The tacit knowledge of Claudio Monteverdi as expressed in the opera La Tragedia di Claudio M

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The Tacit Knowledge of Claudio Monteverdi

as expressed in the opera

La Tragedia di Claudio M

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The influence of *I Comici fedeli* by their energy, flexibility, presence and creative humour, can be seen as the ultimate embodiment of my thesis, which would not have made its point without this group. They were balanced by the wonderful creation of Davide Dolores, who evoked Claudio Monteverdi's emotions and thoughts into a living human being.
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Introduction

My idea for a research project with Monteverdi as a central theme originated when I led the Early Music department of the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague. To open more possibilities for the students in historical performance exploring new music specially written for them, plans were made for a sequel to an explorative project, mixing early and new music. That project was George Frederic Handel's serenata, *Parnasso in Festa*, performed in the Grote Kerk, The Hague, in the Handel/Princess Anna of Hannover celebration in the 2009 festival year. In this project, students of composition teacher Cornelis de Bondt replaced parts of Handel's music with their own creations, maintaining the original libretto. This libretto tells the story of *Thetis* and *Peleus*.[1] Not an opera, but rather a 'festa teatrale'. The mythological ingredients of this piece had been made suitable for the wedding ceremony of Anne of Hannover and stadtholder William IV, by including some substantial scenes with other protagonists like Orpheus and Apollo. The cast of star singers for the nuptials was already present in London because just two weeks earlier, they had performed Handel's *Arianna in Creta* in the King's Theatre. Subconsciously, a lot of these narrative facts would later turn out to have an embryonal function in my own artistic research project.
As the organiser of the Handel Festival 2009 in The Hague and, more importantly, as head of the department performing its music, I was very close to the creative process of the festival production. After a next very successful school production in 2010, Monteverdi's *Vespers* conducted by Charles Toet, also performed in Italy at the location of origin in Mantua, I was determined to have theatrical music of this composer as our next mission.

Soon, it was clear that creating something out of the incomplete surviving opera *Arianna*, was the most attractive option. The part that was still there and even survived in print, the *Lamento d'Arianna*, could be serving as a very strong lead towards interesting new music drama.
Before working out a concept under the name *The completion of Arianna*, it became clear that this had already been done by Alexander Goehr in 1995. It was interesting to read about his procedure of composing by first setting the libretto in a mock Monteverdi style and subsequently replacing this by his own inventions. But I did not feel like attempting a similar procedure.
In the meantime, a collective of composition students were recruited by Cornelis de Bondt, all interested in investing in a new opera project. De Bondt himself, however, was absorbed by the struggle with Dutch governmental destruction of our cultural life by cutting almost a quarter of the national budget, with huge consequences for almost every branch of culture and its education.[2] He was more interested in an opera with Giorgio Agamben's *Homo Sacer*

[1] Actually, a story Monteverdi could not, nor wanted to set to music, as he politely wrote in his refusal letter. See Chapter 5, Contexts p. 140.
[2] The budget for theatre and music ensembles, music schools, museums, public libraries, etc. See also the beginning of chapter Writing of the Libretto, p. 83.

as a point of departure. The isolated position of men in a discursive relationship with politics and the organisation of law, sovereignty, power and the concept of body would be the main themes in this operatic narrative. At that moment, I was already captivated by Monteverdi's letters and started to imagine his person coming to life in a film or on stage through the wording of the letters and their content. I was increasingly intrigued by the conflict between Monteverdi and Artusi and the whole of its exhibitionistic theatricality. There was certainly common ground with Agamben's theme, especially where the struggle with authorities and laws was concerned.
At the same time as these exploratory efforts were made to launch a new hybrid opera project with old and new music, I was preoccupied with another research project, one of an epistemological nature. It concerned propositions for making a shift in dealing with knowledge in education and integration of embodiment in cognition rather than prolonging the old-fashioned dichotomy of body and mind. Through that research, I became acquainted with the theories of Michael Polanyi about tacit knowledge. What struck me was the way he addressed the struggle of the practitioner or the connoisseur to make others believe and trust their expertise and refrain from demanding explanations. We don't ask a pilot or a surgeon first to explain what they are doing and how before we put our lives in their hands. Why would we ask these impossibilities from artists if there is no threat?

From then on, I had a hunch that both branches of research were very much related and offered an opportunity to explore their common ground more deeply. Monteverdi's letters articulated several very recognisable issues, for which I found an explanation in Michael Polanyi's writings. While I delved into the letters with the help of contextualisations by musicologists, it often felt that the personal tone of those letters made me a contemporary of Claudio Monteverdi or vice versa. Even if I stripped my interpretation of inevitable 21st-century projections, knowledge was still implicitly communicated, easily bridging four centuries. A heuristic feeling came up that this contact over centuries could be realised in a theatrical performance. The knowledge would no longer just sound in the head of a reader but be staged and simultaneously shared with many.
To me, it was obvious that all this research should be compiled into one large PhD project of artistic research, including a practical realisation in the shape of an opera, for which a creative team of composers was already standing by.

This proposal was accepted in the DocArtes[3] program, although doubts were expressed at its start about the feasibility of the opera project.
The research was clearly in the realm of epistemology and historical performance practice. However, the practical side of the case study—The Tacit Knowledge of Claudio Monteverdi—enlarged the spectrum of inquiry considerably by connecting modern composition to Monteverdi's modernities at the beginning of the 17th century.

[3] See for the program the website: www.docartes.be

The research questions:

How can we reconnect with the tacit knowledge that vanished with the death of its owner, specifically Claudio Monteverdi?

How could one retrieve at least part of this knowledge indirectly through the embodiment of information codified in language and notated music?

The practitioner Monteverdi

With some simplification, tacit knowledge belongs to the practitioner, and explicit knowledge is the domain of the theorist. In the chapter *Dichiaratione,* I have demonstrated that Monteverdi and later also his brother used this opposition willingly to disarm their opponent Artusi. These examples are indicative of the composer's view of his own profession, particularly concerning performance.
Music historians have always been rather silent about Monteverdi as a performer (see chapter *The Narrative*), but this is crucial to understanding his position in the innovations they granted him. This lack of attention is mostly due to himself because, from the beginning, he avoided, with one exception, any reference to being a singer and a viol player (See the beginning of the chapter *Contexts*). It is not difficult to imagine him actively taking part in singing his madrigals at the beginning of his career at the Gonzaga court.

For his viol playing, this is different. There is one very explicit reference to him as a virtuoso on the viola bastarda, which, in the context of the *Dichiaratione,* is even more meaningful. The fact that even after his *Orfeo*, he is said to play the viola bastarda in court regularly tells me that he was not just showing off with fast improvisations but that he did wonderful things in improvised counterpoint as well (see *The Narrative-Banchieri*). This last clue indicates that he mastered an art that depended on reflexes from profoundly interiorised practical knowledge. More study is needed to reconstruct these particular qualities, for instance, with the help of his many compositions on a basso ostinato. Is their origin in his experience with the 'contrapunto alla mente sopra il basso'? But his skills as viol player must have created a rich palette of sounds. After all, there must be a reason that his obituary compared him with Orpheus, which says he did not have an equal with the sound of his viol. (see chapter Contexts)

Virtually all of Monteverdi's music has a vocal character, even the instrumental parts. This, along with all the other qualities of his music, characterises him as a composer-singer. The fact that he needed to know for what singer he was writing when asked to send music from Venice, (see Contexts) so he could give some thought 'to the appropriate natural voice' indicates that he was very intimately familiar with the physical peculiarities of human voices. The same goes for his report of an audition, with detailed comments.

His recommendations for abundant rehearsing for singers are closely related to this expert knowledge. Like actors, singers needed to live (dwell) in their parts before they would fully embody them. Freedom in delivery and sprezzatura was only possible when they had interiorised the full spectrum of what they had to represent, both vocally and in terms of the musical meaning.
Even one madrigal needed severe preparation for the singers, as he wrote because it was very difficult to sing without first practising. The practical implications of singing the part in its context could not be completely understood at first sight and it would harm the composition, to sing it unprepared. This means that a singer could only perform up to the standard when the appropriate technical knowledge was interiorised and thus tacit.

Text

In Monteverdi's letters, abundant information is given of the kind referred to above. But when he turned to a more personal communication register, I saw many possibilities for using literal sentences for the dialogues in my libretto. I later found out that there are resemblances with 'Verbatim Theatre', which became more popular while I was compiling texts for the opera. (see Chapter 3, Writing the Libretto p. 89). The principle is the same, which means the effort to stay as close as possible to the source and so obtain a certain truthfulness. In both cases, the authenticity of the words automatically contributes to consistency in the staging of the subject. It has a tacit function as well if we consider the text to be a musical score that demands meticulous reproduction of the subtext's intentions. Because Monteverdi seems to have spontaneously written down his words, voicing them is primarily an embodiment of the thoughts and feelings of that particular moment. Graphology might have added an extra layer of reading, but it has not been attempted in the context of this research.
The printed sources such as the '*Lettera ai studiosi lettori*' and the '*Dichiaratione'* (see chapter) do not have the immediacy of the letters. Still, they have, on the other hand, the extra dimension of an 'audience' that is addressed by the authors. It is, so to speak, already a step in the direction of staging their message.
Monteverdi is not the only one present in the staging through his letters; Eleonora de Medici's words in the scene where Caterina Martinelli dies are all taken from her personal correspondence. They are confessions to an intimate relative or trusted courtier.
There are four scenes of theatre within a theatre. Literally so, with the text of Andreini's dialogue between Momo and Verità in Act III. The other scenes are 'opera in opera': *Orfeo, Dafne* and *Arianna,* which all have their subliminal layers of connotations.

Characters

The layers in the libretto are determined by the construction of the characters.
There are four basic layers in each of the protagonists:

- Historical
- Mythological
- Allegorical
- Theatrical

These layers constantly cross each other fluidly, and the only character without the extra layers is Monteverdi. He is only historical in his role, but his function is, at the same time, to represent the whole.

The protagonists:

Claudio Monteverdi

Piacere (Caterina Martinelli, Eurydice, Amor, Dafne)

Potere (Eleonora de Medici)

Verità (Virginia Ramponi Andreini, Florinda, Arianna)

Vanità (Francesco Rasi, Orfeo, Apollo, Teseo)

Ragione (Daedalus, Giovanni Maria Artusi, Ottavio Rinuccini)

The characters all have their well-documented historical fundament, and their action is bound to the factual information music historians have collected. From there, a process of transformation unfolds into the temporal reality of the opera, which has mythological aspirations. The allegorical layer makes it possible to identify with the characters and the narrative throughout the constantly changing settings. With this, I hoped to achieve that the audience can relax by accepting the frames while focal attention on the stereotypes reassures that the narrative streak is being followed. The activity takes place in a myriad of shapes and sensorial stimulations, all with one goal: to convey the drama.

Comici Fedeli

Just like the historical situation of the artistic processes *La Tragedia di Claudio M* is reflecting on, the role of the Commedia dell'arte troupe is essential in the theatrical transformation. They embody all aspects of the drama, even to the point that the prima donna of the group, La Florinda, performs the tragic highlight of the opera, the Lamento d'Arianna. In all the historical comments, this scene is praised by contemporaries as a revelation.
In our opera, the Comici are constantly present and create a continuum of action, except for the scene of the *Lamento,* when they disappear for the total time of Arianna's monologue. Three times, they have the stage for themselves and play a kind of *intermezzi,* which are part of the total dramatic structure. In the *Idropica* they fulfill the historical duty of presenting their play. The pantomime before the start of *Dafne* is an introduction to the lightness of that opera and makes a cesura with the heavy circumstances surrounding Monteverdi.

The most classical Commedia dell'arte is the scene of Zanni and Arlecchino with the laural tree that is left over after carnival and embodied by the ill Caterina. The burlesque performance by the two *comici* enhances the contrast with Caterina's dramatic situation. When a doctor arrives and appears to be also a comedian, the tension culminates into a collapse of the hilarious followed by the elevation of the tragic. Suddenly, there is the fragility of human existence about which we did read from a distance but which we now suddenly experience by participating in the magical concentration of the theatre.
This participation is essential in the entire research process setup.

The Music

The five composers who wrote the new music for *La Tragedia di Claudio M* can be seen as operating in a 21st-century equivalent of the explorative framework of the Camerata dei Bardi. They worked on the project for several years and had in the centre of them a radical theorist-composer, Cornelis de Bondt, who is not afraid to take an isolated position within the cultural community if following his ideals should oblige him.
Many discussions have been held to arrive at an alignment with Monteverdi's performance principles, as I wished for this research project.
Instrumentation with just historical instruments was one condition. Initially, attempts were made to include more improvisation, but this delayed too much the completion of reliable musical planning that served the narrative. The only free improvisation was done by the experienced jazz double bass player Yussif Barakat. He accompanied the *Dafne* pantomime of the Comici Fedeli in Act II.
Crucial was our mission to develop a consistent version of 21st-century *parlar cantando.*
It took a long time and many trials before each composer contributed with their own solutions, thanks to the fact that every vocalist had a separate composer exclusively writing for them. Automatically, this resulted in contrasting allegorical characters endorsed by the connection of attributed instrumentation. All allegories had their own symbolic instruments.
The stylistic and dramatic coherence on the level of music was composed by Cornelis de Bondt. He designed a two-layer continuum by a thematic formel that was distilled out of the *Lamento d'Arianna* with the help of his personal MS-Dos composition program. This had the function of a *cantus firmus*, a musical backbone for the entire opera, playing a leading role in the apotheosis at the end of the opera.
The other layer he called the 'Fate layer' which interrupts now and then the action, as a symbolic reminder of (life) time.
As in the early 17th-century performance, a lot of freedom was granted to the singers and instrumentalists. For the 'rules of the game' see the instructions of the score.[4]

[4] See appendix: Instructions to the score, p. 181.

The project as a probe

I consider the entire project with all its different components, such as preparative research, discussions by the makers and actors, creative and professional input by composers and performers, stage directions and stage set design, reactions from the audience, etc., the cluster of this all, as an embodied probe stick. (see Chapter 1, Episteme, p. 17).

At the proximal side of this probe are we, living now, and every collective member with their own epistemic archive. On the other (distal) side of the probe, which bridges more than 400 years, there is the living Monteverdi, embedded in his time, social and cultural environment, and complete with all his knowledge, transforming because knowing is a process that happens to him.

This probe stick is a sophisticated feeler, not a rigid tool. It continuously morphs and rejuvenates through actions and interactions and by letting go of ballast. It regularly touches the other side, and signals come our way. Because the distance is vast, we might just think that we know what we feel. However, this could also be another bias, colouring perception.

For the solidity of this probe, which can be bent into an interpretative frame, I have designed a few conditions. The narrative should stay as close as possible to the factual reality as we know it (thanks to a lot of hard work by many musicologists and performing artists). Every decision should refer to this backbone. The last line of Monteverdi's 'lettera' is guiding not just for composers but for all the makers and performers.

...*Il moderno Compositore fabrica sopra li fondamenti della verità...*[5]

[5] ...the modern composer builds upon the foundations of truth.

Episteme

The role of knowledge in playing music from the Past.

The origin of all knowledge is tacit, and experience is its fundament. In that sense, implicit knowledge is basic, and all other appearances of knowledge are just reductions or modifications of this larger whole. This overarching property is inherent in art. It counts for final artistic products as much as for their practical beginnings. Remarkably, education in the artistic field needs to sufficiently recognise this fact or organise the approach to knowledge accordingly.

Trained as a musicologist and a performer of historical instruments (mainly viola da gamba), my relationship with knowledge was the doctrine of daily life throughout my professional career. This relationship had many angles, and it was not always easy to give informative knowledge an appropriate position and function to make it, first of all, feeding my musical practice.
Historical performance practice defines itself as a research-based approach to music of the past. This means that sources such as treatises, scores, playing methods, iconography and organology largely dominated the practical routines. In my case, the imperative of factual knowledge over other aspects of music-making often caused me to experience music as speaking somewhat indirectly to or through me. With hindsight, the large quantity of explicit knowledge was taking up much space destined for other qualities as a player.
The increase in this knowledge had two different consequences, which are natural phenomena. Parallel to learning from the unknown to knowing a gradually expanding number of facts and details, there was an increasing awareness of what was still to be learned. The more one knows, the better one sees what is not (yet) known and what probably will never be known.

On the other hand, the previously unknown became familiar and embedded in (sub)conscious practical application. Things started to speak for themselves. This latter trend is part of a collective movement of historical performance practices, which expanded considerably by the massive exchange of knowledge in the field since the early 1970s.[1]
Over the decades, the movement developed certain implicit rules concerning historical repertoires, leading to an inevitable standardisation. A tacit agreement on how to realise extant scores based on rules distilled from the sources had become a recognisable practice.

[1] Harry Haskell, *The Early Music Revival*, *A History* (New York, Dover, 1996), p.163, provides the best example. The immediate success of the London-based magazine *Early Music* after its launch in 1973 can be seen as a significant handshake between musicologists and performers. It is one example of many new journals and specialised magazines in the field. The profile of scholar-performers like Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Christopher Hogwood, and Gustav Leonhardt was an expanding force behind the fusion of research and practice.

These standards were challenged based on newly acquired knowledge or views with alternative motivations. The objections to the beliefs, integrated into the ever more successful historical performance practices, eventually culminated in the so-called 'Early Music debate.' The debate took place in the 1980s. There was an antecedent by Theodor Adorno,[2] which was followed up by Laurence Dreyfus' article *Early Music defended against its devotees.*[3]
The best-known and most extensive contributor was Richard Taruskin, who, in his own words, 'debunked' the authenticity claim of the Early Music Movement in *Text and Act* and other publications.[4] Very substantial in the debate were the articles and books by authors like Joseph Kerman, Nikolaus Harnoncourt and (looking back on the 1980s) Charles Rosen.[5] The debate mainly concentrated on how believable the claims were that the approach of the Early Music Movement represented the original intentions and experiences of the composers of some centuries ago. The claim of 'authenticity', though not directly made by the leading performers in the field, was used by record labels and other publicity channels. Ten years after the launch of *Early Music,* its new editor, Nicholas Kenyon*,* organised a conference on the topic of authenticity, collecting all the high-profile contributions in his standard work about authenticity in historical performances.[6] In the discussion, the philological scrutiny of the historical performers was confronted with their tendencies to subconsciously project contemporary aesthetics and taste onto the music of the past. The opponents did not challenge the application of knowledge but the omission of including the unknown within the larger picture of artistic valuation. The scrutiny of historical facts needed to be balanced by scientific or epistemological rigour. Instead, a tacit agreement on how to perform guaranteed a lively conviviality and conviction.

Crucial in this opposition against these grades of authenticity is dealing with the ephemeral quality of music that prevents reconstruction. All the knowledge that died with the composers, musicians and instrument makers was and will remain forever tacit. Nevertheless, as with all history, musicians who play the music of the past in some way will have to relate to this dimension. Wilhelm Dilthey's axioma[7] '*Leben versteht Leben'* covers the idea that 'living life is capable of re-living the life that passed away.' Central in that process is the carrier of information, the so-called dead '*Geistiges Objekt'* or intellectual content. The temporarily frozen part of it can be regained thanks to technologies such as scripture or - as in our case - music notation, iconography and musical instruments.

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[2] Theodor W. Adorno, "Bach gegen seine Liebhaber verteidigt," *Merkur,* Heft 40, Jahrgang 5, Juni 1951, pp. 535-546.
[3] Laurence Dreyfus, "Early Music defended against its devotes", *The Musical Quarterly* 69, 1983, pp.297-322.
[4] Richard Taruskin, *Text and Act, Essays on Music and Performance,* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1995).
[5] Joseph Kerman, *Contemplating Music: Challenges to Musicology* (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1985); Nikolaus Harnoncourt, *Musik als Klangrede, Wege zu einem neue Musikverständnis* (Kassel, Bärenreiter, 1985); Charles Rosen, "The Benefits of Authenticity" (1990) in *Critical Entertainments* (Cambridge. Mass., Harvard University Press, 2000), pp.201-221.
[6] Nicholas Kenyon, (ed.), *Authenticity and Early Music,* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1988).
[7] In: René Munnik, *Tijdmachines,* (Zoetermeer, Klement, 2013) p.162.

The content of this presumed *Sleeping Beauty* is subjected to a plethora of interpretations, guided - as Hans Georg Gadamer stated[8] - mainly by the dialogue of every individual interpreter with the text. As a result, we talk of 'plural authenticities,' where every version has its authentic meaning instead of one ideal reading. In all this, the author of the intellectual content is simultaneously present and absent, thus causing this polysemic dimension to the preserved work of art. Chasing the original intention of the dead composer is frustrated by a perpetual escape from the ideal content, while its pursuit remains an illusory but inevitable necessity.[9] So, the lost paradise is not behind us but travelling with us in a kind of parallactic movement. Like the moon seen from a driving car on the highway.

The proximal and the distal

The Early Music Movement of the 20th century was not the first to bring music and theatre from a distant past back to life. In the second half of the 16th century, a small group of humanists studied the possibilities of reviving ancient Greek musical drama. A key figure at its beginning was the lutenist and music theorist Vincenzo Galilei, who was inspired by the findings and ideas of his friend Girolamo Mei. This humanistic historian wrote a treatise on the subject *De modis musicis antiquorum.*[10] The text was never published, but many of his ideas and findings contributed to Galilei's *Dialogo della musica antica e della moderna,* published in 1581.[11]

Their work formed the foundation for the Florentine academy, known as the 'Camerata dei Bardi' (named after their leader, Count Giovanni Bardi.) This group of poets, composers, theorists and intellectuals discussed the arts and shared an interest in Antiquity. With all the information that Girolamo Mei (consulting Boethius) and later also Galilei brought into the group, they managed to (re)construct a kind of vocal music completely driven by text. They created a way of performing soloistic recitation with slender accompaniment free from the polyphonic structures, much later indicated as the monodic style, then known as the s*tile recitativo*. Galilei describes his conviction (after studying Aristotle's *Poetics*) that all Greek tragedy and comedy was sung. A practice that was taken over by, as he wrote, '*I latini*' (the Romans).

The passage Gallilei based his theory on is most likely the sixth chapter of Aristotle's *Poetics*:

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[8] Hans Georg Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode*, (Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 1960) I. Teil, Die Erfahrung der Kunst, b) Verwandlung ins Gebilde und die totale Vermittlung. pp. 116-126.

[9] See about this hermeneutic view: Roland Barthes, "La mort de l'auteur", *Mantéia,* 5, (1968) pp.61-67.

[10] Girolamo Mei, *De modis musicis antiquorum*, Ms. (1568-1573): see Girolamo Mei, *De modis*, critical ed. Eisuke Tsugami. Tokyo, Keiso Shobo, 1991. On Mei and his role in the 'Camerata Fiorentina': Donatella Restani, L'Itinerario *di Girolamo Mei dalla "Poetica" alla musica*. (Florence, Olschki, 1990). (Studi e testi per la storia della musica, 7).

[11] Vincenzo Galilei, *Dialogo della musica antica e della moderna* (Firenze, Marescotti, 1581). Vincenzo Galilei, *Dialogue on Ancient and Modern Music*, trans., with introduction and notes by Claude V. Palisca. (New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, 2003). Transcription of the original text Utrecht University (2016) at https://tmiweb.science.uu.nl/text/transcription/galdia.html (The OCR contains many uncorrected errors).

Tragedy, then, is an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude: in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament, the several kinds being found in separate parts of the play; in the form of action, not of narrative; through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions. By 'language embellished,' I mean **language** into which **rhythm**, **'harmony,'** and **song** enter. By 'the several kinds in separate parts,' I mean that some parts are rendered through the medium of verse alone, others again with the aid of song.[12]

What strikes me is the effort Galilei and some others took to decipher and interpret the original Greek notation, understand their tuning systems, and understand their tonal systems, which consisted of modes characterised by explicit connotations. Apparently, these studies also helped Galilei rethink harmony and increase the use of dissonance in his own harmonic spectrum.
It is specifically noticeable that within a general interest in the arts of Antiquity during the preceding two centuries, very detailed studies of a chain of music theorists (Pythagoras, Aristotle, Boethius, Guido of Arezzo) helped the Camerata dei Bardi to achieve their own *rinascita* of the antique theatre's sound.
Knowledge older than 1500 years and handed over in descriptions and codified melodies found its way into the treatises of, above all, Vincenzo Galilei. This knowledge was thus connected with, as well as opposed to, the music theory of the mid-16th century, dominated by the standards of Gioseffo Zarlino. From all the research, discussions, and experiments, a coherent new practice grew, successfully represented by Giulio Caccini and Jacopo Peri. They were the singers of the Camerata who first came with results that found acclaim as a new way of performing music drama in a sung-spoken way.

The most valued achievement in the new style around the time this novelty was expanding, the first decade of the 17th century, was Claudio Monteverdi's *Lamento d'Arianna*. Even his competitor Marco da Gagliano confirmed that this composer wrote such an exquisite aria that one could truly affirm that he renewed the value of the music of the antiques:

Il signor Claudio Monteverdi, musico celebratissimo, capo della musica di S. A., compose l'arie in modo sì esquisito, che si può con verità affermare che si rinnovasse il pregio dell' antica musica, perciò che visibilmente mosse tutto il teatro a lagrime.[13]
(Signor Claudio Monteverdi, a celebrated musician and head of H.H.'s music, composed the arias in such an exquisite manner that they can truly be said to have renewed the value of ancient music. This visibly moved the entire theatre to tears.)

Monteverdi did not share the reconstruction ideal of the Florentine intelligentsia. As he wrote to Doni in 1634, he had taken notice of Galilei's treatise some twenty years earlier and had seen the part where the inadequate practice of the ancient Greeks was mentioned. It was dear to him to have seen it as he wrote to Doni, but he also realised that the old notation ('performance signs') was so different from that of his own times that he did not

[12] Text available at https://www.gutenberg.org/files/1974/1974-h/1974-h.htm
[13] Marco da Gagliano, preface to *La Dafne*, 1608. See Angelo Solerti, *Lei origini del melodramma, testimonianze dei contemporanei,* (Torino, fratelli Bocca, 1903), p.82.

even try to understand them, being sure that they would remain obscure, and he would be lost in the practice of the ancients.
(Or, as it says in his letter: *Ho pero visto non prima d'hora anzi venti anni fa il Galilei co la ove nota quella poca pratica antica, mi fu caro all'hora l'haverla vista, per haver visto in questa parte come adoperavano gli antichi gli lora segni praticali a differenza de nostri non cercando di avanzarmi piu oltre ne lo intenderli; essendo sicuro che mi sarebbero riusciti come oscurissimi zifere, et peggio essendo perso in tutto quel modo praticale antico.*)[14]

Monteverdi's background was that of a music practitioner rather than an intellectual environment such as the Florentine Camerata. Even though he published his first compositions[15] as a 15-year apprentice of Marc'Antonio Ingegneri, this primarily showed the knowledge of an apprentice developing into a craftsman. His more creative experiments most likely found their way into playing viola bastarda, which was an art of improvisation. The fact that Vincenzo Gonzaga accepted him as a court musician (see Chapter 5, p. 128.) based on these skills indicates that he was an exceptional and, for his age, very accomplished instrumentalist and singer.
From the letter to Doni cited above, we can conclude that Monteverdi considered himself, also with hindsight, primarily a practitioner who would approach such subjects physically, mentally and artistically from the proximity of his own experience. In the case of the Camerata dei Bardi, they made a collective effort to explore a practice that only survived as poetic texts and descriptions of their theatrical performance. With a distance of more than one and a half millennia to the studied subject, a comparison between their contemporary music theory and similar phenomena from antiquity served as guidance towards a (re)discovery of a practice that might mirror the original.

Michael Polanyi suggested that this kind of scientific or artistic exploration should be seen as an act of probing with the help of a tool.[16] As an example, he chose the stick of a blind person that helps to avoid collisions with objects or stepping in holes on the way. The stick-holder explores or feels his/her way from what is nearest (in anatomical terms, the proximal) to what is far, in this case, at the end of the stick (the distal). The stick is an extension of the arm/body that feels its way into the unknown and interprets the vibrations and resistances encountered. So, the familiar (the known) is in direct contact with the unknown and by concentrating one's attention and awareness on this bi-directional process of exploration, one dwells temporarily in a circular motion of growing knowledge, which is personal. This indwelling is conditional to gain transformative growth from the whole operation.
This theoretical model's relation to Claudio Monteverdi is obvious here. For a violist or any other player of bowed instruments, the process of learning and performing is similar to the

[14] Letter 125 of 2 February 1634, to G.B. Doni, in Annonciade Russo, and Jean-Philippe Navarre. *Correspondance, préfaces et épîtres dédicatoires*, (Sprimont, Mardaga, 2001), p.216. See also: Claudio Monteverdi, *Lettere*, a cura di Éva Lax, (Florence, Olschki, 1994), no. 124, p.124.
[15] *Sacrae cantiunculae, tribus vocibus, Claudinis Montisviridi Cremonensis, Egregii Ingegnerii discipuli, liber primus*. (Venice, Angelo Gardano, 1582).
[16] Michael Polanyi*, Personal Knowledge*, *Towards a Postcritical Philosophy* (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1958), Chapter 4, §8, p.59.

probestick. One feels through the bow, the way into the sound by connecting feedback of resistances with the musical language of bodily actions.

The interpretative framework

The trajectory in such an exploration is predominantly subconscious and not controlled by the mind. It is a comprehensive physical (neurological) process in which memory plays an independent but crucial role. The knowledge obtained in such a way is mostly subliminal and cannot be articulated in subdivided particulars without diminishing its quality or reducing its truthful compass. Polanyi baptised this knowledge, therefore, as '*tacit knowing*.' [17] Moreover, he saw knowledge always as a process connected to a person. It should, therefore, not be identified as something fixed.

For the Camerata dei Bardi, a collective interpretative framework served as a metaphorical probestick. As stated above, this framework consisted of coherent shared beliefs and explicit knowledge about ancient Greek music theory and the vast repertoire of ancient literature. In addition, other interpretative frameworks from more recent authors, such as Boethius or Guido of Arezzo, extended the proximity of the 'stick' in a telescopic way towards the very remote past. A recontextualisation refined the images of the lost practice at the distal end through practical experiments and a search of the proximal side. The indwelling of the group made them contemporary with the cultural field they studied, and at the same time, by projections, they subconsciously morphed that same field to fit the ideals of their present. According to Polanyi, committing oneself entirely to this process of probing investigation is conditional on its credibility and success. He sees this principle for science as well as (emphatically) for the arts.

> No one can know universal intellectual standards except by acknowledging their jurisdiction over himself as part of the terms on which he holds himself responsible for the pursuit of his mental efforts.[18]

This means that in the case of the Camerata dei Bardi, we are not dealing with a subjective concoction from a collective endeavour. Every individual contribution was submitted in confidence, from a personal passion to the agreed intellectual standards of the group based on historical and artistic fundaments. (It is interesting to see the parallels with the Early Music Movement of the 1970s and 1980s when collective passion and conviction catapulted discoveries and skills into a new dimension of historical performance.)

Through this framework of commitment, a self-regulating coherence emerged, leading to the growing proximity of the hidden truth of a new style of music drama. The heuristic moments in this research depended on responsible choices of actions, which (as Polanyi describes it) 'excluded randomness or egocentric arbitrariness.'

If we consider the new vocal style around 1600, the *stile recitativo,* as new knowledge, Polanyi's observations concerning this chapter are very appropriate in our case:

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[17] Michael Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1966), p. 10.

[18] Polanyi*, Personal Knowledge*, Chapter 10, §2, p.302, 303.

The implications of new knowledge can never be known at its birth. For it speaks of something real, and to attribute reality to something is to express the belief that its presence will yet show up in an indefinite number of unpredictable ways.[19]

Drawing this picture much broader, we can say that there was an inevitable line from the first tentative attempts to combine speaking and singing until, finally, the mature appearance of opera as a new medium.

Vincenzo Galilei's research was the most 'scientific' contribution to the Camerata. He found his arguments, above all, in Aristotle's work. The central question was whether Greek tragedy was entirely sung. Galilei 'coloured' the information, however, by freely interpreting some statements about Greek tragedy as actually being sung and not spoken. In his *Dialogo,*[20] this conclusion is based on paragraphs 6 and 15 of book XIX in Aristotle's *Problemata* ("Problems Connected with Music") and nuanced in *Poetics,* chapter VI, which states that some texts were spoken and others 'rendered with the aid of song' (see above, fn. 10). Galilei admits this last contradiction, but blaming Aristotle's memory while being convinced that the Problemata was written first, which is doubtful:

Vero è che nella Poetica, quando viene alla diffinitione delle Tragedia, pare che egli scordi il alcuna cosa da quel primo parere.[21]
(It is true that in *Poetics*, when coming to the definition of Tragedy, it seems that he had forgotten something of that first opinion.)

He seems to subconsciously want to follow his own track and see the confirmation of a fully sung tragedy. Indeed, the Greek term for mixing speaking and singing connects with tragedy in the mentioned fragments of the *Problemata.* The translation of the word *parakatalogí* (παρακαταλογὴ) is by scholars generally accepted as 'recitative/reciting.' So, for Galilei, this passage in the book dedicated to music was a key to his conviction about sung Tragedy:

(Aristotle, *Problems*, XIX, 6) Why is recitative in songs tragic? Is it because of the contrast? The contrast evokes emotions and is found in extreme calamity or grief, while uniformity is less mournful.[22]

Mimesis

Even more relevant than the role of song in Tragedy are Galilei's searches for indications of the role of imitation within acting. As we saw above in the quoted passage of the *Poetica*, Aristotle underlines the aspect of imitation in acting, by and in language, which enhances the

[19] *Idem*, p.311.
[20] Galilei, *Dialogo,* p.145, trans. Palisca, p.362.
[21] *Idem,* fn. 743, Palisca points out that Galilei was unaware of the posthumous compilation of the *Problemata.* He thought it was written before *Poetica.*
[22] Aristotle, *Problems*, I, 1-19 (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2011) (Loeb Classical Library, 316), pp. 536, 537.

emotional impact. In paragraph 15 mentioned above, he explicitly sketches the work of the specialised actor (ἀγωνιστῶν) and the performance of the *nomoi* (melodic patterns, songs) who contrasted by their length with the choral strophes:

(Aristotle, *Problems*, XIX, 15) Is it because *nomoi* were for professional actors, who, being already able to perform imitations and exert themselves for a sustained period, their song became long and multiform? Like the words, then, the melodies too, followed the imitation in being continually varied. For it was more necessary to imitate by means of the melody than by means of the words.[23]

The protagonists had a fair amount of musical freedom to use their palette of emotional imitations translated into musical expression. The chorus could not because "it is easier for one person to execute a lot of modulations than it is for many." The conclusion is that the *hypocritès* (the actor) is an *agonistes* (professional virtuoso) and a *mimetes* (imitator).[24]

Michael Polanyi discusses mimesis in another context, which is nevertheless related because it deals with the transmission of knowledge by imitation. This tacit learning of knowing how to do something was first described after observations of animal behaviour. Not the "blind parrot-like imitation, but a genuine transmission of an intellectual performance from one animal to the other; a real communication of knowledge on the inarticulate level."[25] Polanyi points out that all arts are learned in this way of intelligently imitating and that there is a condition for the learner to place his confidence in the master. This principle is not limited to the master-apprentice relationship. The actor can imitate a person who is a model for a role or character by the same intelligent observation. In turn, the craft of the imitator can be imitated to learn more about expression for other purposes.

Vincenzo Galilei saw this strategy of learning by imitation as the ultimate chance to get closer to a genuine text expression in music. He advised his readers interested in the rhetorical style of the ancient Greeks to observe the Commedia dell'arte actors (*i Zanni)* of their present-day tragedies and comedies:

- Quando per lor diporto vanno alle Tragedie & Comedie, che recitano i Zanni, lascino alcuna volta da parte le immoderate risa;
  (When they go for entertainment to the tragedies and comedies recited by the *Zanni*, let them restrain their immoderate laughter,)
- & in lor vece *osservino* di gratia in qual *maniera* parla, con qual voce circa l'acutezza & gravità, con che *quantità di suono*, con qual sorte *d'accen*ti & *di gesti*, come profferire quanto alla *velocità & tardità del moto*, l'uno con l'altro quieto gentilhuomo
  (& instead let them observe with gratitude in what manner and with what voice regarding high & low pitch, with what volume of sound, with what kind of accents & gestures, what speed or slowness of articulation, one gentleman speaks quietly with another.)
- attendino un poco la differenza che occorre tra tutte quelle cose, quando uno di essi parla con un suo servo, overo l'uno con l'altro di questi; considerino quando ciò accade al Principe discorrendo con un

[23] *Idem*, pp. 542-545.
[24] Luis Calero, "Training a Chorus in Ancient Greece", *Gilgameš,* No. 2, 2019, pp. 15-27.

[25] Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge*, p.206.

suo suddito & vassallo quando al supplicante nel raccomandarsi; come ciò faccia *l'infuriato*, ò *concitato;*
(Let them pay attention to the difference between all these things, when one of them speaks to his servant, or a servant to another. Let them consider when this happens to the Prince in speaking to his subject & vassal; or a supplicant pleading; how the enraged or excited person speaks;)

- come la donna maritata; come la fanciulla; come il semplice putto;
come l'astuta meretrice; come l'innamorato nel parlare con la sua amata mentre cerca disporla alle sue voglie; come quelli che si lamenta; come quelli che grida; come il timoroso; e come quelli che *esulta d'allegrezza,*
(how a married woman, a girl; a mere tot; a cunning harlot; a lover speaking to his beloved when he is trying to bend her to his will; how someone who laments; or one who cries out; how a timid person sounds or one exulting in joy;)
- da quali diversi accidenti, essendo da essi con attentione avvertiti & con diligenza essaminati, potranno pigliar norma di quell oche convenga per l'espressione di qual sivoglia altro concetto che venire gli potesse tra mano.
(From these various occurrences, observed with attention and diligently examined, they could take the norm of what suits the expression of any other idea that might come to hand.) [26]

With these examples, Galilei pointed to direct imitation through intelligent observation. In this example, the intelligence is not reflective but sensitive to goal-directed behaviour.[27] In Polanyi's terminology, the observer is advised to dwell in the mind of the performers during the action. Four hundred years after Galilei, Polanyi correctly described such processes as a tacit functioning within learning. A transmission of knowledge occurred under the radar of our conscious mind. In art, the advantage of such a way of learning is that the wealth of details, nuances, refinements, curiosities, inexplicabilities, etc., next to the undividable *qualia* aspects, 'the suchness' of relevant items, is not sacrificed to inevitable processes of reduction or compression. According to Antonio Damasio, feelings provide the *qualia* element included in subjectivity. Damasio's definition of the integrated experience as an enabler of the cultural mind is analogous to Polanyi's theory of personal knowledge.[28] Explicitation would produce an effect of the impoverishment of meaning compared to the original expression remaining embedded in its totality.
Half a century after Polanyi's conclusions, neuroscience succeeded in refining such observations by directly measuring brain activities during primates' learning. In his book *The Neuroscience of Human Relationships,* Louis Cozolino dedicates a chapter to this fundamental principle of social coherence facilitated by so-called mirror neurons.

The microsensors revealed that neurons in the premotor areas of the frontal lobes fire when another primate is observed engaging in a specific behaviour. [....] Because these neurons fire both when observing and performing a particular action, they have been dubbed mirror neurons." [...]

[26] Galilei, *Dialogo*, p.89.
[27] In this light, it is interesting that despite the subtitle of his book, Bertolt Brecht gave the same recommendation in his lecture for the Danish Working Class Actors. Bertolt Brecht, *Rede an dänische Arbeiterschauspieler* über die Kunst der Beobachtung, in: *Schriften zum Theater, Über eine nicht-aristoteliche Dramatik.* (Berlin, Suhrkamp, 1957) p. 268.
[28] Antonio Damasio, *The Strange Order of Things. Life, Feeling, and the Making of Cultures* (New York, Pantheon Books, 2018), pp. 144-148.

"Mirror neurons lie at the crossroads of the processing of inner and outer experience. [...] It is because of their privileged position that mirror neurons are able to bridge observation and action. [29]

Cozolino's research is relevant here because he also studied the relation between words and gestures. These are linked even to the point that our tongue muscles are activated by listening to speech. So, the action of speech of the sender, as well as facial expressions and gestures, result in reflexive activation of motor systems in the observer.
Galilei encouraged composers and musicians to observe the actors in action in order to follow their performances as musical gestures, which could be captured in the shape of recitatives. Crucial is the immediacy of the process. The fact that no analysis comes in between what happens and how it is reflected in the receiver makes the artistic outcome experienced true. It is the dramaturgical equivalent of the verisimilitude of the visual arts.

A similar way of working had become second nature to one of the great opera composers of the 20th century, Leoš Janáček. He used to write down conversations or spoken language around him directly in music notation in a little notebook. He wanted to catch the musical dimension of his mother tongue (!) at its most lively manifestations. Ironically, this habit was so dominant that even at the deathbed of his daughter Olga, he wrote down the scene in that notebook. Turning what was truly happening into a dramatised scene, like an artist making a drawing of the deathbed of a family member.[30]

Janáček's method mirrors Vincenzo Galilei's ideal when transferring spoken word to music. Galilei mostly paid attention to the precise characterisation of the person represented by the ancient singers. He summarises the recommended observations above and puts them into practice, translating them into musical action of tone, accents and gestures, volume, and rhythm.

Nel cantare l'antico Musico qual si voglia Poema, essaminava prima diligentissimamente la qualità della persona che parlava, l'età, il sesso, con chi, & quello che per tal mezzo cercava operare; i quali concetti vestiti prima dal Poeta di scelte parole à bisogno tale opportune, gli esprimeva poscia il Musico in quel Tuono, con quelli accenti, & gesti, con quella quantità, & qualità di suono, & con quel rithmo che conveniva in quell'attione à tal personaggio.[31]

When the ancient Musician sang any Poem he wished to *sing*, he first examined very diligently the quality of the person speaking, his age, his sex, with whom, & what he sought to achieve by that means; which concepts the Poet first put into words chosen to suit his needs, which the Musician then expressed in that tone, with those accents, & gestures, with that quantity, & quality of sound, & with that rhythm which suited that character at that moment.

Galilei was the first of the Camerata dei Bardi, who realised a composition in the new monodic style, which he sang himself. There is a testimony of Giovanni Bardi's son Pietro in a

[29] Louis Cozolino, *The Neuroscience of Human Relationships; Attachment and Developing a Social Brain.* (New York, Norton, 2006), Part IV, ch. 13, pp. 186-191.
[30] Jaroslav Vogel, *Leoš Janáček,* (Prague, Artia, 1962), trans. Geraldine Thomsen-Muchová, London, Orbis Publishing, 1981, p. 197. The RC version of this dissertation includes a picture of the notebook page.
[31] Galilei, *Dialogo* p.90.

letter from 1634 to Giovanni Battista Doni that he sang with a clear tenor voice, accompanied by a consort of viols, his *Lamento di Conte Ugolino* after Dante's *Inferno*. Apart from the good voice, he apparently sang intelligibly, and although the music lovers liked it, the performance created envy among his colleagues. This *stile recitativo* was a discovery for Jacopo Peri and Giulio Caccini, but they found "too much antiquity and roughness" in Galilei's approach. According to Pietro de Bardi the two singers "softened the style and made it suitable to arouse affects by it, which were seldom heard."[32]

Dwelling in, breaking out

For Galilei, probing by his interpretative framework resulted in an immersion in his field of study, ancient Greek music. To see it through Polanyi's eyes, we would say that his contemplation brought Galilei from an observer of experiences into a person absorbed by their inherent qualities. "The impersonality of intense contemplation," as Polanyi states, "consists in a complete participation of the person in that which he contemplates. And not in his complete detachment from it, as would be the case in an ideally objective observation."[33]

Galilei's lamento was more an explorative experiment than the work of his younger colleagues. Hence, the roughness of his findings and the slightly fanatic endeavour to evoke the antique original in an uncompromised appearance by artistically breaking out of the habitual frames.[34] Quite deliberately so, because he departed from a hunch (a tacit fore-knowledge)[35] of what the original Greek music must have been like. However, he knew he could only approach it instead of rediscovering its original appearance. His priority was to break out of the expressive limitations of polyphony. In a key chapter of *Personal Knowledge,* "Dwelling In and Breaking Out", Polanyi compared artistic innovations with the chain of upheavals in scientific development. Though mainly taking place in the tacit dimension, he states that "new movements of art include a re-appreciation of their ancestry and a corresponding shift in the valuation of all other artistic achievements of the past." Therefore, Polanyi's definition of the appreciation of art is not verification as in measurable natural sciences but *validation*.[36]

The attribution of value instead of verification to the way the revival of ancient music is appreciated creates a paradoxical layer to Polanyi's statement, which Charles Rosen ironically refers to as the "Shock of the Old."[37] In the Early Music debate described above, ethical questions determined a large part of the discussions. If we classify historical performances as

[32] Pietro de Bardi conte di Vernio — Lettera a G. B. Doni [16 XII 1634] see Solerti, *Le Origini,* pp. 143-145.
[33] Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge*, p.197. Chapter 6. §13 provides the answers to fully understand Polanyi's view on this part of his theory.
[34] The letter of Pietro de Bardi mentioned earlier describes the reaction of Jacopo Peri and Giulio Caccini to adopt the endeavours of Galilei in the new style, "sfuggendo (avoiding) una certa rozzezza (roughness/simplicity) e troppo antichità (too much antiquity)." Solerti, *Le Origini*, p.145.
[35] Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension,* pp. 23,24.
[36] Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge,* p. 201.
[37] Charles Rosen, "The Benefits of Authenticity" appeared earlier as 'The Shock of the Old', in the *New York Review of Books*, 1990.

'new movement of art' the re-appreciation of earlier performances is obvious. They are mostly considered 'outdated' when measured to standards of historical evidence but can still be valued based on other parameters. These aspects that prevail above the historical informed are most of the time related to the tacit knowledge of performers and their traditions. The ethical card was not only drawn by the 20th-century Early Music Movement. The idealism that motivated Galilei's ardent research and experimentation also carried a component of projection.

Pietro de Bardi stressed the support Galilei received from his father, Count Giovanni Bardi, who specialised highly in the same material as his companion. The Count's help was needed and much appreciated as we read in the dedication of Galilei's *Dialogo,* printed in 1581. From that book, we see Galilei's wider context and belief in experiments as a condition for proper research. He had found the right companion in his sponsor because apart from investing financially, Count de Bardi 'toiled for entire nights for such a noble discovery.' (*il quale le notti intere, e con molta sua spesa si affaticò per sì nobile acquisto*). The consequence of choosing that path is described by Pietro de Bardi as an arduous undertaking that was then considered ridiculous.[38] New artistic phenomena have been ridiculed very often, certainly since the early modern times. In this case, it is remarkable that the values of the past were taken as a starting point, and Galilei was determined to go against what he considered the delusions of his day and restore values. In his enthusiasm, he even attributes words to Aristotle that are not found literally in the philosopher's texts:

& parimente Aristotile: dicendo egli, che quella musica la quale non serve al costume dell'animo, è veramente la disprezzarsi.[39]

(…& likewise, Aristotle says that music which does not serve the custom of the soul is really to be despised.)

Galilei was determined to go against the fashions of his days and made a moral appeal to his contemporaries to seek the higher values of their art instead of satisfying the senses with entertaining novelties:

Tra i Musici antichi di pregio, fu sempre grandemente reputata la severità, & la curiosità avvilita; dove per il contrario quelli de nostri tempi, hanno senza rispetto alcuno à guisa degli Epicurei, anteposto à ciascun'altra cosa, la novità per diletto del senso;[40]

(Among the ancient Musicians of merit, seriousness was always greatly esteemed, & curiosity vilified; where, on the contrary, those of our time have, without any respect, like the Epicureans, put novelty before everything else for the sake of delighting the sense;)

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[38] '*Il primo a far sentire il canto in istile rappresentativo: preso animo e aiutato per istrada sì aspra, e stimata quasi cosa ridicolosa.'* (The first who made [people] hear singing in the stile rappresentativo encouraged and helped [by count Bardi] on this road that was so tough and judged as a more or less ridiculous thing). Solerti, *Le Origini,* p.144.

[39] Galilei, *Dialogo*, p. 84. Palisca (*Dialogue,* p.209, fn. 405.) reminds us that such a dogmatic statement was uncharacteristic of Aristotle but that he wrote about the influence of music on the moral character in education. (Aristotle, *Politica* 8[1340b]).

[40] Galilei, *Dialogo,* 84. (translation based on Palisca (*Dialogue*, p.209).

Even though his experiments were embedded in a movement of avant-garde, he still had to stick his neck out with something that initially risked being misunderstood even by his peers. In the history of artistic development, there are many pivotal changes we can point to as moments an artist broke out of an existing structure. Validation was often only possible in the aftermath of the event, and the implications were initially uncertain, as with all appearances of new knowledge.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we see that by playing music from the (remote) past, an infinite quest for more knowledge will be generated after the interiorisation of every discovery. On a large scale, this has been made clear by the Early Music Movement that started in the 1960s. The commitment of that community ended up in a collectively shared 'personal knowledge' raising an increasing awareness that the most wanted knowledge would remain forever tacit because it died with its owners. The positive side of this fact has manifested itself as a quest for a 'lost' ideal that, in a parallactic movement, travels in time with all the searching artists, thus stimulating creativity.

A parallel can be drawn with a similar movement at the end of the 16th century, the Camerata dei Bardi in Florence. Their efforts to develop music drama based on ancient Greek tragedy were guided by Vincenzo Galilei, who had a visionary approach to reviving vocally recited drama. Understanding these efforts along the lines of Michael Polanyi's theoretical model of the probe, or in this case, a collective interpretative framework, we have a clear example of a path to the discovery of new knowledge (in this case, the *stile recitativo*) by dwelling in shared beliefs and explicit theoretical facts of ancient Greek music. Galilei's probe functioned like a telescope,[41] going from more recent authorities like Guido of Arezzo, via Boethius in the Early Middle Ages, to Aristotle, whom he considered the main authority in his search. Indeed, this path would lead to the important discovery of mimesis, a tacit process of learning by imitation, as a guiding principle in creating a vocal style. This would preserve the actor's available tools in representing a dramatic character while singing.

Galilei's theory about imitation in this context is not only endorsed by Michael Polanyi's explanations of the 1950s but also confirmed by neuroscientists like Damasio and Cozolino 70 years later.

Monteverdi, who chose this practical way, as we saw in the letter to Doni quoted above, considered reconstructing Greek music impossible for himself. Nevertheless, he took notice of Galilei's writings, profited after Jacopo Peri and Giulio Caccini from the newly developed stile recitativo, and, according to his colleagues, led it to a higher level of perfection. Comparable steps towards an ideal of merging spoken language and song in twentieth-century opera, like those of Leos Janácek or Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill, can be deducted to originate from a similar process of applying their tacit knowledge.

[41] Thus preceding his son Galileo, who would use a self-constructed telescope to bridge a physical distance, contemplating the universe.

Michael Polanyi

From science to epistemology

Michael Polanyi, (born as Miháli Pollacsek), was born in Budapest on 11 March 1891 and died as a British citizen on 22 February 1976 in Northampton. He was a polymath with expertise in medicine, physical chemistry, economics, political theory, and philosophy. A broad and intensive education from the very start of his life determined Michael Polanyi's multifaceted scientific career. His parents were secular Jews, and after his father's death in 1905, his mother established a salon that was frequented by the intelligentsia and artists of vibrant Budapest.
In the wake of his elder brother Karl (later a famous economist), he became involved with the Galileo Circle, a scientific student community that discussed social, economic, and political issues.
After finishing his medical studies at the University of Budapest, he became more interested in continuing his studies in chemistry and profited from the opportunity to spend a year at the Hochschule in Karlsruhe. His professor there shared some of Polanyi's papers with Albert Einstein, who was very positive about the content. This first contact was followed by a twenty-year correspondence with the famous scientist. While serving in the army during WWI, he finished his first pathbreaking article in thermodynamics during sick leave, published in the *Proceedings of the German Physical Society.* When Polanyi was invited in 1921 to present his theory about the adsorption of gases at a special meeting where Einstein was invited, his unconventional method was heavily attacked[1] for showing a "total disregard for the scientifically established structure of matter."

It was the time that Polanyi's outsider position came to the surface in a confronting way. But he stuck to his conviction and nine years later was proved right. This experience taught the young scientist that he could stand alone outside the scientific community without distrusting or ignoring the discipline.
Two weeks after taking a position in Berlin at the Institute of Fiber Chemistry, he made an important discovery, again outside the routine, delivering a breakthrough in X-ray analysis that became the new method. He spent three years in the institute working on X-rays and crystals[2] before moving on to his real passion, studying reaction kinetics at the Institute of Physical Chemistry. In the 1920s, Berlin was the world centre of scientific avant-garde and knowledge development. Polanyi later described his participation in the weekly Physics Colloquium, having informal discussions surrounded by the brightest physicists, such as Max

[1] Mark T. Mitchell, *Michael Polanyi, the Art of Knowing,* in the series 'Library of Modern Thinkers', (Wilmington Delaware, ISI Books, 2006) p. 6.
[2] Much later, he dedicated a small chapter to crystals, *Crystallography,* in his book *Personal Knowledge* of 1958, clearly based on his experiences of those years in Berlin. PK, *Order,* p. 43-48.

Planck, Albert Einstein, Erwin Schrödinger, Max von Laue, Otto Hahn and Lise Meitner, as the most glorious intellectual memory of his life.[3]

These discussions were in stark contrast to the threat of repression when the Nazis came to power in the new decade. Initially hesitating to leave Germany, he later gratefully accepted an offer from the University of Manchester to take a Chair of Physical Chemistry.
Just before and during the years of war, Polanyi resisted[4] the tendencies to conflate pure science and the applied sciences, with the Soviet Union as a negative example, and made a plea in Britain to not follow that track and let science follow the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake.

In 1944, he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society and a year later, he gave his Riddle Lectures at the University of Durham. In these lectures, he chose a more philosophical angle. He initiated some of the ideas that would later grow into a comprehensive new theory about knowledge by including implicit components as its fundament.

Manchester University created a separate position to make sure Polanyi would not move to the USA, where there existed a substantial interest in the original scientist. Avoiding discussions with the Philosophy department, they offered him a Chair of Social Studies to further develop his theories. Some colleagues saw with dismay how he moved away from science to dedicate himself entirely to the epistemological adventure. The philosopher Isaiah Berlin was very negative about this step:"... here is a great scientist giving up the Nobel to write mediocre works of philosophy."[5]
But Polanyi was already convinced that he had found his true vocation and that his laboratory years were essential as a fundament: "...an experience in science is by far the most important basic ground for developing philosophic ideas."[6]

Theories of an outsider

Polanyi entered the discipline of philosophy as an outsider, and again, this was in many ways an advantage as in his previous multidisciplinary excursions. However, he also felt a lack of overview when preparing his Gifford Lectures for 1951/52 in Aberdeen, where the blueprint of his theory about tacit knowledge was exposed for the first time. In 1950, he met the philosopher Marjorie Glicksman Grene in Chicago, who (in Polanyi's acknowledgements)[7] "seemed to have guessed my whole purpose, and ever since she has never ceased to help its pursuit." So, Grene not only provided him with a crash course in philosophy, but she also

[3] Mitchell, *Michael Polanyi,* p. 17.
[4] In 1940, Polanyi published his collected essays about economics and freedom of inquiry in *Contempt of Freedom.*
[5] Mitchell, *Michael Polanyi*, p. 17.
[6] *Idem.*
[7] "Setting aside her own work as a philosopher, she has devoted herself for years to the service of the present enquiry." Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge, London,* University of Chicago Press, 1958. p. IX

remained his critical sparring partner while writing his magnum opus, *Personal Knowledge, Towards a post-critical Philosophy.* Polanyi must have owed a large part of the referential solidity and authority in the field to this assistance, which he acknowledges on the first page of the book.

The ideas and determination of the almost ten-year writing project were completely Polanyi's. His main purpose was to liberate the modern world from its belief in objectivism and reintroduce, for the first time since the teachings of church father Augustine had lost their influence, a post-critical alternative based on belief, commitment, intuition, guessing, and imagination.[8]

Polanyi had grown gradually to this new conviction. Looking at Polanyi's publications until the 1950s, outside the field of science, we can conclude that he had followed and commented with intelligent social commitment on political and economic processes for decades. On top of that, as a European Jew, he knew too well the dark side of technological progress that was detached from humanistic embeddings.

He knew the world of scientific discoveries from the inside and had seen the fallacy of positivist belief in detached observations and neutral descriptions if scientific breakthroughs were made. While Albert Einstein's discovery of relativity was regarded as an illustration of such a positivistic conception of science in his day, Polanyi considered it the opposite, which he underpinned in chapter 1.3 of *Personal Knowledge*, 'Relativity'.[9]
He opposed objectivism by establishing a theory based on a fiduciary framework of embedded beliefs within a like-minded community. Conditional is that these beliefs are continuously reconsidered during exploration and exegesis.

The findings of Gestalt psychology inspired the first steps in developing a new view of knowledge. Though Polanyi stresses the differences in his writings between the Gestalt theory[10] and his own approach, he admits that this was an essential opening to his concepts of how knowledge is experienced. An important lead was the concept of the Gestalt theory, which is akin to the theory Polanyi developed later: the process of 'integrating our awareness of particulars without being able to identify these particulars.'
Max Wertheimer, the founder of the Gestalt theory, served as a research psychologist during the First World War in Berlin, close to Einstein's house. Wertheimer became friends with the scientist and profited from learning more about the Gestalt-like method Einstein applied when he developed his theory of relativity. It is fascinating to see how several roots of the

[8] Polanyi saw a fundamental difference between the "supreme immediate knowledge, called intuition," as articulated by Leibniz, Spinoza or Husserl and the "discovery by steps" in a "work-a-day skill of scientific guessing." Michael Polanyi, *Knowing and Being, essays by Michael Polanyi.* ed. Marjorie Grene (London, Chicago University Press, 1969) pp. 143,144.
[9] Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge,* pp. 9-15.
[10] "Perception, on which Gestalt Psychology centered its attention, now appears as the most impoverished form of tacit knowing.' Michael Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension,* (London, University of Chicago Press, 1966) p.7.

theory of tacit knowledge dated from the beginning of the century, with Berlin as a meeting point.

Though Polanyi did not take part in any philosophical discourse and was eagerly catching up after WOII to get an understanding of the discipline, his ideas were not growing in a vacuum either. Gilbert Ryle was a British philosopher who worked out a similar concept that resisted Cartesian dualism based on the separation of body and mind. Ryle's focus on the difference between 'knowing how' and 'knowing that' (the German *Können* and *Wissen*) were considered of the same structure by Polanyi, who concluded, however, that both types were always present in the total process of knowing.
What separated Polanyi from most of his contemporary scientists and thinkers was his conviction that modern mechanistic objectivism had to be replaced by a restored trust in belief. Or as he puts it: 'All knowing depends on a fiduciary framework.' He deliberately conceived a theory beyond the critical tradition as inherited from Kant, based on the *Confessions* of Augustine; *nisi crederitis non intelligetis, '*you will not understand, unless you believe.'

Marjorie Grene later summarised this step they both made as "a kind of lay Augustinianism in which we recognize that our reasoning always rests on an attempt to clarify and to improve, something we already believe, but believe, of course, in such a way that we recognize that we might be mistaken."[11]
Consequently, Grene and Polanyi shared the view that the modernist concept of truth was something that we can only know and prove, leaving behind all we know but cannot prove, excluding matters of beauty, morality, justice etc.
It is precisely in this latter area that Polanyi wanted to offer an alternative to objectivism. The recent war destructions influenced his conviction that truth claims of scientism had moral and political repercussions. The philosopher Eric Voegelin, also a refugee for the Nazis, drew a similar conclusion. "Scientism seeks to reduce all knowledge to what can be empirically verified. Historically, the murder of God is not followed by the superhuman but by the murder of man."

It is significant that, somehow, after both world wars Polanyi endured, he oriented his own existence to the Christian faith. In 1919, he converted to Catholicism, as he stated, inspired by reading Dostoyevsky's *Grand Inquisitor* and Tolstoy's *Confession.*
In 1947, he was invited to participate in the discussion group *The Moot,* around the Scottish missionary and ecumenical pioneer J.A. Oldham. He filled the void after the untimely death of his compatriot, the sociologist Karl Mannheim, with whom he had been a member of the Galileo Circle. (see above). Mannheim was an important founder of the sociology of knowledge, and since his dissertation, 'Structural Analysis of Epistemology', he had kept an

[11] Quoted in Phil Mullins, "In memoriam Marjorie Grene", in *Tradition and Discovery, The Polanyi Society Periodical,* 36,1 p. 60.

interest in researching the interconnection of the disciplines. The Moot was a mixture of renowned scholars, clergy and artists (like T.S. Eliot); their agenda included the position of Christianity in the post-war social restoration. Polanyi did not share himself automatically in the category of Catholics because his views were in many ways leaning towards Protestantism or independently philosophical, but for that reason even more appreciated by Oldham.

After accepting the Chair of Social Studies from the University of Manchester for this purpose, he dedicated most of his time to elaborating his theory of tacit knowing, which included an important role for faith or trust.
As he summarises in his chapter *The Justification of Personal Knowledge*, the invitation to dogmatism was a 'corollary to the greatly increased critical powers of man.'

> These [critical powers] have endowed our mind with a capacity for self-transcendence, of which we can never again divest ourselves. We have plucked from the Tree a second apple which has forever imperilled our knowledge of Good and Evil, and we must learn to know these qualities henceforth in the blinding light of our new analytical powers. Humanity has been deprived a second time of its innocence and driven out of another garden, which was, at any rate, a Fool's Paradise.
> Innocently, we had trusted that we could be relieved of all personal responsibility for our beliefs by objective criteria of validity - and our own critical powers have shattered this hope.
> Struck by our sudden nakedness, we may try to brazen it out by flaunting it in a profession of nihilism. But modern man's immorality is unstable. Presently, his moral passions reassert themselves in objectivist disguise, and the scientific Minotaur is born.[12]

His description of modern science's failure to maintain high moral standards is relevant even today. The alternative he suggested with meticulous substantiation in his magnum opus, *Personal Knowledge,* is the proposition to 'restore to us once more the power for the deliberate holding of unproven beliefs.'

Throughout his life, Polanyi remained tacit about his private religious convictions in the circles of philosophers because, like Marjorie Grene, many were hostile to religion.
Two years after the appearance of *Personal Knowledge* (1958), the dedicated consultant and sparring partner Grene discovered Maurice Merleau Ponty's work, which was a revelation for her. She saw the 1945 publication of *Phénoménologie de la perception* as a complementary enrichment to Polanyi's theories to form her own synthesis of both in *The Knower and the Known* (1966). In his article "The Structure of Consciousness,"[13] Polanyi admitted that parts of Merleau Ponty's theory had been foreshadowing his own, such as the experience of the body as an existential act, not based on observation or thought. However, despite his agreement with profound observations of that theory about the consequences of bodily perceptions, he saw his own ideas going a step further in addressing the Cartesian dilemma (supposed separation of body and mind) by 'acknowledging two mutually exclusive

[12] Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge,* p. 268.
[13] in: Polanyi, *Knowing and Being,* p.223.

ways of being aware of our body', which was fundamental developing his theory about tacit knowledge.

Polanyi's Tacit Dimension

Michael Polanyi baptised the two mutually excluding ways of awareness **focal** and **subsidiary** awareness. When we perceive the world from the proximity of our body, we either consciously pay attention to something or subconsciously register particular elements that we cannot report but that all contribute to perceiving a whole.

If, for example, you were swindled by a person who spoke intensely to you, the focus of your attention was most probably all the time on the meaning of the words. If later the police ask you to identify that person out of hundreds of pictures, you will see immediately which is the right one. But you cannot tell how you recognise the person because the particulars of the face (and maybe at a later confrontation voice as well) have not consciously entered your mind. Subsidiary awareness played a crucial role in getting the result. Polanyi speaks of subsception to subliminal stimuli, a process we cannot control.[14] The process as a whole is what Polanyi called "Tacit knowing."

We can know more than we can tell.

These observations led Polanyi to a conclusion about the essence of human learning and discovery. As mentioned above, he saw a kinship with the Gestalt theory, but he considered the role of perception in that theory primordial.
The essential difference with his theory is that subsidiary awareness is not random in its functioning but, as he formulated it, has a bearing on the result. An active shaping of experience is taking place in the pursuit of knowledge, and this shaping or integrating is, according to Polanyi, the tacit power by which all knowledge is discovered and held to be true.[15]
In the theory of tacit knowing, there is always a direction, hence the use of the verb. If we consider a skill (knowing how to) as knowledge, we enter the field of practitioners. We rely 'on our awareness of a combination of muscular acts to attend to the performance of a skill.[....] attending *from* these elementary movements *to* the achievement of their joint purpose.'[16] In this functional structure of tacit knowing, we are usually unable to specify the elementary acts. Certainly, if we consider higher crafts, such as surgery or playing a musical instrument. The complexity of the elementary movements presupposes, in those cases, a complete reliance on automatism. In this context, Polanyi defines reliance as a personal commitment involved in all acts of intelligence by which we integrate some things

[14] Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension,* p. 14.
[15] *Idem.* p. 6.
[16] *Idem,* p. 10

subsidiarily to the centre of our focal attention.[17]
The so-called phenomenal structure of tacit knowing means an awareness of the proximal term (such as the muscular acts mentioned earlier) from which we are attending the appearance of a second term. The combined working of both structures reveals what we call *meaning*. Even though we know the meaning of something, it is possible that we are not able to specify its particulars. There is a distance between both that we can bridge with the help of a tool.[18] Using the tool transposes meaningless (at least unspecifiable) feelings into meaningful ones, which are then at some distance from the original feelings. This is the semantic aspect of tacit knowing.

Here, Polanyi gets to the core of his theory: "All meaning tends to be displaced *away from ourselves*, and that is, in fact, my justification for using the terms 'proximal' and 'distal' to describe the first and second terms of tacit knowing."[19] The terminology was borrowed from the anatomy and structure description of plants, meaning closer or more distant from the body axis or trunk. But in this case, the orientation in perception even goes from indefinite processes inside the body to attending qualities from things outside. By using a probe or any other sentient extension of our body, we can incorporate the thing outside as if it is interior (or as if our body extends outwards) and dwell in it. This interiorisation is a learning process, a practice, that creates new tacit particulars on the proximal side as a reference.
If we focus on the particulars, separating them from their relation and subsidiary role, we destroy our understanding of the whole.[20] That process is, however, reversible, and we can interiorise the isolated particulars once more through concentration on the entity. This is a common process in learning a piece of music, and after isolating some technical details, we pay full attention to the 'music' as an undividable whole. This does not bring back the spontaneous original meaning we experienced when we were sight-reading. Explicit re-integration does not replace the tacit counterpart.

At this point, it is interesting to read what Polanyi remarked about rules and skills in chapter 4 of *Personal Knowledge*:

- The aim of a skilful performance is achieved by the observance of a set of rules which are [during the performance, JB] not known as such to the person following them.
- Rules of an art can be useful but they do not determine the practice of an art. They are maxims which can serve as a guide to an art only if they can be integrated into the practical knowledge of the art. They can not replace this knowledge.[21]
- Efforts to distil the rules out of art will not bring art into an alternative shape.[22]

[17] Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge,* p.61.
[18] see an example in the chapter Episteme https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/1688046/2348734#tool-2359438
[19] Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension*, p. 13.
[20] This is why Monteverdi corrected Artusi about highlighting the 'particelle' in his madrigals.
[21] This is the core of the Monteverdi-Artusi conflict.
[22] This remark is particularly relevant for those who try to restore an art by following its rules without taking into account what the position of tacit knowledge was in the entity of the work.

Rules are, of course, necessary if we want to mark the boundaries that determine form in any field of study. However, that attitude approaches the world by its tendency to give priority to the tangible and visible elements. It does not clarify the entity of relations. It was Polanyi's conviction that not by looking at things but by dwelling in them, we understand their joint meaning. It is illustrated by the way a painter looks at his or her subject.[23] To rely on a theory for understanding nature is to interiorise it.[24] It could be a definition of Monteverdi's conclusion after going the path of nature when discovering how imitation works in music drama.[25] Or, as Polanyi states: "...its true knowledge lies in our ability to use it."

Just like Monteverdi, Polanyi also stumbled on a problem that Plato addressed in relation to discovery. He quotes the paradox of the *Meno: '..*to search for a solution of a problem is an absurdity; for either you know what you are looking for and then there is no problem; or you do not know what you are looking for, and then you cannot expect to find something.'[26]

Polanyi introduced a third way of looking at this nod. It is not that we don't know what we are looking for, but we are incapable of articulating it. He formulated the intimation that many searchers have at the beginning of a research process and called this a *hunch*, an idea based on feeling for which there is no proof.

He quotes Einstein,[27] who spoke of '*ein intuitives Heranfühlen an die Tatsache*.' Sensing the presence of a hidden reality to which undefined clues are pointing. By committing oneself to such a conviction, one takes responsibility for pursuing this hidden truth. Holding that position implies a temporarily solitary existence.

This isolation counts mostly for those in the avant-garde of scientific or artistic discovery. A large part of the arts and sciences are learned tacitly, preceded practically by apprenticeship with a master, and embedded in tradition. Tradition presupposes the existence of a community that holds its achievements high as the fruits of collective personal knowledge.

[23] See the description of Rembrandt's struggle at page 138
[24] Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension,* p. 17.
[25] See p. 135 about "La via naturale all imitatione."
[26] Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension,* p. 22.
[27] Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge,* p. 150.

The Narrative

As in all history, Claudio Monteverdi comes down to us as a narrative based on documents containing facts, other artefacts and - in his case - encoded artistic output (scores).
This narrative is still alive and constantly rejuvenated after over four hundred years. It has literally been revived in the past hundred and twenty years since exponentially increasing numbers of new performances of his works started to take place.
Parallel to this resounding past (or slightly anticipating it) was the gradual scientific emancipation of musicological activities. These activities had their roots in the work of music theorists and chroniclers, dating back to Monteverdi's days. Below is a condensed overview of this historical positioning of Monteverdi up to the threshold of the 20th century.
Remarkably, every period has its image of the composer Monteverdi. Sometimes, certain aspects of those versions last a bit longer, like the idea that he was the avant-garde inventor of new music and a new style at the beginning of the 17th century. This idea dominated the historiography in the first half of the 20th century. In the 18th century, however, the Monteverdi-Artusi controversy, surviving primarily in print, caused a misinterpretation of Monteverdi's innovative and artistic qualities by questioning his craftmanship. In the 19th century, a lot of confusion was caused by inaccuracy in the handling of historical facts and data. Although more of this factual information became available, historians filled up the gaps with their imagination.
But in the end, all these variations in storytelling add to an overall concept of the art of a master, which moves performers, audiences and creators.

Two portraits

Nothing evokes our idea of a dead composer's persona stronger than a good portrait. In Monteverdi's case, we deal with two versions of one portrait. The difference in reception of these two versions is significant in itself.

The copy (see plate on the bottom) of a portrait by Bernardo Strozzi (1581 -1644) (*Il Cappuccino*) is now in the Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum. The original is in the director's room of the Wiener Singverein[1] and was painted in Venice in the early 1630s.

Almost exclusively, only the copy is reproduced in various publications to illustrate the composer. This is how the person Claudio Monteverdi has been known to the world since the second half of the last century.

This is particularly noteworthy because striking details in the original painting are not found in the copy, which gives the impression of a 'photoshopped' image. There are apparent differences in the shape of the head, the eyes, the beard, the haircut, the nose, and the ear and the skin colour. Overall, the impression is that the portrait was painted with a living model, and the copy was probably created posthumously after the original Strozzi painting. Indeed, as a survivor of the plague that had just killed 46.000 people in Venice, it was special to be a living model. He had witnessed Alessandro Striggio (the *Orfeo* librettist) dying from the disease when this dear friend came to Venice with a diplomatic mission from Mantua. After the disaster had passed, Monteverdi entered the service of the church and became a priest, which we also notice from his clothes on the painting.

[1] https://www.a-wgm.at/ausstellungen/musik-venedig

Illustrations on the previous page:

Bernardo Strozzi, (1581-1644), *Portrait of Claudio Monteverdi*, Vienna. Collection Musikverein, Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Wien.

Anonymous, (attrib. Bernardo Strozzi), *Portrait of Claudio Monteverdi*, Tiroler Landesmuseum, Innsbruck.

Although questions of copyright have possibly played a role in the fate of Monteverdi's image (trimmed rather than authentic), it is nevertheless striking that now the history of the two paintings is known, this situation has not been altered. Since Paolo Fabbri explained the historical details of both portraits in his 1985 monography, very little attention has been paid to these facts as if they were of little value. Even those who seriously try approaching Monteverdi's presumed original sound ignore the visual equivalent and accept a substitute for the real man.

Monteverdi, as seen by his contemporaries

The two versions of the portrait illustrate what happens when second-hand knowledge and information corrupt the original. Just like this happens in painting, so it also occurs in written testimonies. Many examples of reflections in contemporary reports or comments created Monteverdi's historical image, unadjusted by his personal writings. Only twice was the latter undeniable because he addressed a general audience directly in print, as will be illustrated later.
Though Monteverdi was already frequently admired as 'il divino Claudio' during his lifetime, severe criticism was manifested publicly by Artusi in print or uttered privately, as Doni did in his correspondence to Mersenne. Giulio Cesare Monteverdi offered the audience a peek into the life and mindset of his brother through his explanation of Claudio's public letter in the fifth madrigal book. The impressions of Claudio's character sketched in this public defence align very well with those from the 127 extant letters by Claudio himself.

Artusi[2]

In 1605, Claudio Monteverdi published his fifth book of madrigals, dedicated to his patron, Vincenzo Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua. In the dedication, he refers to performances of these madrigals in the duke's chambers, which led to Monteverdi's appointment as *maestro della musica.* Now printed, they were, as he continues, granted the protection of such a noble Prince that the madrigals "would lead an eternal life to the shame of those who had been seeking to bring death to the work of others."

This last remark was pointing to the Bolognese music theorist and canon Giovanni Maria Artusi, who had published a treatise in 1600 and a sequel in 1603 entitled *L'Artusi overo Delle imperfettioni della moderna musica.*[3] In this treatise, madrigals by Monteverdi were taken - without naming the author - as examples of breaking rules of counterpoint and good taste in the new fashion of composition.

[2] For details, see the chapter *Dichiaratione*, pp. 68-80.
[3] Giovanni Maria Artusi, *L'Artusi overo Delle imperfettioni della moderna musica.* (Venice, Giacomo Vincenti, 1600), and *Seconda parte dell'Artusi overo Delle imperfettioni della moderna musica,*(Venice, Giacomo Vincenti, 1603).

Monteverdi waited five years before publicly replying to Artusi's allegations and took the publication of his fifth book as an opportunity to make a statement. This, along with his musical output, would ensure him a long-lasting reputation in music history as the great musical innovator of the 17th century. The statement was twofold because he opened[4] this fifth book with the madrigal *Cruda Amarilli,* the most heavily attacked by Artusi, followed by the madrigals *O Mirtillo*, *Era l'anima mia* and *Ecco Silvio.* Monteverdi embraced the works in his book by adding to the assertive dedication as a postface, the 'letter to the studious readers', that would initiate an exegesis of this theoretical conflict, which lasts until the present day.

The controversy between Artusi and Monteverdi became a topos in the history of Western music, which was right from the start - as we will see later on - the main subject in many chronicles describing Monteverdi's position. From the year 1609 on, when Adriano Banchieri referred to it, the polemic calmed down, but following the writings of other contemporaries of the composer, it was kept alive in the work of music historians in the centuries to follow.

It is striking that the narrative of Monteverdi as a pivotal innovator at the turn of the century was - probably unintentionally - initiated by himself. Not in the least by his claiming exclusivity of the term *seconda prattica,* which oddly had first appeared in Artusi's sequel of 1603 in a letter by Monteverdi's defender, L'Ottuso.[5] Until now, this defender's identity has not been convincingly revealed, but it would add a very important perspective to the polemic.

The difficulty is that Ottuso's writing style, despite his apparent deep knowledge of the innovations by the new composers as well as the *prima practica*, excludes the most obvious candidates, one of the Monteverdi brothers.[6] The theorist and Artusi-opponent Ercole Bottrigari referred to l'Ottuso as a real person he knew and for that reason is excluded by Palisca as well. The assumption that Artusi would have made up the defender L'Ottuso himself, as Palisca suggests, lacks substantial evidence.

Monteverdi could have left the defence against all allegations against his music, which would triumph in numerous reprints (Quarto libro, 1603, 8 x and Quinto libro, 1605, 9x). From the beginning, colleagues internationally acclaimed the works. But after five years, he decided it was time for a reaction, as described earlier. So, he addressed his thoughts to the 'studious readers', the intelligentsia of learned musicians and music theorists. They used to be spoken to directly in print, and a letter or preface "Ai lettori" can be found in numerous treatises. However, most such prefaces contained detailed information about performance practice and theoretical issues. This 'message to the readers' was more of a pamphlet and was reprinted only twice, in 1606 and 1608.

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[4] Seth Coluzzi pointed out that the order of madrigals was the same as Artusi had used them to illustrate his attacks. Only the second madrigal in that line, *Anima mia, perdona* had already been published in the 4th book. (1603). Seth Coluzzi, 'Licks, polemics, and the viola bastarda: unity and defiance in Monteverdi's Fifth Book', *Early Music*, 47/3, (Autumn 2019), p.338.

[5] The term *seconda prattica* was used in a casual way by L'Ottuso academico, an alias for an unidentified person defending Monteverdi in the *Seconda parte dell'Artusi*, quoted in Claudio Palisca, "The Artusi–Monteverdi Controversy." *The New Monteverdi Companion*, (Arnold, Denis, and Nigel Fortune, eds.), (London: Faber & Faber, 1985), p.129ff.

[6] Palisca points also to the opening of the 1605 'lettera' where Monteverdi states he had not reacted before to Artusi's allegations, which would have been odd if he had done so as l'Ottuso. Palisca, op.cit.p. 136.

Dichiaratione della lettera.
The letter by Claudio Monteverdi might have had little impact (certainly not for posterity) if there had not been a follow-up that clarified the 'telegram' statements made in this letter. His brother Giulio Cesare became the spokesman in a following publication two years later, in the summer of 1607. As a postface to the first edition of Claudio's *Scherzi musicali*, he wrote a clarification of his brother's letter to the studious readers (*dichiaratione della lettera*).

For centuries to come, the publications of Artusi in 1600 and 1603 and the defence of the Monteverdi brothers in 1605 and 1607 were the main ingredients for music historians and chroniclers' portrayal and characterisation of Claudio Monteverdi's modernity in his time.

These music historians often copied each other, and after some time, an identity emerged that was heavily coloured by the imagination of the writers.

Banchieri
Already in 1609, Adriano Banchieri, composer, theorist and also a clergyman, embraced in his *Conclusioni nel suono del Organo* the modern practices of composers 'in the guise of a perfect orator.' In this constellation, he put Monteverdi on top of all (p. 60) saying

'non debbo lasciare in far nominanza, del soavissimo componitore di Musiche Claudio Monteverde capo in Musiche appresso il Serenissimo Sig. D. Vincenzo Gonzaghi Duca di Mantova (ben che noto il suo valore universalmente à professori) in materia di moderno componere, poi che li suoi artefiziosi sentimenti in vero sono degni d'intera commendatione, scoprendosi in essi ogni affetuosa parte di perfetta oratione, industremente spiegati, & imitati d'armonia equivalente..'.[7]

"I must not fail to name the most 'suave' composer of music, Claudio Monteverde, head of the music of the Most Serene Lord Don Vincenzo Gonzaga Duke of Mantua (although his worth is known universally to professors of music), in matters of modern composition, for his artful sentiments are truly worthy of total commendation, uncovering therein every affective part of perfect oration industriously laid out and imitated by equivalent harmony."

Banchieri recognises the merits of theorists and composers such as Zarlino and Artusi, but they "have failed to demonstrate in practice how to align the words by imitating the *affetti*, in whatever genre, whether in Latin or vernacular."[8] The affections Banchieri is pointing to are sorrow, passions, sighs, weeping, laughter, errors, questioning, etc.

Their counterpoint is very strict (*osservatissime*), resulting, as he says, in the sweetest sounds, but that has little to do with the text.

In 1609, two years after the defence of Giulio Cesare, this endorsement for Claudio Monteverdi also appeared in print, albeit in a book about organs. It was the first of its kind in a long series of reflections of a historical nature, enlarging the effect of the Artusi-

[7] Paolo Fabbri, *Monteverdi*, Trans. Tim Carter. (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1994), p.106.
[8] my translation.

Monteverdi controversy. Five years later, Banchieri pcublished his *Cartella musicale,*[9] where he clarified once more that for the *contrapunto osservato,* many rules existed. However, for the modern *contrapunto commune* (improvised), there were no rules, nor could they be made. Vincenzo Galilei already drew this conclusion in 1591[10]. In a way, Banchieri, being the first reporter of the controversy, saw most likely that the origin of this conflict was the incompatibility of a theorist's approach towards the tacit know-how of a skilled practitioner.

Adriano Banchieri was obviously in favour of adventurous harmonic progressions by the way he described in the *Cartella* an experience of listening to improvised counterpoint (*contrapunto alla mente sopra il basso)*, which, as a result, "with certain observations between them made a delicious hearing."[11]

Banchieri's admiration was not limited to theoretical issues. His appreciation of Monteverdi's music was shown in full proportion when he took him as a model for his Accademia dei Floridi, which he founded in 1615, and consequently invited him on 13 June 1620 to the celebration of the feast of St. Anthony in the San Michele in Bosco near Bologna. Later, in the *Lettere armoniche* of 1628, Banchieri brings back to the readers and Monteverdi's memory that music was played and speeches were held in his honour.[12]

Huygens

Eleven days later, after Monteverdi returned from Bologna to Venice, his vespers on the feast of St. John the Baptist were witnessed by the young Dutch composer and diplomat Constantijn Huygens.[13] The Dutchman wrote about it in his journal with superlative praise, offering us now a little peek into the local performing forces of those days.

Le 24e, qui fut la feste Saint Jean Baptiste, on me mena au vespres à l'eglise Saint Jean et Lucie[14], où j'entendis la plus accomplie musique, que je fay estat d'ouïr en ma vie. Le tant renommé Claudio di Monteverde, maistre de la chappelle à Saint Marc, qui en estoit autheur, la dirigea et modera aussi cette fois, accompagné de 4 tiorbes, 2 cornets, 2 fangotti (sic), 2 violins, une viole basse de monstrueuse grandeur, les orgues et autres instruments, qui furent touchez et maniez au parangon les uns des autres, outre 10 ou 12 voix, qui de ravissement me mirent hors de moy.

"It was the most perfect music I have ever had the pleasure of hearing in my life. The composer of the piece, the widely renowned Claudio Monteverdi, maestro di cappella of San Marco, was also the conductor of this performance, played by four theorbo's, two cornetto's, two bassoons, two violins, a bass viol of gigantic proportions, the organs and other instruments, one played even more beautifully than the other. Furthermore, there were 10 or 12 voices, which put me beyond myself with delight."

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[9] Adriano Banchieri, *Cartella musicale nel canto figurale fermo & contrapunto,* (Venice, Vincenti, 1614), p.230.
[10] See Palisca, "The Artusi–Monteverdi Controversy," p.156, n84.
[11] "…con certe osservationi tra di loro conferite rendono un udito gustosissimo…."
[12] Adriano Banchieri, *Lettere Armoniche,* (Bologna, Mascheroni, 1628), p.141-142.
[13] Constantijn Huygens, *Journal of a journey*, 24 June 1620; for the original text see https://www.dbnl.org/tekst/_bij005189401_01/_bij005189401_01_0006.php#054
[14] Should be San Giovanni Elemosinario. See Fabbri/Carter, *Monteverdi*, p.176.

Doni

An interesting second round for Monteverdi to influence his position in music history by writing about himself is a correspondence with Giovanni Battista Doni, who had been seeking contact with him for his treatise[15] dealing with the development of the new style at the beginning of the century. It is significant that the composer proactively approached the chronicler in this case, after hearing that Doni was interested in contacting him as a major oral witness of the period he was describing. From this exchange of information between the two men, only two letters by Monteverdi survived. The angle from Doni is represented in other letters and his treatise.

Of the two letters of Monteverdi to Giovanni Battista Doni that are preserved, the first letter, dated 22 October 1633, discusses after thirty years his struggle with Artusi. He avoids the name and just mentions the cleric as 'a certain theorist' who pretended that in his madrigals, Monteverdi had done some exercises in counterpoint as if it was 'solfege for children who are beginning to learn note against note.' What made it worse is that this insult had been published in print (*la causa fu perche si piglio per gusto di far contro purre in istampa ad un mio madrigal cioe in alcuni passi armonici soi fondato sopra alle ragioni di prima pratica cioe sopra alle regole ordinarie*).[16] The fact that these allegations appeared in print put much extra weight on the attack. Also, Ercole Bottrigari, another target for Artusi, reminded in his defence, the *Aletelogia* (which remained only a manuscript), the pompous gesture of being criticised in a printed publication.[17] He writes: "On what authority does he think he has to play the publics censor?"

Concerning publishing, Monteverdi admits in his letter to Doni that he feels obliged and is still working on the treatise he promised in his letter of 1605 to debunk all the allegations of his opponent, be it that he has changed the title from *Seconda pratica ouero perfettione della moderna musica* in *Melodia overo seconda prattica musicale*. Again, claiming the *seconda prattica* as his territory. As explained by his brother, Monteverdi intended with the term *seconda prattica* the priority of text (indicated as *oratione*) within the musical composition.

Doni has understood from the son of Giovanni Bardi (Camerata Fiorentina), Piero de' Bardi that the composers of the circle, with the help of poets Iacopo Corsi and Ottavio Rinuccini came to a point in the new style that could hardly be done better. He says Monteverdi also profited greatly from this cooperation even though Rinuccini did not know/read music.

"*e parimente grandissimo aiuto ricevé il Monteverde dal Rinuccini nell'Arianna, ancorché non sapesse di Musica (supplendo a ciò col suo giudizio finissimo, e con l'orecchia esattissima, che possedeva; come anco si può conoscere dalla qualità, e testura delle sue poesie*)…"

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[15] Giovanni Battista Doni, *Trattato della musica scenica* (1633-35), Pdf (Roma, Neoclassica, 2018), p. 54, p.124 and p.181, Fabbri p.299 n30.

[16] Letter No. 124, Annonciade Russo, and Jean-Philippe Navarre, *Monteverdi, Correspondance, préfaces et épîtres dédicatoires,* (Sprimont, Mardaga, 2001), p.214. Dennis Stevens, *The Letters of Claudio Monteverdi,* (London, Faber, 1980), p.410 translates: "The reason for this was that he had been pleased to criticise (in print!) one of my madrigals, as regards certain of its harmonic progressions on the basis of tenets of the First Practice."

[17] Bottrigari, 1604, *Aletelogia di Leonardo Gallucio à benigni e sinceri lettori.* p.72. (https://www.yumpu.com/it/document/read/29866269/bottrigari-ercole-title-aletelogia-di-leonardo-gallucio-ai-benigni-e-)

('and likewise, Monteverdi received a great deal of help from Rinuccini in *Arianna,* even though he was not into music (making up for this with his very refined judgement and the exact ear he possessed, as can also be seen from the quality and texture of his poems)...'.[18]

Doni goes on to state that the three composers of the new style Peri, Caccini and Monteverdi owed so much to the lessons of the poets (*instruendogli di continuo di pensieri eccellenti, e dottrina esquisita*) and that Corsi and Rinuccini were the real architects of the *Musica scenica*.

However, regarding the more technical details about the musical innovations the chronicler cannot ignore Monteverdi's role. Doni introduces his analysis of the *Lamento d'Arianna* by saying that for the sake of variation in the new style, he recommends the judgement of Monteverdi, who 'leaving aside these superstitious rules [about Modi and Tuoni] the composer knew perfectly well how to vary with diversity the cadences of his *Arianna.*' (..which means wandering through different modes or *tuoni*).[19]
Nevertheless, after writing this recommendation in his treatises, less respect was shown for the intellectual status of the composer. The reason might be a personal one for the omission by Monteverdi to thank the author for receiving a copy of Doni's book, nor giving any feedback on its content.

Giovanni Battista Doni, 7 July 1638 letter to Marin Mersenne[20]; *"…Pour Cl. Monteverde il n'est pas homme de grandes lettres, non plus que les autres musiciens d'ajourhuy, mais il excelle à faire des melodies pathetiques, merci de la longue pratique qu'il a eu à Florence de ces beaux esprits des Academies, mesme du sieur Rinuccini […] encore qu'il n'entendist rien en la musique contribua plus que Monteverde à la beauté de ceste Complainte d'Ariadne composee par lui."*

(As for Claudio Monteverdi, he is not a scholarly man, not more than other musicians these days, but is excellent in making moving melodies, thanks to the long practice he had in Florence from these bright minds of the Academies, even mr. Rinuccini [...] who, despite he was not trained in music, contributed more than Monteverdi to the beauty of this Plaint of Ariadne, composed by him.")

Again, Doni, who was not a composer himself, was trying to downplay Monteverdi's importance in his path-breaking lamento. In terms of setting a text to music, this work goes much further than just wondering through different modes for colouring the emotional states of the protagonist.

Doni depicted in his letter Monteverdi as limited in his literary training. His presumption that he owed the quality of his work to his long practice in Florence and the elevated spirits of the academies there was, of course, his own invention. The idea that Rinuccini contributed more to the beauty of the lamento than the composer was echoed later by other writers.
As Massimo Ossi[21] observed, there is no reference whatsoever to Monteverdi having a "long practice in Florence with the lofty spirits of the Academy." This is the first striking example

[18] my translation
[19] Doni, *Trattato*, p.16.
[20] Fabbri, *Monteverdi*, p.293.
[21] Ossi, Massimo. *Divining the Oracle: Monteverdi's Seconda Prattica*. (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2003) p. 191.

of a chronicler inventing biographical details and thus creating confusion about Monteverdi's life for posterity.

Ban

Even more arrogant than Doni's were the comments of the Dutch priest and theorist Ioan Albert Ban from Haarlem, who dedicated a treatise of 1642 to Constantijn Huygens. First he praises Monteverdi as the composer who achieved more than anyone else. But then he did not hesitate to position himself like Artusi as a school teacher with a patronising conclusion: "..hadde hy den kracht der geluyden, te weeten stemtrappen ende stem-sprongen mede zoo doorgront, hy zoude veel veerder gekomen ende wonderlyke dingen gedaen hebben."[22]

"...would he have understood equally well the power of sounds, that is in voice leading and jumps, he would have come much further and done even more marvellous things."

Ban was not a musician, and, to my knowledge, no musician ever criticised Monteverdi in such a way. As we shall see, this is typical for the theorists and music historians, and it is more likely that Ban's remark was inspired by the assumed deficiencies of Monteverdi as printed by Artusi.

Certainly, his contact with Descartes—then living in Egmond aan den Hoef close to Haarlem—played a role in his judgement. Ban worked with Descartes to calculate the 'perfect harpsichord' tone distances with five additional red keys to the black keys. This was a very rational approach to temperament and music that depended on explicit mathematics.

Ban admired Monteverdi for his rhetorical achievements in music, which was also his priority. He called his interval system after Cicero, *musica flexanima,*[23] the soul-stirring style of composition. However, this style depended on a rigid and complex use of intervals. This might be the reason for his criticism, thinking that the rigour of his own invention was lacking in Monteverdi's works.

A year before Monteverdi died, Ban wrote that he hoped the assertive spirit of this master was still searching for the improvements he had in mind. On the other hand, just like Monteverdi, he sets nature as an example for the searching artist, who cannot invent something genuinely new that is not already to be found in nature.

"De nature is ryk en vast wetende, ende werkende in haer zelve. : wy en bedenken niet nieuws buiten de natuire (sic): maar speuren alles na."

"Nature is rich and firmly knowing, working in itself.: we do not invent something new outside of nature, but are researching everything that is already there."

Ban's image of nature included the laws of physics and its numbers of vibrations, etc. Probably due to taking measurements together with Descartes in 1639, to create the 'Volmaekt Klaeuwier' (perfect keyboard) with pure enharmonic extensions by extra keys. It is conceivable that he hoped that Monteverdi would continue searching for improvement using this or similar inventions for acceptable intervalic relations. However, it is also very

[22] Joan Albert Ban, *Zangh-Bloemzel,* Amsterdam*,* 1642, fol. 4 r, facsimile F. Noske, Amsterdam, 1969.
[23] Cicero, 'oratio flexanima', in *De oratore*, 2, p.187.

probable that the ‘nature as knowledge’ concept was of a spiritual kind, which would be appropriate for him as a priest.

Bonini

Another cleric and contemporary of Monteverdi who wrote down the youngest history of music was the Florentine monk Severo Bonini. Like Doni's, his treatise[24] was not published but it is an interesting source for scholars nowadays. Certainly, when considering that he had studied with Giulio Caccini and, during his formative years, learned the new monodic style while it was developing. By the time he wrote his treatise monody had become the standard, but he positioned the 'eminentissimo maestro' Monteverdi as a singular representative because of his sensitive style. As a reason he gives the maestro's unusual inventions through which he 'roused the sleepy spirits to invent new whims.' (*hà destato li spiriti sonnacchiosi ad' inventar nuovi capricci).*[25]

Among scholars, Bonini is best known for his statement (forty years after its composition) that Arianna's lament was found everywhere.

After summing up the Florentine representatives of the *stile recitativo* he names Monteverdi as the “first among foreigners” (forestieri: outside Florence) who “enriched the style with his extraordinary and capricious thoughts in his opera *Arianna*, which was so much loved (gradita), that there was not a house with a harpsichord or theorbo, that did not have its lamento.”

(*Tra forestieri il primo fù* il Signor Claudio Monteverdi il quale arricchi questo stile di peregrini vezzi e nuovi pensieri nella Favola intitolata Arianna. Opera del Signor Ottavio Rinuccini gentilomo di Firenze fù tanto gradita, che non è stata Casa, la quale havendo cimbali, ò Tiorbe in Casa, non havesse il lamento di quella.)[26]

Despite the praise for Monteverdi's artistic courage, Bonini leaves some doubt about his appreciation. Not only by his choice of words but by sometimes explicitly condemning the construction. 'Some of the Great', he writes, 'are sometimes shaming themselves by delivering more air than art' (*avendo piu aria che arte*). Like an echo of Artusi, he takes as an example the madrigal *Sfogava con le stelle, of Monteverdi's book IV,* where the author, according to him, had lost the good rules of counterpoint (*questo Autore mentre lo componeva smarrisse le buone regole del Contrappunto*) since there are many perfect consonances of the same species that descend and ascend together.

Posthume praise

The only other contemporary additions to the biography of Monteverdi came just after his death when he was honoured in print by the *Fiori Poetici* and particularly the *Laconismo* written by the priest Matteo Caberloti.[27]

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[24] Severo Bonini, *Prima parte de' discorsi e regole sovra la musica et il contrappunto ,* (Ms.) Facsimile by Leila Gallena Luisi, Cremona, Fondazioni Claudio Monteverdi, 1975).

[25] Severo Bonini, *Discorsi e regole sopra la musica et il contrappunto* [88r], transcription by Mary Ann Bonino 1979, https://chmtl.indiana.edu/smi/seicento/BONDIS_TEXT.html

[26] *Idem*. See also Tim Carter, *Monteverdi’s Musical Theatre,* (New Haven, Yale University Press,2002), p.4.

[27] Caberloti, ‘Laconismo delle alte qualità di Claudio Monteverdi’, in Fiori poetici raccolti nel funerale del …signor Claudio Monteverdi, ed. G. B. Marinoni (Venice, Miloco, 1644).

Artusi is no longer mentioned in this *oraison funebre*, but indirectly plays his part by the remark that Monteverdi's intended treatise on the perfection of modern music was prevented by his untimely death.

This conclusion was probably mainly motivated by the urge to pay tribute to the genius of Monteverdi in modern composing. Caberloti was more accurate, as Ellen Rosand pointed out, in describing the effect of the wide emotional range and contrast displayed in Monteverdi's operas.[28] After a series of rhetorical questions, Caberloti comes to the main characteristic that Monteverdi was able to change the affects from moment to moment.

E nella varietà de' suoi componimenti per le Nozze de Prencipi, e ne Theatri di questa Serenissima Città rappresentati, non variano di momento in momento gli'affetti?

Perche hora t'invitano al riso, il quale in un tratto sforzato dei cangiare in pianto, e quando pensi di pigliar l'armi alla Vendetta, all'hora appunto con miracolosa metamorfosi cangiandosi l'harmonia si dispone il tuo cuore alla Clemenza: in un subito ti senti riempire di timore, quando altretanta fretta t'assiste ogni confidenza.

"And with the variety of his compositions for the weddings of princes and performed in the theatres of this illustrious city, did the affects not change from moment to moment? Because now they invite laughter, which all at once is forced to change into crying, and just when you are thinking of taking up arms in vengeance, a marvellous change of harmony disposes your heart into clemency; in one moment you feel yourself filled with fear and in the next, you are possessed by complete confidence."[29]

Historicisation

A bit more than half a century after Monteverdi's death, the contemporary perspective had vanished, and a process of turning practical knowledge into written form was established. A chain of storytellers kept the Monteverdi myths alive. Once again, the clergy undertook this self-imposed task. All these contributions show that Ercole Bottrigari and Monteverdi were rightfully upset that Artusi's objections had appeared in print.

Tevo

This is, for instance, clearly the case with Zaccaria Tevo in his *Musico testore*[30] from 1706. After one century, he reviews the Artusi-Monteverdi controversy, explaining objections to the free treatment of dissonances and showing his understanding of Artusi's points of view. Despite appreciating Monteverdi's inventiveness and genius, Tevo believed that ignoring the rules had weakened his compositions.

Martini

Later, during the 18th century, the story of compositional weaknesses was revived by Padre Giambattista Martini, in his *Esemplare, o sia Saggio fondamentale pratico di contrapunto*

[28] Ellen Rosand, *Monteverdi's last operas, A Venetian Trilogy,* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2007) p.197.
[29] Translation Ellen Rosand.
[30] Zaccharia Tevo, *Musico Testore,* (Venezia, Antonio Bartoli, 1706), p.175-178.

fugato.[31] Martini sketches Monteverdi as 'one of the first to introduce modern music, and for that reason, he had many adversaries.' He calls Artusi one of the principal adversaries (probably imagining more of them) and in his publications among the others (who else?) Monteverdi was the primary target. To help the reader see the full impact, Martini takes him to the battlefield: 'The heated war between the two parties was bitter.'

There are no details about who the other opponents of Monteverdi would have been, but many writers repeated this tale for a century to come. And the verdict of *seconda prattica* was yet again confirmed in print.

Burney

Charles Burney, in his *General History of Music*,[32] dedicated a chapter on 'Monteverde' for which he was indebted to Padre Martini. He met the Italian master in Bologna during his journey in Italy and had most of his information first-hand. Nevertheless, his own imagination helped him dress up the story a bit, neglecting some chronological and topographical facts and, above all, the original sources. It is interesting that he specifies Claudio Monteverdi as someone who initially distinguished himself on the tenor viol, while others only speak of viola. The viola da gamba might be Martini's translation of *vivuola*, which is found in Monteverdi's dedication to Vincenzo Gonzaga.

But in contrast with these plausible observations also Burney's errors originated from Martini's *Storia della Musica*, which was not always as accurate as his reputation would suggest. An example are the Madrigals for 3,4, and 5 voices, which he classified as published in 1582, the year of *Sacrae cantiunculae* for three voices, Monteverdi's first publication. For some reason, Burney names Ingegneri 'maestro di capella' of Duke Vincenzo I and Monteverdi following lessons with him after entering the Duke's court music. François Fétis would later copy this error without checking. Also, the so-called deficiencies in composition are echoed by Fétis.[33] Burney obviously had not seen the editions of the early madrigal books. Otherwise, he would have noticed that Ingegneri was mentioned as Monteverdi's teacher years before he entered the court music in Mantua.

Charles Burney did not hesitate to dress up the whole controversy with Artusi saying Monteverdi "violated many rules of counterpoint…" which resulted in "…many opponents, who treated him as an ignorant corruptor of the arts." […] According to Burney, after Artusi published his treatise, "musicians entered the lists on both sides, and the war became general." Thus, copying, without further study, the narrative that was turned by Padre Martini into a story of war with substantial troops on both sides.

In the fourth volume,[34] of his *General History of Music,* we read that Charles Burney was unable to distinguish the presumed superiority of Monteverdi over Peri and Caccini when it

[31] Giambatista Martini, *Esemplare, o sia Saggio fondamentale pratico di contrapunto fugato* Tomo, II, (Bologna, 1775) p.180-185.

[32] Charles Burney, *A General History of Music,* volume III, (London, 1789), p.233.

[33] François Joseph Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des musiciens*, Tome 6, (1867) p.448,; "fils des pauvres parents" ..."Ingenieri maître de chapelle du duc" "Il est facile de voir que son ardente imagination ne lui laissa pas le loisir d'étudier avec attention le méchanisme de l'art d'écrire, car les incorrections de toute espèce abondent dans ses ouvrages." "Maitre de chapelle" (sic!) on the frontispiece of the 5th book of madrigals 1604. (sic) Gallica p.447. (1840)

[34] Charles Burney, *General History of Music*, Volume IV, (London, 1789), p.27.

concerns the development of recitative in dramatic music. He notices that Monteverdi paved the way for innovation by harmonic audacities to such a point that “every fortunate breach of an old rule seems to be regarded as the establishment of a new.” He continues that apparently, "everything is now allowable in musical composition as long as it does not offend cultivated ears." Nevertheless, there is not much praise of Burney for *Orfeo* and he complains mostly about incomprehensible dissonances and the counterpoint in two parts being deficient. “Some sagacity is necessary to discover (distinguish) the errors of the press from those of the composer.”

Burney gives a few excerpts from *Orfeo* to illustrate what he calls the incomprehensible offences to the ear by certain voice leadings. In line with Artusi, he accuses Monteverdi of mistakes that even a beginner in composition would not make.

Considering that at the end of the 18th century, there was very little knowledge about performance practice around 1600, it is understandable that Burney’s aesthetic judgement was based on the idea that the score was the music. The figures he added to the bass in the examples from *Orfeo* show that he did not know about the harmonic idiom of the period. Burney’s footnote in this example quotes Pietro Della Valle, who did not publish his discourse himself but had it made accessible by Doni. In his discursive letter *Della musica dell’età nostra che non è punto inferiore, anzi è migliore di quella dell’età passata*, (*About music of our times which is not inferior, but rather better than that of the past*) 1640, Della Valle states that under the influence of Rinuccini, Bardi and Corsi and other ‘erudite Toscan gentlemen’ the later works of Monteverdi were considerably better (*miglioraſſe*) than the first. (“*…si vede quanto l’istesso Monteverde ne migliorasse nelle ultime sue cose, che sono state assai differente dalle prime*.”)[35] Burney took this as a confirmation of his low esteem of *Orfeo*.

In his time, Burney and others attributed the innovation of music theatre mainly to the poets. In *Le rivoluzioni del teatro musicale italiano,*[36] Stefano Arteaga, discusses at length all the qualities of Rinuccini and his opera *Dafne* that was performed in Florence. Without providing any proof Arteaga writes that Rinuccini's *Arianna* was also performed in Florence in the years following, 'modulated' by Monteverdi. Indicative of his sloppiness is Arteaga's mistake of describing Arianna lamenting Giasone's departure on one page and on the next page, quoting the libretto with Theseus (Teseo). Anyway, the *lamento* was, in Arteaga's words, for a long time, the top of opera in this genre (*Capo d'opera dell'arte in quell genere*), and the merits of Rinuccini were represented enough by this fragment alone. Significantly, Arteaga did not mention Monteverdi's contribution, thus downplaying the merits of the composer.

Fétis

As mentioned above, François Joseph Fétis copied information from Padre Martini and Charles Burney when he added his share among the music historians to the narrative about Monteverdi in the 19th century.

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[35] Solerti, *Le origine del melodramma,* p. 154.

[36] Stefano Arteaga, *Le rivoluzioni del teatro musicale italiano dalla sua origine fino al presente,* tomo1, (Bologna, Carlo Trenti, 1783) p.195.

He also corrected Burney after consulting Ernst Ludwig Gerber's lexicon,[37] the false presumption that Monteverdi developed his style of daring dissonances in theatrical works. These were written after Artusi published his first attack in 1600.

In his first version of the *Biographie universelle des musiciens*, which he compiled between 1837 and 1844, the author, who specialised in harmonic studies in Paris, makes some interesting observations. Fétis wondered why Monteverdi was unaware of the implications of his innovative approach to harmonic matters that transformed music from a modal system to modern tonality. At least he did not address this in his defence of the letter to the studious readers.

"Il n'aborde pas la grande question des transformations de l'harmonie et des tonalités et ne se doute pas de l'importance de ce qu'il a fait. Monteverde avait été dirigé à son insu par son génie a toutes ces innovations, et sans aucune direction philosophiques". [38]

(He did not tackle the major issue of transformations in harmony and tonality and had no idea of the importance of what he had done. Monteverdi had been led unwittingly by his genius to all these innovations and without any philosophical guidance.)

By attributing the harmonic innovations to a kind of intuitive way of working (*à son insu*), Fétis refers to the composer's implicit knowledge. It is his own observation because Monteverdi's letters were not yet available at the beginning of the 19th century. Monteverdi might have been unaware he had transformed harmony when writing his defence in 1605, but not anymore when he wrote his letter to Doni about finding his own way while composing the lamento. (see above)

Later, Pietro Canal[39] endorses in his book about music in Mantua the view of Fétis on the intuitive approach of Monteverdi. He just formulated it differently and attributes the harmonic innovations to the 'fine ear and vivid listening' of Monteverdi rather than relying on firm principles or philosophies about these changes. Canal concludes by stating that the composer was the first to pave the way for a modern use of dissonances and thus elucidated the essence of tonality.

Understanding the full implications of the harmonic transformation was not possible for Fétis, who (like Burney) obviously had problems interpreting the unfigured basses of the time. His enthusiasm about the *lamento d'Arianna* as a profoundly melancholic piece of music, was not damaged by, as he called it:

La basse incorrecte et l'harmonie heurtée et bizarre, dont le compositeur a accompagnié ce morceau ne nuissent point au caractère de mélancolie profonde qu'on y remarque.[40]

(The incorrect bass and jolting, bizarre harmony, by which the composer has accompanied this piece, detract nothing of the deep melancholic character it conveys.)

It is unclear what the source is for Fétis' version, but there are many deviations from all the known sources. The figured bass has been reworked by changing notes and harmonies. Two added bars (15-16) repeating the phrase "in cosí gran martire" weaken the *abruptio* at the

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[37] Ernst Ludwig Gerber, *Neues historisch-biographisches Lexikon der Tonkünstler*: K-R, Volume 72, 1813, p.453

[38] François Joseph Fétis, *Biographie universelle des musiciens et bibliographie générale de musique.* Tome 6, (1840) p. 449f.

[39] Pietro Canal, *Della Musica in Mantova, Notizie tratte prinzipialmente dall'archivio Gonzaga* , (Mantova, 1881) p.102.

[40] Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens,* 1840, Tome 6, p.450.

reprise of the opening bars. It seems a 'cosmetical' implant by Fétis, just like the other alterations, to adapt the style to the expected appreciation of his audience.

In his updated edition of the *Biographie Universelle,* which appeared in 1864, Fétis added a considerable extension of information about Monteverdi, thanks to recent research. However, this new knowledge was not always accurate, such as the work of Francesco Caffi.[41] From this Venetian author, he copied the information that Monteverdi was born from 'oscuri parenti which he understood as 'fils de pauvres parents' (son of poor parents). With hindsight, this is rather funny, bearing in mind that Baldassarre Monteverdi was a doctor who reported to Duke Vincenzo that he had to lend his son 500 scudi because the court often did not pay the wages over the past years.

Also, the story that Monteverdi became a pupil of Marc'Antonio Ingegneri after being accepted in Mantua because the latter would have been the duke's maestro di cappella, is a persistent misconception that many historians shared.

The twisted view of Monteverdi's formative years was based on the impression that he owed his acceptance at the Mantuan court only for being a gifted viol player. For Fétis and other lexicographers, that should explain some clumsiness in counterpoint. However, certainly, from the virtuoso viola bastarda players, an extensive and intrinsic knowledge of counterpoint was required. In my opinion, this is extremely relevant for a proper idea of the specific qualities of Monteverdi as an inventor of instant counterpoint in various musical textures. For the 19th-century lexicographers, the following knowledge was not yet available.

Both Girolamo Della Casa, at the beginning of the viola bastarda fashion, and Francesco Rognoni, at the end of it, stress the importance of an intelligent approach to realising ex tempore added notes to a composition.

- Girolamo Dalla Casa; *Della Viola Bastarda* [...] “nella qual professione si va toccando tutte le parti, si come fanno gli intelligenti, che fanno profesione."[42] (in which profession one touches all the parts, as the knowledgeable do, who realise this practice)

- Francesco Rognoni, wrote in his paragraph *Della Viola Bastarda* that the instrumentalist was creating his part improvising through all the registers " *hora con nuovi contraponti, hor con pasaggi d'imitationi.”*[43] (and now adding new counterpoint, then with passages of imitations.)

The historians' opinions were strongly influenced because their information depended exclusively on accessible printed sources. The war metaphor of Padre Martini received an extra attribute from Caffi (p.216), baptising the book of Artusi, 'the banner of war' (*lo stendardo di guerra*). Fétis confidently repeated the information and even Artusi's self-organised support by the Florentine humanist Girolamo Mei, using the posthumous publication of his *Discorso*[44] of 1602. Caffi had blindly followed this fallacy because Mei died

[41] Francesco Caffi, *Storia della Musica Sacra nella cappella ducale di San Marco da Venezia, (*Venice, Stab.di G. Antonelli, 1854) p.215f.
[42] Girolamo Dalla Casa, *Il vero Modo di Diminuir* (1584) Libro Secondo, Alli Lettori.
[43] Francesco Rognoni, parte seconda del *Selva de Varii Pasaggi* (sic), (Venice, 1620) p.2.
[44] Artusi inserted in his *Seconda Parte delle Imperfettioni* some passages from Girolamo Mei's *Discorso Sopra la Musica Antica e Moderna* (1602), pretending that the Florentine humanist confirmed his theory.
See E. Vogel, dissertation 1887, p.30.

in 1594. Six years before the publication of *L'Artusi,* and as far as we know, completely unaware of Monteverdi's existence.

Beginnings of revival

A crucial step François Joseph Fétis took was his attempt to let Monteverdi's and other music from the past sound again, evoking the ideas of that past. For his series of *Concerts historiques* at the conservatoires, first in Paris and later in Brussels, he even made an effort (to a great extent in vain) to recreate the sound of the original instrumentations.

The first concert in this series was on 8 April 1832 and dedicated to the early history of opera, starting in 1590. Fétis introduced the concerts with lectures and demonstrated his talk with substantial fragments from the operas at stake. After playing Caccini and Peri, the audience was confronted with the first sounding proofs of Monteverdi's *Orfeo.* The best available singers were recruited, and there was a promise of period instruments from the Brussels Museum collection. As a former curator and librarian of the Paris Conservatoire, Fétis profited from the vague distinction between private ownership and institutional property when appointed director in Brussels. Many books were returned to Paris after his death.

The announcement of viols, basses de viole, organs, old guitars, and harp could not always be realised, as we learn from the sardonic reviews[45] of the *concerts historiques,* viciously posted by Hector Berlioz in the *Gazette Musicale de Paris*.

Berlioz's disappointment is understandable if we consider his passion for instrumentation and diversity in sound character. There is a report by August Tolbeque, a 19th-century specialist in historical cello and viola da gamba, which stated that to find musicians who could play them, Fétis had to cope with modernised historical models of instruments. He ended up with disguises[46] of cello, guitar, harp, etc., and he later admitted to regret that the performances did not match his views.

Fétis not only adapted the instruments to the taste of his time. In his copy of the *Lamento d'Arianna* (see above), the changes he made in the harmonies, but also in the structure, are proof of his unobligated attitude in matters of authenticity.

The copies of *Orfeo* we can find now in the digitised[47] Fétis collection of the Belgian Royal Library show alterations that were very probably made with the Paris performances in mind. The famous passage "Tu sei morta" from the second Act of the opera is transposed one tone higher. This might have to do with the tenor's tessitura, who sang at the *concert historique* in 1832, and as such, would be understandable.

But apart from the highly simplified harmony, Fétis also changed the melody considerably right from the opening of this recitative, starting at e' instead of b-flat. As a consequence, the character of this passage is more that of a lyrical tenor from the early 19th century. The original chromatism which Monteverdi used to colour the emotion is erased by a

[45] Hector Berlioz, "Concert historique de M. Fétis", *Gazette Musicale de Paris*, no. 18, 5 Mai 1833, p.155.
[46] "...montant la basse de viole en violoncello, la viole d'amour en alto, le pardessus de viole en violon, le luth en guitare, etc." Peter Holman, "The Strobach syndrome François-Joseph Fétis, Historical Fakes and the Early Music"*, Musica Disserenda,* XIX/2, (2023), p.15, n12.
[47] https://uurl.kbr.be/1909104/p221

straightforward and banal melodic development. The whole scene is replaced by newly composed recitatives, maintaining the original rhetorical outlines and gestures but with little understanding of the refined Italian declamation of early opera. Monteverdi's admirable blend of text and music, which always resulted in a great variety of declamatory rhythm is altogether lost. If this is the score of what was presented as Monteverdi's music at the *concert historique* of April 1832, the list of Fétis falsifications can be extended with these presumed reconstructions of *Orfeo.*

The main reason for the success of the *concerts historiques* and the impression Fétis made digging up old masterpieces was most probably due to the all-star cast[48] of four tenors, three sopranos and two basses he had at his disposal. In retrospect, it is incredible that the very best singers of his time, as well as outstanding instrumentalists, were willing to contribute to this adventure. Virtuosi, who normally sang the leading roles of Rossini and Meyerbeer operas in Paris and throughout Europe, such as Giovanni Battista Rubini, Luigi Lablache and Wilhelmine Schroeder-Devrient, were now performing the highlights of centuries ago in Fétis adaptations.

From the changes that Fétis made in the passages from *Orfeo,* it seems that he had to satisfy the taste of the audience and comfort the singers by offering a more familiar idiom than represented by the original notes. It seems obvious that in this way, the singers could probably sight-read this 'early music'. To make an impact, the final duet between Apollo and Orpheus was extended with repeats and additions (see examples), so it sounded more like the belcanto of contemporary composers. With these aforementioned tenors, also today, this would make a great impression.

Remarkably but in no way by chance, these historical concerts coincided with what would later go down in history as *l'affaire Fétis*. The man had been fired as librarian of the Paris Conservatoire and moved to Brussels to continue his career as director of the Belgian Royal Conservatoire. After his departure, a large part of the collections of the Conservatoire and the Bibliothèque Royal Paris, such as old prints, manuscripts, magazines etc., were missing. Many other objects were mutilated and damaged by personal annotations, and others were torn from their bindings. After three had passed unnoticed, only one large moving box of books was intercepted by Paris customs while the rest had left for its destination in Brussels. In his correspondence, Fétis kept denying he had done something illegal. Apparently, he considered himself the only person who should have these materials at his disposal because others were just ignorants in the field.[49] His authority was based on his monumental effort to write a history of music in an encyclopedic format, the *Histoire universelle des musiciens,* which was indeed an exceptional achievement. But also full of errors that were not corrected in a second and revised edition after twenty years. A lot could have easily been adjusted if he had taken the time to be more conscientious or at least more scrupulous.

Kiesewetter

The *concerts historiques* in Paris were not the only events of such nature in Europe in the 1830's. In Vienna, the work of amateur musicologist Georg Raphael Kiesewetter resulted not

[48] Aristide Farrenc, “Les concerts historiques de M. Fétis à Paris”, *La France Musicale,* (1855), p.2.
[49] François Lesure, “L'affaire Fétis,” *Revue belge de Musicologie,* 28/30 (1974 - 1976), p.221; "...les livres sur lesquelles je travaille sont plus utilement placés dans mes mains que dans celles de qui que se soit."

only in publications but performances as well. They took place at his house and were programmed with vocal repertoire from the 16th to the 18th century. The repertoire was approached with genuine curiosity, as can be read in his *History of Modern Music of Western Europe* and resulted in a broad overview that made him publish a separate book in 1841 on secular vocal music of the Middle Ages until the beginnings of opera.[50]

In the first edition of the history of music, Kiesewetter's observations of Monteverdi were based on limited source material. He was, therefore, copying errors in dates and facts, like Rinuccini as librettist of *Orfeo.* Also, his judgment of the free treatment of dissonances in Monteverdi's madrigals is still an echo of Padre Martini. In line with the exaggeration of the latter, Kiesewetter suggests that Monteverdi was attacked by his learned colleagues ('heftig angefochten von seinen gelehrten Kunstgenossen'). Evidently, again, no other names of opponents are given than Artusi. However, he adds that Monteverdi might have inspired composers to explore the application of dissonances in ways that were formerly unaccepted or not conceived as possible.

Like Fétis, Kiesewetter also did not correct his errors[51] in the revised edition of his history of music, published in 1846, despite having proven to know all the correct data in his 1841 publication about the rise of opera. These were based on the work of Carl von Winterfeld's *Johannes Gabrieli und sein Zeitalter* published in the same year as the first edition of Kiesewetter's History of Music, 1834.

Von Winterfeld had done first-rate research in primary sources in several Italian cities and was the first to publish a transcription of the *Lamento d'Arianna,* though only the beginning. It is not clear what he used as a source, but the characteristic dissonance of the second note (b-flat) is smoothened by a change of the bass note, a 'correction' that was copied by many after this publication. In the fifth bar, the seventh of the melody is changed into a fifth, maybe to avoid the unprepared dissonance, but causing a parallel fifth to the next bar. A real error that Monteverdi would not have made. Also, on the word 'volete', the original painful *e* against *b-flat* in the bass is softened into an innocently embedded anticipation.

In his book,[52] Von Winterfeld points to the fame of this lamento, which was considered in its time "a miracle of art" and "if we disregard some of the awkwardness and harshness of the modulation, which must have been inseparable from the first attempts of the new music genre, we cannot fail to recognise the strength of the passionate expression in it." Again, the particular inventions of the old maestro are seen as clumsy mistakes against the rules of harmony and counterpoint.

In 1862, Kiesewetter's nephew, August Wilhelm Ambros, also published a history of music. Remarkably, he added errors that his uncle had not made, apparently by quoting recent authors such as Francesco Caffi. Nevertheless, he felt qualified to judge the lamento for his readers but failed to check data and facts that were already known for a century, as could

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[50] Raphael Georg Kiesewetter, *Geschichte der europäisch-abendländischen oder unserer heutigen Musik. Darstellung ihres Ursprungs, ihres Wachsthums und ihrer stufenweise Entwicklung; von dem ersten Jahrhundert des Christenthums bis auf unsere heutige Zeit.* (Leipzig, *1834* (Nachdruck 1846)), English translation 1848.
[51] Kiesewetter, *Geschichte,* 1846, 2. Ausgabe p.75; "Auch noch im Jahre 1600 gelangte die Arianna des Rinuccini mit Musik von Peri [.....] in Florenz zur Aufführung. Im Jahre 1606 dieselbe Arianna mit Musik von Claudio Monteverde, dann 1607 der Orfeo des Rinuccini ebenfalls mit Musik von Monteverde."
[52] Von Winterfeld, *Johannes Gabrieli*, p.37.

be read in the *General History of the Science and Practice of Music* By Sir John Hawkins of 1775.

Ambros wrote:

Ja, wer nur dieses Stück, beziehungsweise die erste Strophe kennt, wird sogar geneigt sein, Monteverde auf eine Höhe zu stellen, welche er wohl sicher erreicht haben würde, wäre er etwa Zeitgenosse Gluck's gewesen, welche aber in seiner Zeit zu erreichen nicht einmal die Flügel seines Genius stark genug waren. Der Gesang selbst schon zeigt es in seinem Verlaufe — denn auch er verfällt endlich dem Grundübel dieser ersten dramatischen Versuche — er wird monoton. [….]
Im folgenden Jahre 1608 folgte die Oper „Orfeo" nach der Dichtung eines Ungenannten (nicht Rinuccini's) und der sogenannte Ballo delle Ingrate — eine Composition, wo die Musik trotz der antiken Götter, die im Textbuche erscheinen, zum erstenmale im vollen Zauberschimmer des Romantischen steht.[53]

(Yes, who, knowing only this piece [Lamento d'Arianna], more in particular the first strophe, would be inclined to put Monteverdi on a level that he would have reached if he were Gluck's contemporary? To reach this in his time, the wings of his genius were not strong enough. The song itself shows it in its course - for it too falls prey to the basic evil of these first dramatic attempts - it becomes monotonous. [....] In the following year, 1608, came the opera *Orfeo* with the libretto of an unnamed (not Rinuccini) and the so-called "Ballo delle Ingrate" - a composition where the music, despite the antique Gods that appeared in the libretto, for the first time stands in the magic glimmer of the romantic.)

Historians and Theorists were equally fluent in delivering their judgements and critical observations. But as we have seen before, a lot of it consisted of a chain of copied 'knowledge' and lacked understanding and scrutiny.

Earlier in Ambros's *Geschichte,* we read that Monteverdi had been attacked by other representatives of the old music style:

"Claudio scheint auch noch von anderen Anhängern der alten Musikstyls allerlei Angriffen erfahren zu haben."[54] Again, the persistent myth that Padre Martini started about the crowd of Monteverdi's opponents is repeated here. Although Ambros was active as a musician and composer and a professor of music history in Prague, he did not show much understanding from that perspective.

Gevaert

A few years after the publication of Ambros' fourth volume of *Geschichte der Musik,* the Belgian composer and musicologist François-August Gevaert contributed substantially to the revival of early music by making it available for performance. In 1868, he published an anthology[55] of Italian vocal music from the 17th and 18th centuries, giving an impressive overview of highlights and stylistic development. He had just returned from Paris, where he was active until the French-German war as director of the Opera, after having premièred

[53] August Wilhelm Ambros, *Geschichte der Musik* IV, (Leipzig, 1862), p.358. My translation.

[54] Ambros, *Geschichte*, p.353.

[55] François- August Gevaert, *Les Gloires de L'Italie*, (Paris, Heugel & fils, 1868) Anthology of unpublished vocal music, arranged for Piano and Voice for conservatoires in France, Belgium, Germany and Italy.

seven of his own operas. Gevaert succeeded Fétis in Brussels as the director of the Royal Conservatoire. He appointed teachers of the highest calibre in Europe, such as Eugène Ysaÿe and Henri Vieuxtemps. The latter was Arnold Dolmetsch's teacher, and in this light, it is significant that under Gevaert the interest in performing music from the past was intensified after Fétis' retirement.

Among the early Baroque composers in Gevaert's anthology, the first strophe of the lamento was the only work by Monteverdi he considered appropriate to include. From a didactic point of view, it is understandable that Gevaert did not consider parts from *Orfeo* suitable for the students of the conservatoires to whom he addressed the anthology. There would be too much to explain or adapt.

Like his predecessor Fétis, Gevaert inserted some alterations, and he probably even copied from him. Changes in rhythm that go against the meter of the text, such as "E che volete.." (bar 7), and "in cosi dura sorte" (bar 11) might lead back to Winterfeld's transcription.

There is, however, no other explanation for the missing word "voi" (bar 8) than Gevaert having copied Fétis' transcription. Likewise, this indicates that the most popular version of the lamento, in Alessandro Parisotti's *Arie Antiche*, must have been taken directly from *Les Gloires de L'Italie.* Just like many other songs and arias, which were not from the original sources, as the compiler says in his preface.[56] Parisotti states that he collected the works in his volumes from old manuscripts and prints. He regretted that 'he had to limit himself to this selection.' He claims to have done his utmost in transcribing the works, not changing anything from the original, and even to have consulted various manuscripts to come closest to the most elegant form.

For many generations of singers and students through the 20th century, the *Arie Antiche* remained an introduction to the vocal repertoire of the 17th and 18th century. The influence on their style of performance is noticeable until the present day.

The immediate popularity of Parisotti's version can be traced right up to the orchestration of the lamento, by Ottorino Respighi, resulting in an invitation by the conductor Arthur Nikisch for a performance with the Berliner Philharmoniker in 1908. Respighi had taken Parisotti's arrangement of the lamento as a starting point, using the transposition to F-Minor, now in the advantage for the tessitura of the Dutch star soprano Julia Culp.[57] For the rest of the lamento, he must have found another source, which had become available since the late 1880s, primarily by the work of Emil Vogel.

The rise of musicology: Emil Vogel and Romain Rolland

Rigorous research in the late 19th century and philological scrutiny profoundly changed the historical awareness of musicology. Direct consultation of the sources and archival studies provided answers to questions that were hardly asked beforehand because historians kept copying each other, including all the errors, presumptions, and fantasies.

The decade between 1885 and 1895 saw a disclosure of important archives and libraries in Italy. As a 24-year-old student from Berlin, Emil Vogel travelled to Italy with a Prussian scholarship to assist with studies on Palestrina.

[56] Alessandro Parisotti, *Arie antiche, vol. 1-3,* (Milano, Ricordi, 1885-1894).
[57] The score with piano reduction of Respighi's *lamento* was dedicated to Julia Culp, *The Dutch Nightingale* (1880-1970).

But soon, he followed his own interest and singlehandedly rewrote the history of Claudio Monteverdi, based on facts from primary sources. He profited from the publication by Stefano Davari,[58] who had published his findings of the Mantuan Gonzaga archives in 1885 and introduced a new voice through Monteverdi's extant letters.

Vogel summarised his findings in a dissertation[59] of 45 pages, which granted him a doctorate title on 4 August 1887 at the Friedrich Wilhelm Universität in Berlin. Soon after, he published the rest of his study in an article[60] of 136 pages in the Vierteljahrsschrift für Musikwissenschaft, including some of Monteverdi's letters, an almost complete list of his printed music and the first complete and faithful transcription of the *Lamento d'Arianna.* He found the untitled lamento in the Biblioteca Nazionale in Florence, after searching[61] for the score of *Arianna* in all major libraries of North- and Middle Italy.

This article set a new standard in the Monteverdi studies, which remains valuable until the present day. Vogel was the first scholar after Davari to consistently use the name Monteverdi instead of Monteverde, as was customary until then. His argument was that Monteverdi signed all his letters with this spelling. Something he did not remark is that the surname was always written in lowercase and never with a capital M. Thanks to Vogel's research, there was no longer any doubt about the date of birth nor the status of Monteverdi's father. Also, the inexplicable aberration that Marc'Antonio Ingegneri would have been maestro di cappella at the Mantuan court, was debunked by him.[62]

He clarified that Monteverdi was Ingegneri's apprentice before entering the Mantua service. The year of entrance at court, mistaken even by Davari, has been corrected by Vogel deducted from known facts. If he had entered in 1589, Monteverdi would have addressed his new patron in his dedication to the second book of Madrigals (1590).

Vogel is the first author to discuss the controversy with Artusi extensively and with an understanding of the nuances of its situation. He consulted more documents, such as Ercole Bottrigari's *Aletelogia*[63] in Bologna. To finish the war metaphor, he quotes this unpublished treatise with a fierce characterisation of Monteverdi.

"... Er ist ja ein Mann der viel weiß und viel kann, er wird sich mit Klugheit und Tapferkeit vertheidigen und wird die Bodenlose Kühnheit und Arroganz jenes Mannes niederschlagen, der da verlangt man solle sich seinen Vorschriften unterordnen, während er selbst thut was ihm gefällt."

("... He is a man who knows a lot and can do a lot, he will defend himself with wisdom and bravery and will defeat the bottomless boldness and arrogance of the man who demands that one should submit to his rules because he does as he pleases.")

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[58] Stefano Davari, *Notizie biografiche del distinto maestro di musica Claudio Monteverdi desunte dai documenti dell'Archivo Storico Gonzaga.* Atti della R. Accademia Virgiliana. (Mantova, Mondovi, 1885).

[59] Emil Vogel, "Claudio Monteverdi. Leben, Wirken im Lichte der zeitgenössischen Kritik und Verzeichniss seiner im Druck erschienenen Werke", diss. Berlin, 1887.

[60] Vogel, same title in *Vierteljahrsschrift für Musikwissenschaft* - 3, 1887. pp. 315 – 450.

[61] See p.44 of Vogel's dissertation. It must have been around 1886 that he found this important source. After 138 years, the quest for the complete score is still going on, for instance, by Erwin Roebroeks, with a stipend to search in Venice.

[62] Vogel, *Vierteljahrsschrift,* p.317 n.6.

[63] *Aletelogia di Leonardo Gallucio, a benigni e sinceri lettori. Lettera apologetica del C.H.B.* (Cavaliere Hercole Bottrigari) p.75.

Despite his meticulous fact-checking, Vogel also made assumptions based on common sense that were unproven. For instance, there is still an echo of all those who wrote about the forces on Artusi's side.
About the publication of the third book of madrigals, Vogel suggested that "...his innovations naturally aroused the strongest opposition from the theorists of the old school." Subsequently, he introduced Artusi 'among the opponents' but mentioned no other names. Also, the loss of his 'irreplaceable' wife, Claudia Cattaneo, is said to have shocked the entire court in Mantua, which is Vogel's interpretation of a letter that was sent by Federico Follino to order Claudio's return and starting to work on a new opera. According to Vogel, her death had caused the greatest pain to her loved ones. Their boys, Francesco (6) and Massimiliano (3), must have missed their mother very much. However, Claudio has not even left one line that tells us what he felt for her. After his wife's death, the only times he mentions her name are in letters referring to her pension and via his father, the problem that he stood alone in taking care of his children.

"...senza la provisione della sig.ra Claudia, con doi filiolini poveri cosí lassiati nella morte di lei alle spalle sue, ..."
(...without the provision of signora Claudia, with two poor sons after her death, left like that on his shoulders..)[64]

Before Vogel, no one had shown so much genuine interest in Monteverdi since his death. He undertook enormous work to get the fullest possible overview of his life and works, putting truthfulness above all else. This included the articulation of uncertainties, where previous historians allowed themselves judgments on the basis of limited context.
The relentless distress caused by Gonzaga's failing payments and shortage of rewards meets with Vogel's comprehension, and he does not see it as an exaggeration of begging letters like many authors still do. Vogel tended to the other side:

"Aus allen seinen Beschwerden leuchtet doch nur seine unendlich liebevolle Sorgfalt für das Wohl und Gedeihen seiner Familie hervor- ein Characterzug der sich in den meisten seiner uns erhalten gebliebenen Briefe offenbart und oft geradezu rührender Weise hervortritt."
(In all his complaints, the only thing that shines through is his infinitely loving care for the well-being and prosperity of his family - a trait that is revealed in most of his surviving letters and often emerges in a downright touching way.) [65]

Rolland

The French writer, Nobel Prize winner and great intellectual spirit of his time, Romain Rolland, initially wanted to become a musician. His parents did not agree with such a future. His understanding of music contributed nevertheless generously to his influence on several cultural movements, such as the revival of music from the past.

[64] Letter by Baldassare Monteverdi to Eleonora de Medici, duchess of Mantua, 27 November 1608, (Fabbri, 1985) p. 148.
[65] Vogel, *Vierteljahrsschrift*, p. 341

In this light, it is significant that his doctorate thesis[66] was a profound study of the rise of European opera in the early Baroque period. He must have done a substantial part of his research when residing at the École Française in Rome. Also, his encounters with the revolutionary Malwida von Meysenbug, a close friend of Nietzsche and Wagner, opened his horizon and understanding of cultural context, enriching his philological and musicological commitment. After two years, he returned to settle in Paris and completed a doctorate in the faculty of *Lettres*. It was the second dissertation on music in France[67] that we now consider the beginning of musicology as an academic discipline. The emancipation of musicology is characterised by Pierre Aubry, from the *Institut catholique de Paris,* when he wrote in 1899:

"L'histoire de la musique n'appartient plus aux musiciens qui ne sont que des musiciens […]. La science contemporaine […] enlève aux praticiens la partie scientifique de leur art pour la confier soit aux philologues, soit aux historiens, soit aux philosophes et aux savants. Nous appellerons musicologie l'ensemble de ces diverses manifestations de la science musicale."[68]

(The history of music no longer belongs to musicians, who are only musicians [...] Modern science [...] takes away from practitioners the scientific part of their art and entrusts it to philologists, historians, philosophers and scholars. We will call musicology the sum total of these various manifestations of the science of music.)

Rolland's influence in this field was decisive and soon stretched over Europe, illustrated by his organisation of the international *Congrès d'Histoire de la musique de Paris* in 1900, the first of its kind in France.[69]

In his thesis, Rolland dedicated a whole chapter to Claudio Monteverdi and positioned him in the context of the social and artistic developments of his time. He used Vogel's article and sometimes borrowed interpretations of the German scholar. But as a writer, his imagination was inclined to fiction without the exactitude of supporting facts. This is clear when discussing Monteverdi's love and care for his family. He describes the "racking worries" in 1607, the "cruel" illness of his young wife Claudia, whom he loved "tenderly," and her "languishing for more than a year" before it became fatal to her. Actually, we do not know whether her disease lasted the whole year, only that she had been severely ill in the fall of 1606.

There is conclusive evidence, however, that Monteverdi did a lot to ensure both his sons were well off. In his letters, we find proof, for instance, that the 23-year-old Massimiliano, a young doctor in medicine, was imprisoned because he had read a book on the forbidden list of the Inquisition.[70] Claudio tried to use his contacts in Mantua, such as Alessandro Striggio,

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[66] Romain Rolland, *Les origines du théâtre lyrique moderne. Histoire de l'opéra en Europe avant Lully et Scarlatti.* diss., Paris, 1895.

[67] The first French thesis was by Jules Combarieu, who like Emil Vogel had studied with Philipp Spitta. *Le Rapport de la poésie et de la musique considérée du point de vue de l'expression,* diss. Paris, 1894.

[68] Danièle Pistone, "Romain Rolland face à la musicologie de son temps"*, Cahiers de Brèves*, no.29, June 2012. p. 28.

[69] idem, p.29.

[70] See Rolland, *Les origines,* p.90 n2; Denis Stevens, *Letters* (1980) nrs.115-119, pp. 380-393.

to react to a letter by the 'Father Inquisitor' saying that he could get his son released by paying a bail of 100 ducats until the case was dispatched.

Surprisingly, Rolland allowed himself in his dissertation obvious sloppiness in using previous studies. Vogel's accuracy contrasts sharply with Rolland's nonchalance.

On page 84 of his thesis, he gives "Monteverdi né en 1568 à Crèmone..." and on the same page "Claudio Johannes Antonius Monteverde, né à Crémona au commencement de mai 1567...' This latter information is clearly taken from Vogel's article. On the next page, the librettist of *Orfeo* is identified as Alessandro Striggio. But two pages further, Rolland shifts into a poetic mode and suggests Rinuccini as the author of l'Orfeo, possibly confusing the opera with *l'Euridice* by Peri.

Contemplating the suffering of "*Orphée",* he sees analogies with Monteverdi's own life in the year of creation:

"…(ces successions si hardies et d'une expression si moderne), son angoisse déchirante qui devine aux premiers mots la terrible nouvelle que le messager n'ose dire, et qu'il n'ose pas entendre, ramènent involontairement l'esprit aux propres inquiétudes de l'artiste. On croirait que ***Rinuccini*** *a écrit à son adresse ces consolations prématurées dont Apollon caresse l'âme meurtrie de son poète, réfugié dans son art, arraché de la terre vers les cieux immortels.*[71]

(these bold sequences, so modern....his heart-rending anguish as he guesses at the first words of the terrible news that the messenger does not dare to tell, and that he does not dare to hear, involuntarily brings the mind back to the artist's own worries. One would think that Rinuccini had written for him those premature consolations with which Apollo caresses the bruised soul of his poet, who has taken refuge in his art, torn from the earth towards the immortal heavens.)

It is very hard to understand that the persistent error (from Burney? see above) about Marc'Antonio Ingegneri's presumed function as '*maestro di capella'* at the Gonzaga court still survived in Rolland's thesis. Monteverdi's teacher is named as such on page 85, in relation to the formation of the boy, but bluntly contradicted a few pages later (*Il fut maître de chapelle du duc de Mantoue*), despite Vogel's explicit falsification.

But at the other end of the spectrum, on the literary side, Rolland often delves into Monteverdi's specific position among his contemporaries. He emphasises the musical freedom that Monteverdi achieved, contrasting it with his Florentine colleagues by his dedication to practising his instrument day and night to explore its effects. What Artusi mocked is viewed by Rolland as transcending vocal boundaries. While the justness – (did he mean accuracy?) - of the recitative may suffer slightly and the structure of the poetry may be overlooked, a direct connection between souls is established (*l'âme parle directement à l'âme*).[72]

[71] Rolland, *Les origines,* p.87.
[72] *Idem*, p.92.

"Ainsi l'observation et l' « imitation » des passions (non pas seulement de la parole passionnée) est l'essence de la musique nouvelle. Elle ne s'attache donc pas servilement au texte, mais elle lit au fond de sa pensée."

(And *thus, the observation and "imitation" of passions (not just passionate speech) is the essence of new music. It does not slavishly stick to the text but reads into the bottom of its thought.*)

These discriptions are the kind that Danièle Pistone meant by his observation about the literary approach of Rolland to describe his subject; "*Si le langage n'y est pas dépourvu de termes techniques, le ton très littéraire est toutefois celui de l'émotion personnelle, riche de métaphores empruntées au domaine religieux*." (While the language is not devoid of technical terms, the very literary tone is one of personal emotion, rich with metaphors borrowed from the religious sphere.)[73]

In the context of Monteverdi's dramatic use of instruments, Rolland refers in a footnote to a concert he attended in the year before his dissertation came out. In December 1893, the first of a series *concerts historiques* was organised by Charles Bordes, the founding father (together with a.o. Vincent d'Indy) of the Schola Cantorum Paris. Bordes had an aria sung from *Orfeo* with an exposition of the rich instrumentation, which must have been *Possente spirto* ("*le fameux air d'Orphée"*). Though he admits that these curiosities of instrumentation can still be felt today, he sees here a loss of unity in the dramatic impression.

Rolland was attentive to the dramatic impact of Monteverdi's work and had been reading his reflections in the extant letters. His analysis of what determines the extra dimensions this composer added to a storyline and narrative compared to his colleagues is summarised when Monteverdi discussed in a letter his opera *La finta pazza Licori*.[74]

La musique va jusqu'au fond du cœur, et ne s'en tenant pas à la seule impression passagère éveillée par le mot, elle prête l'oreille aux sentiments plus qu'aux paroles du personnage; elle tient compte « de son passé et de son avenir, » comme dit Monteverde, c'est-à-dire de son caractère général; et nous voici bien près du leit-motiv *moderne, où se résume une âme, que l'on voit vivre et se transformer au cours d'une action dramatique.*

(The music goes right to the bottom of the heart and does not confine itself to the mere passing impression awakened by the word; it lends its ear to the feelings more than to the words of the character. It takes into account "his past and his future," as Monteverde puts it, that is to say, his general character; and here we are very close to the modern *leitmotiv*, which sums up a soul that we see living and transforming itself in the course of a dramatic action).

In July 1891, Malvida von Meysenbug took Rolland to Bayreuth on his way back from Rome to Paris. Seeing *Parsifal, Tristan,* and *Tannhäuser* together made a huge impression on him, and he saw analogies with the Italian beginnings of music drama, such as the role of the text, the silent audience, the hidden orchestra and the way human passions were exposed.

[73] Pistone, *Romain Rolland,* p.30.

[74] Rolland, *Les origines,* p.93. The opera was abandoned before completion.

Rolland's passion for Richard Wagner's music drama explains his association with the idea of *Leitmotiv*. For instance, Arianna's sighing motive when she directly addresses Theseus (*O Teseo, o Teseo mio*), which I believe indeed functions not just as a refrain but also as a point of reference on which the audience subconsciously orients the dramatic development.

D'Annunzio, the narrative of decadentismo

It was during this period, at the turn of the century, that Romain Rolland played a decisive role in the changing narrative about Monteverdi and the true discovery of his music.

When Rolland was back in Rome in 1897, he was invited on 9 May to the salon of the Contessa Ersilia Caetani-Lovatelli to meet Gabriele D'Annunzio.[75] This influential dandy poet had an immediate interest in the young musicologist, and right from the start of their acquaintance, they profoundly explored their common interests. D'Annunzio had a great passion for music, but as Rolland puts it later in his correspondence, he made people believe that he was much more knowledgeable than he was. While working on his novel *Il Fuoco*, he absorbed the ideas and expertise of his new friend on the rise of opera in Florence and his ideas about Wagner. Clearly, the poet had not read Rolland's book *L'Histoire de l'Opera en Europe,* although it had come on the market at the end of 1895. But many of the Frenchman's views will have passed through conversation, mainly and reportedly so in the summer of 1899, when they spent holidays together in the hotel Waldstätterhof, Brunnen, Switzerland.

Rolland's knowledge (and very likely his enthusiasm) thus inseminated the final version of *Il Fuoco*, as shown in an ecstatic dialogue about the outstanding achievements of Caccini, Peri and Emilio de Cavalieri. Their way of presenting the whole human being in their musical drama (*manifestare con tutti i mezzi dell'arte l'uomo integro*)[76] had been interpreted very much in the same vein as this was done in Bayreuth. The passage makes D'Annunzio's nationalism explicit and shows his wish to let Italian superiority retroactively compete with Germany of his present day. In this context, Monteverdi is introduced in the novel as a hero and saviour:[77]

"*Bisogna glorificare il più grande degli innovatori, che la passione e la morte consacrarono veneziano, colui che ha il sepolchro nella chiesa dei Frari, degno d'un pellegrinaggio: il divino Claudio Monteverde.*"

(We must glorify the greatest of innovators, he who is anointed a Venetian by his passion and death, whose tomb is in the Frari church, worthy of a pilgrimage: the divine Claudio Monteverde).

[75] Emilio Mariano, *Gabriele d'Annunzio e Eleonora Duse ovvero dal Fuoco alle laudi,* a cura di Maria Rosa Giacon, (Venice, Edizioni Ca'Foscari, 2016) p.124.
[76] Gabriele D'Annunzio, *Il Fuoco*, (Milan, Fratelli Treves, 1900) p.160.
[77] D'Annunzio, *Il Fuoco*, p.161.

The nationalistic atmosphere is endorsed by the following conversation of characters that D'Annunzio, as most of them in *Il Fuoco,* moulded after real people of his inner circle:[78]

- "*Ecco un'anima eroica, di pura essenza italiana! - assenti Daniele Glàuro* (Angelo Conti) *con reverenza.*

- Egli compì l'opera sua nella tempesta, amando, soffrendo, combattendo, solo con la sua fede, con la sua passione e col suo genio - disse la Foscarina (Eleonora Duse) *lentamente, come assorta nella visione di quella vita dolorosa e coraggiosa che aveva nutrito del più caldo suo sangue le creature della sua arte. -"*

(- "Here is a heroic soul, of pure Italian essence! - confirmed Daniele Glàuro with admiration.

- He accomplished his work in the storm, loving, suffering, fighting, only with his faith, his passion and his genius,' said Foscarina slowly, as if absorbed in the vision of that painful and courageous life that had nourished the creatures of his art with its warmest blood. -")

The scene turns from a discussion into a theatrical mode when La Foscarina encourages Stelio (D'Annunzio) to tell about Monteverde. His telling captures the imagination to such an extent that the composer actually appears in the dining room:

"*L'antico sonator di viola, vedovo ardente e triste come l'Orfeo della sua favola, apparve nel cenacolo. Fu un'apparizione di fuoco assai più fiera e più abbagliante di quella cha aveva accesso il bacino di San Marco: una infiammata forza di vita, espulsa dall imo grembo della natura verso l'anzia delle moltitudini; una veemente zona di luce, erotta da un cielo interiore e rischiarare i fondi più segreti dela volontà e del desiderio umano; un inaudito verbo, emerso dal silenzio originario a esprimere quel che v'è di eterno e di eternamente indicibile nel cuore del mondo."*

(The ancient viola player, a fiery and sad widower like the Orfeo of his fable, appeared in the cenacle. It was an apparition of fire far prouder and more dazzling than that which had entered the basin of St Mark's: an inflamed force of life, ejected from the womb of nature towards the anxiety of the multitudes; a vehement zone of light, erupted from an inner sky and illuminated the most secret depths of the human will and desire; an unheard word, emerging from the original silence to express what is eternal and eternally unspeakable in the heart of the world.)

Then the poet asks the audience, 'Should we speak of him if he himself could speak to us?.' He means that it is infinitely more telling to hear the music composed by Monteverdi. The following scene still evokes an almost spiritistic seance, now with real music. The singer that appears in *Il Fuoco* as Donatella Arivale was, in reality, Giulietta Gordigiani, a very beautiful rising star and close friend of Eleonora Duse. At the beginning of the novel, she is

[78] The figure of Daniele Glàuro was based on Angelo Conti, an art historian and writer who, at the time, was the director of the Galleria dell'Accademia di Belle Arti in Venice.
La Foscarina is moulded after D'Annunizo's partner of those years, the famous actress Eleonora Duse (1858-1924), with whom he had a stormy relationship. She was the Italian equivalent of Sarah Bernhardt. The intrigue of her relationship was exposed in *Il Fuoco.*

announced to be soon performing Arianna, but in this scene, Donatella appears as an anonymous ghost of the mythological Arianna.

(For reasons of brevity, only the English translation is given in the following passage of *Il Fuoco.*)

"And he gazed at the singer, and he saw her as when she had first appeared to him in the pauses, among the forest of instruments white and lifeless as a shadow. But the spirit of beauty which they had invoked was to manifest itself through her.

'Ariadne', Stelio added in a low voice as if to awaken her.

She rose without speaking, went to the door, and entered the neighbouring room. They heard the rustle of her skirts, her light footfall, and the sound of the cembalo being opened. All were quiet and intent. A musical silence seemed to occupy the place that had remained empty in the supper room. Once, only a breath of wind slanted the candle flames, disturbing the flowers. Then all became anxious again and motionless in expectation.

" Lasciatemi morire ! "

Suddenly their souls were ravished by a power that seemed the lightning-like eagle by which Dante in his dream was ravished up to the flame. They were burning together in undying truth; they heard the world's melody pass through their luminous ecstasy.

" *Lasciatemi morire* ! "

Was it Ariadne, still Ariadne, who was weeping in some new pain? rising, still rising, to new height in her martyrdom?

E che volete
Che mi conforte
In cosi dura sorte.
In cosi gran martire?
Lasciatemi morire"

The voice ceased; the singer did not reappear. The aria of Claudio Monteverde composed itself in the memory like a changeless feature.

" Is there any Greek marble that has reached a simpler and securer perfection of style? " said Daniele Glauro in a low voice, as if he feared to disturb the silence, which was still ringing with the music.

" But what sorrow on earth has ever wept like this?" stammered Lady Myrta, her eyes full of tears that ran down the furrows of her poor, bloodless face while her hands, deformed by gout, trembled as they wiped them away.[79]

[79] "The Flame of Life" English translation by Kassandra Vivaria, Boston, L.C. Page, 1900. pp. 114-115

Because the 'voi' is also missing here (see above: *E che volete voi)*, D'Annunzio likely had a score of the *Arie Antiche* by Parisotti. Even more likely, he knew the score and Giulietta Gordigiani once performed the lamento for him. The contact was intimate, but she disappeared (*la cantatrice non riapparve*)[80] from his life when she married Baron Robert von Mendelssohn in 1899, a descendant of Felix Mendelssohn, a cellist and a wealthy banker. The couple settled down in Berlin, where they lived until Mendelssohn's death (1917), in close contact with a large circle of famous musicians.[81] It is very well possible that Giulietta witnessed the concert in 1908, where the Berliner Philharmoniker performed the *Lamento* with the slender-toned singing soprano Julia Culp (see above) as a soloist.

The 20th-century breakthrough

Admiration for Monteverdi, labelled as a proto-Wagnerian composer, coloured his music's revival just partly. Rolland had started this associative narrative, which d'Annunzio used to disseminate his ideology of Mediterranean superiority. But Rolland was from the beginning convinced of Monteverdi's unique qualities, judging it with the same criteria as he did with the music of his contemporaries. He was not looking for a hybrid romantic style for the inventor of opera but searched for the essence of his output. The challenge was to bring the dormant scores of Monteverdi's dramatic music to life, even though they were an incomplete representation of the actual musical and dramatic compass.
Musicology was needed to start a work of reconstruction, and Berlin delivered much more in that field than as a stage for sounding rediscoveries. For decades, Paris would prove to have the most fertile cultural soil for such initiatives. The fruits of Emil Vogel's thorough investigations in Italy and the subsequent intelligent interpretation of these findings resulted in the possibility of performing the complete *Lamento d'Arianna* and not only its first page.[82] Rolland had started a cooperation with the composer Vincent d'Indy, who was leading the Paris Schola Cantorum, to prepare new performances of Monteverdi's music, just as the school had done with Lully and Rameau. When d'Indy was working on a lecture performance in October 1902, he received a letter in which Rolland suggested performing next to fragments of *Orfeo,* the lamento, at least partly because it was the most famous and most perfect of Monteverdi's pieces.[83]

He warned, however, that the piece in its entirety could risk being monotonous.

"*Il est un peu trop long, pour pouvoir être donné, sans une impression de monotonie qui détruirait l'émotion du début. Mais peut-être pourrait-on exécuter une partie."*

(It is a little too long to be given without an impression of monotony, which would destroy the emotion of the beginning. But perhaps part of it could be performed.")

Two months later the lamento would be successfully performed in Paris by the young Italian soprano Mlle. Palasara, enthousiastically reviewed by Romain Rolland in the Revue Musicale

[80] Mariano, *Gabriele d'Annunzio,* p.33,
[81] Such as Joseph Joachim, Adolf Busch, Edwin Fischer, Carl Flesch, Karl Klingler, Vladimir Horowitz, Gregor Piatigorsky, Rudolf Serkin, Pau Casals, Arthur Schnabel, Eugene Ysaÿe, Bruno Eisner. The latter might have introduced the scientist Albert Einstein as violinist, with whom he would later play trios together with Giulletta's son Francesco, a cellist like his father.
[82] See above footnote 56.
[83] :" *C'est la plus célèbre page de Monteverde, peut-être la plus parfait…",* autographes de Romain Rolland, Bernard Duchatelet, 2018, p. 83: www.association-romainrolland.org,

of December that year.[84] He had published two fragments from *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*[85] in the same journal to show the comic side of Monteverdi's dramatic work. He must have copied these by hand in Venice when he visited the library of San Marco on his way to Bayreuth.[86] This first confrontation with Wagner's operas left a very deep imprint on the young Rolland, and it certainly explains the shared admiration in fiery discussions he had later with Gabriele d'Annunzio.
Similar inspiration may have worked in his contact with Vincent d'Indy, who was also a dedicated Wagnerian since he had witnessed the complete *Ring des Nibelungen* in 1876 at the inauguration of the Festspielhaus in Bayreuth. Despite their differences, particularly in politics but also more generally in the appreciation of art, d'Indy and Rolland were soul mates in their view of Wagnerian potential qualities in Monteverdi's stage works. Rolland's thesis from 1895 must have triggered the attention by its repetitive references to Wagner.

"…on reconnaît encore l'artiste de la race de Wagner, le musicien dont le but est bien précisément l'action dramatique, et non pas la musique."[87]

(…one recognises the artist of Wagner's kind, the musician whose goal is precisely the dramatic action and not the music.")

D'Indy did not read Rolland's thesis very thoroughly because he quoted freely in his Schola Cantorum lectures, compiled in the third volume of *Cours de Composition Musicale* by a former scholar, Guy de Lioncourt. In this narrative, Artusi was mistakenly labelled one of the Camerata dei Bardi;

'Monteverdi subit des critiques acerbes de la part des Florentins. Artusi, l'un des littérateurs à la solde de Bardi, relate en ces termes la première représentation d'*Orfeo* "On entend un mélange de sons, une diversité de voix, une rumeur harmonique insupportable aux sens. L'un chante vite, l'autre lentement; l'un va à l'aigu, l'autre tombe au grave; un 3^{e} n'est ni grave ni aigu; tel chante selon la méthode harmonique, tel autre selon l'arithméthique. Comment voulez-vous que l'esprit se reconnaisse dans ce tohu-bohu d'impressions?'[88]

("Monteverdi was harshly criticised by the Florentines. Artusi, one of Bardi's literary henchmen, wrote of the first performance of Orfeo: "One hears a mixture of sounds, a diversity of voices, a harmonic rumble unbearable to the senses. One sings quickly, another slowly; one goes high, another low; a 3rd is neither low nor high; one sings according to the harmonic method, another according to the arithmetical method. How do you expect the mind to recognise itself in this hodge-podge of impressions?")

[84] Romain Rolland, *La Revue Musicale*, 2, Nr. 12, December 1902. p.539.
[85] *La Revue Musicale*, 3, No. 4, 4 April 1903, pp. 190-193.
[86] Rolland was invited by his friend Malwida von Meysenbug to attend Wagner performances before returning to Paris. See also Johannes Boer, "Ignition-year 1900, Claudio Monteverdi between revival and decadentismo." in: (Fabris, Dinko and Anna Tedesco, eds), *La riscoperta di Monteverdi nel XX secolo. Musica antica, recezione e pratica della messinscena,* proceedings of the Seminar at Fondazione Levi, Venice, 22-24 settembre 2022, special issue of *Musica e storia*, n.s., I, 2024 (in preparation).
[87] Quoted by Annegret Fauser, "Archéologue malgré lui: Vincent d'Indy et les usages de l'histoire." *In*: Vincent d'Indy et son temps. Musique/Musicologie, Sprimont, Mardaga, 2006. p. 128.
[88] Vincent d'Indy, *Cours de Composition musicale,* Troisième livre, redigé par Guy de Lioncourt d'après les notes prises aux classes de la Schola Cantorum. (Paris, Durand, 1912 /reprint 1950) p. 26.

Another proof of d'Indy's sloppiness in consulting *Les Origines du Théâtre Lyrique moderne,* is that he missed the fact that Artusi was a priest at the Congregation of the Saviour in Bologna.[89] If the *Cours* were based on notes taken between 1897 and 1898, during d'Indy's lessons in the Schola Cantorum, the responsible students or their teacher must have been drowsy. The *Cours* Vol. 3 consists of some random mixtures of quotes from Rolland, like the one above, which he did not connect to *Orfeo* at all. Another surprising quote is more accurate on d'Indy's side but concerns a Wagnerian projection by Rolland himself, which, even as a free interpretation of the *Dichiaratione*, is farfetched. It sounds very much like the kind of populism that Rolland endorsed.

Les hommes de science protestent au nom de Platon, que le peuple se trompe et ne saurait juger. Non, le peuple a raison, et s'il contredit l'élite, c'est à l'élite à se taire.[90]

(Men of science protest in the name of Plato that the people are wrong and cannot judge. No, the people are right, and if they contradict the elite, it is up to the elite to keep quiet.)

In this case, the elite is represented by the academic world, which, as noticed by Annegret Fauser, meant a high degree of identification for Vincent d'Indy. The shared opposition to the academic world was even more than 'slightly veiled in the discourse,' as she puts it.[91] After Padre Martini and Charles Burney, d'Indy discovered new fictive enemies that would have fought Monteverdi.

'Mais bientôt, frappé par la sécheresse du style résultant des théories florentines, il se prit de querelle avec Caccini et se libéra violemment de la tutelle des Académies, qui lui décernèrent alors à l'unanimité un brevet d'ignorance.'

(But soon, struck by the dryness of style resulting from Florentine theories, he quarrelled with Caccini and violently freed himself from the tutelage of the Academies, which then unanimously awarded him a patent of ignorance.)[92]

Obviously, d'Indy lacked the musicological rigour to offer an alternative for the existing institutions and academia he had been criticising. In the educational field, he had high ambitions to initiate changes, and he was part of a committee with a mandate from the 'Ministre de l'Instruction Publique et des Beaux-Arts' to reform the Conservatoire.[93] A rejection from the Paris Conservatoire of his plans for innovation resulted in the foundation of the Schola Cantorum Paris in 1894, together with the organist Alexandre Guilmant and choir conductor Charles Bordes, the principal until d'Indy took over in 1904 (see above).

The Schola embodied the ideology that young composers should learn from analysing great works from the past. After 1900, not just analysis but, on the contrary, increasingly realising these compositions in performance became a way to understand the artistic essence of ancient masters better. A long list of masterworks by half or entirely forgotten composers was excavated and performed in monthly concerts. Predominantly, the French cultural

[89] Rolland, *Les origines,* p.102.
[90] Rolland, *Les Origines,* p. 101. Quoted by d'Indy in *Cours, Vol 3,* p.26.
[91] Fauser, *Archéologue,* p. 131.
[92] D'Indy, *Cours,* Vol 3*,* p. 25.
[93] Jann Pasler, "Deconstructing d'Indy, or the Problem of a Composer's Reputation," *19th-Century Music,* 30/3, (Los Angeles, University of California Press, 2007) p. 240.

heritage was restored, and Rameau, Lully, Charpentier, Clérambault, and Couperin were regularly sounding in the Salle Érard of the school. But Johann Sebastian Bach was probably the best-represented composer of all, and many cantatas and concertos or chamber works alternated in the concert series with the large-scale lineups of oratorios and the B-minor Mass.

This repertoire was all preserved in printed scores (old and new) and manuscripts with sufficient information about which notes were supposed to sound and when. For Monteverdi's dramatic work, however, reconstruction was needed with a thorough understanding of the early 17th-century Italian monodic style. That knowledge was not yet sufficiently available, certainly not to accomplish a reconstruction from an unfigured bass in the bold and unpredictable harmonic language of Monteverdi. In the preface of his 1905 edition of the *Orfeo*, Vincent d'Indy states that the realisation of the basso continuo is done with '*le plus grand respect'* for style. Despite the respect, d'Indy worked out a regularly modernising solution for the recitatives after being encouraged by Romain Rolland to consult a transcription by Robert Eitner.[94] In the letter quoted above (footnote 76), Rolland refers to this transcription, used by d'Indy to make his arrangement. Eitner's edition had a scholarly purpose rather than performative, and Rolland approved the accurate transcription but had severe doubts about the 'harmonic fantasies' of the German musicologist, which were apparently a point of discussion in a previous letter by d'Indy. Rolland wrote: "One is confronted with strange disappointments when taking a closer look at the impressive German science."[95]
However, d'Indy's opinion about Eitner's work was formulated explicitly only later, in 1915, when he released an orchestral score of his own arrangements:

Mon but n'est pas de présenter un *fac similé* de la partition originale traduite en notation moderne; ce travail a déjà été fait assez exactement quant à la sincérité du texte, quoi qu'avec une parfaite absence de goût et une lourdeur bien allemandes, par Robert Eitner. Un document de ce genre intéressant peut-être pour les archéologues, eut été de nulle utilité pour les artistes.[96]

(My aim is not to present a facsimile of the original score translated into modern notation; this work has already been done quite accurately as far as the sincerity of the text is concerned, albeit with a perfect lack of taste and a very German heaviness, by Robert Eitner. A document of this kind, interesting perhaps for archaeologists, would have been of no use to artists.)

A simple explanation for Eitner's twisted harmonic passages is his effort to produce plausible constructions in the basso continuo realisation along the tonality-rules of later periods, which did not exist in the first half of the 17th century.[97] So, in that sense, d'Indy

[94] Robert Eitner, *Die Oper von ihren ersten Anfängen bis zur Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts*, (Leipzig, Breitkopf & Härtel, 1881).
[95] '*On a d'étranges déceptions quand on approche d'un peu plus près l'imposante science allemande.'* footnote 76, Duchatelet, *autographes,* p.83.
[96] Quoted in his dissertation by Benjamin Ernest Thorburn, *Recomposing Monteverdi:* Twentieth-Century Adaptations of Monteverdi's Operas" (PhD diss., Yale University, 2012), p. 15.
[97] Jane Glover has dissected some passages containing farfetched oddities in harmonisation just to keep the vocal and bass lines original. Jane Glover, "The Metamorphoses of *Orfeo,*" *The Musical Times*, 116, Feb. 1975, p.135.

was right about the German approach.
But James Thorburn has pointed out that the versions d'Indy produced of *Orfeo* - in 1905 a French version with piano reduction and in 1915 in Italian with orchestral score – relied very much on Eitner's edition from 1881. Somehow, d'Indy was not aware that he contradicted himself about the uselessness of the musicologist's work for artists and performers. There is convincing evidence that the French composer did not have any other source at his disposal but Eitner's score.[98] Wishing to mould the drama of *Orfeo* in the direction of Wagner, d'Indy had cut off the first and the last act, but nothing appeared in his score that was not found in Eitner's edition, which was also lacking many parts of the original 1609 print.

After all the preparations were done, on 25 February 1904 at 21.00 h, the *Troisième concert mensuel* of the Schola Cantorum was dedicated to the first modern performance of Monteverdi's *Orfeo* in a French translation. Several reviews describe the exceptional event and the imaginative use of instruments by their symbolic connotations within the story. Some of them point directly to the similarities with Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*, which premiered in Paris two years earlier. Apart from the transparent texture, both operas have a kinship in their French declamation.

Today, it is hard to imagine that the performing forces mounted up to 150. To understand the proportions, it is important to realise that at the end of the 19th century, the number of performers was often much higher. Even then, an atmosphere of intimacy was possible, and according to the critics, the music spoke directly to its audience. Louis Laloy remarks in his review in the Revue Musicale about the contrast with Gluck's *Orfeo*: 'Orpheus is a man, not a divine virtuoso.'[99]

In total, there are six extant reviews about this first resurrection of *Orfeo*, mostly from the inner circle of the Schola, like the conductor Julien Tiersot in his magazine Le Ménestrel. His observation is that the lyrical form of this *Orfeo* did not resemble the familiar styles of more ancient epochs nor of the later operas. He calls the peculiar facets of harmony, orchestration etc. at the same time '*très savant et très naïf.'* [100]

The success of the performance was followed by a publication of the piano reduction that d'Indy had made of his own arrangement. This was a crucial first step in the history of Monteverdi-revival because it was not intended as a complete scholarly reconstruction of the original 1609 edition (*reconstitution complète de la partition originale*) as d'Indy writes in his preface. He worked out a score for practical execution of the work in concerts. The release of the score was celebrated with a retake of the *Orphée* on 27 January 1905 in the intimacy of the Schola. Ten days later, a second (public) performance took place at the Salle Pleyel, this time conducted by d'Indy's student Francisco de Lecerda. Above all, the juvenile freshness of the performance, as well as its precision, were praised.[101]

Suddenly, among the many composers whose music was revived by the Paris Schola, a new voice was added that distinguished itself from the many Renaissance masters, J.S. Bach, and the French Baroque music that had been performed for some years, like Charpentier, Campra, or Rameau. With hindsight, the narrative about Monteverdi as mainly a historical figure was taken over by proof of his musical presence, thus creating a new dimension of

[98] Thorburn, *Recomposing Monteverdi,* p. 20.
[99] Louis Laloy, *Revue Musicale*, 4/6, 15 March 1904, p.170.
[100] Federico Lazzaro, "Meco trarrotti a riveder le stelle. Letture comparata delle trascrizioni novecentesche dell' *Orfeo* di Monteverdi.", Thesis, University of Milan, 2007. p. 63.
[101] *Revue Musicale*, 5/4, 15 February 1905, p.125.

narrative. Of course, we should see this in the context of a general revival of music from the past as cultivated by the Schola Cantorum. Nevertheless, Monteverdi's position is different thanks to the surprise of his personal dramatic language in combination with an 'open score', demanding knowledge and creativity to complete it. The performance of *Orfeo* in 1904 and the publication of the score a year later was the beginning of a chain of similar adaptations by famous composers throughout the 20th century.

Parallel to these developments, musicological and philological studies intensified the quest for the 'original' Monteverdi, while performers gradually searched a way to convince by their interpretations with the help of knowledge that was thus retrieved.

While in Paris, the *Orfeo* was prepared for performance, 20-year-old Gian Francesco Malipiero saw his first Monteverdi manuscript in the library of Venice, there titled *Nerone,* but actually *L'Incoronazione di Poppea.* In his own words[102] the seed was planted then for making a transcription of the complete works, which would result in the first monumental edition of a composer in Italy.

Composers often took the lead in making the material ready for performance but also grasped the opportunity to go beyond adaptation and created new work out of an interaction with the 'ghost' of the old master.[103] These hybrid creations were not just a station to pass towards an ultimately historical reconstruction. In recent times, some musicians classified as historical performers with great knowledge of and fluency in the style of Monteverdi's times have chosen to go a comparable, adventurous way.[104]

Being alive by being performed in the past 120 years, all these different aspects have led to a wide spectrum of manifestations, renewing the narrative and proliferating an immense and fertile variety around the person of Claudio Monteverdi and the implicit messages communicated by his music.

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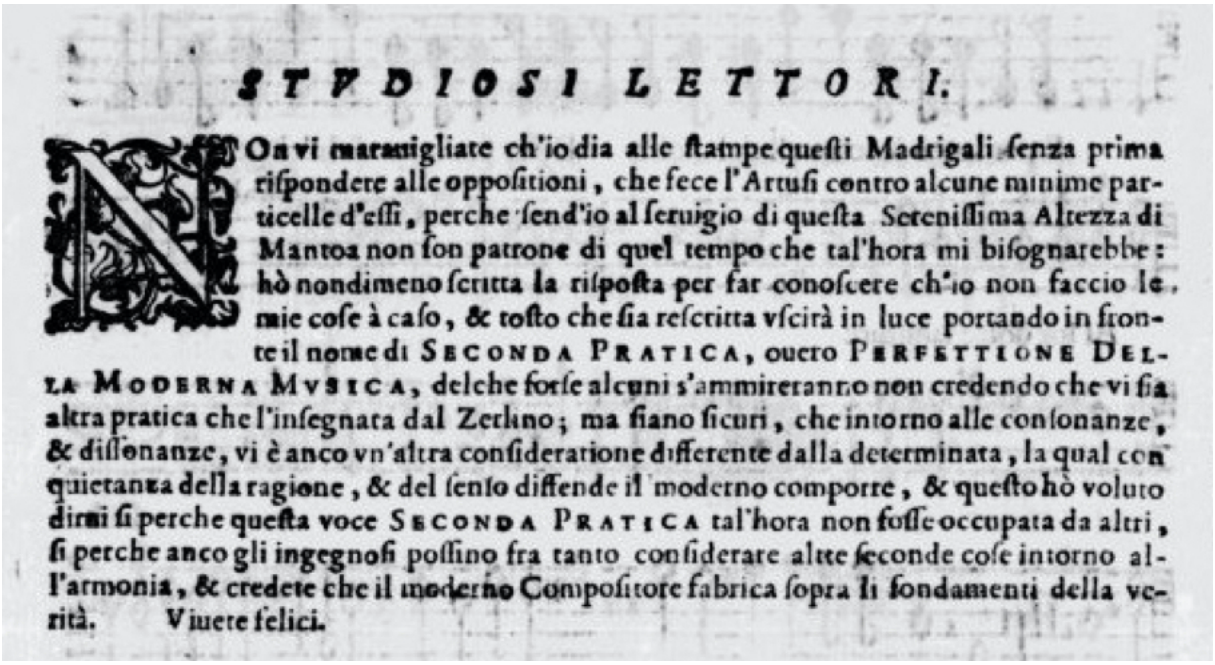
[102] Gian Francesco Malipiero, *Così parlò Claudio Monteverdi,* published on the occasion of Monteverdi's 400th birthday. (Milano, All'insegna del pesce d'oro, 1967).

[103] Thorburn, *Recomposing Monteverdi,* p. 5.

[104] Of course, the most striking example is the ensemble l'Arpeggiata, which has grown from an early music group into an ensemble with an identity outside the categories in the past twenty years. The mixture of early music with different styles, where jazzy or folkloristic improvisation and arrangements dominate, resulted in music played intentionally with postmodern allusions. The Monteverdi programs prioritise playfulness and leisure, detached from a lot of the stylistic agreements of the historical performance community. Other ensembles with comparable freedom of using the original material are often related to this format by one or more shared performers like Ensemble Accordone working with the Italian tenor Marco Beasly. This way, the practice opened a new debate about the identity of historical performance and the boundaries between entertainment and genuine historical content of early music.

Dichiaratione



STVDIOSI LETTORI.

NOn vi marauigliate ch'io dia alle ſtampe queſti Madrigali ſenza prima riſpondere alle oppoſitioni, che fece l'Artuſi contro alcune minime particelle d'eſſi, perche ſend'io al ſeruigio di queſta Seteniſſima Altezza di Mantoa non ſon patrone di quel tempo che tal'hora mi biſognarebbe: hò nondimeno ſcritta la riſpoſta per far conoſcere ch'io non faccio le mie coſe à caſo, & toſto che ſia reſcritta vſcirà in luce portando in fronte il nome di SECONDA PRATICA, ouero PERFETTIONE DELLA MODERNA MVSICA, delche forſe alcuni s'ammireranno non credendo che vi ſia altra pratica che l'inſegnata dal Zerlino; ma ſiano ſicuri, che intorno alle conſonanze, & diſſonanze, vi è anco vn'altra conſideratione differente dalla determinata, la qual con quietanza della ragione, & del ſenſo diffende il moderno comporre, & queſto hò voluto dirui ſi perche queſta voce SECONDA PRATICA tal'hora non foſſe occupata da altri, ſi perche anco gli ingegnoſi poſſino fra tanto conſiderare altre ſeconde coſe intorno all'armonia, & credete che il moderno Compoſitore fabrica ſopra li fondamenti della verità. Viuete felici.

Letter to the 'Studious readers' of Claudio Monteverdi in *Madrigals* Book V, 1605.

STUDIOSI LETTORI

Non vi marauigliate ch'io dia alle stampe questi Madrigali senza prima rispondere alle oppositioni, che fece l'Artusi contro alcune minime particelle d'essi, perche send'io al seruigio di questa Serenissima Altezza di Mantoa non son patrone di quell tempo che tal'hora mi bisognarebbe; hò nondimeno scritta la riposta per far conoscer ch'io non faccio le mie cose à caso, & tosto che sia rescritta uscirà in luce portando in fronte il nome di SECONDA PRATICA ouero PERFETTIONE DEL-
LA MODERNA MUSICA, delche forse alcuni s'ammeriranno non credendo che vi sia altra pratica, che l'insegnata dal Zerlino; ma siano sicuri, che intorno alle consonanze, & dissonanze vi è anco un altra consideratione differente dalla determinata, la qual con quietanza della ragione, & del senso diffende il moderno comporre, & questo hò voluto dirui si perche questa voce SECONDA PRATICA tal'hora non fosse occupata da altri, si perche anco gli ingegnosi possino tanto considerare altre seconde cose intorno all'armonia, & credere che il moderno Compositore fabrica sopra li fondamenti della verità. Viuete felici.

Studious readers

"Do not marvel that I am giving these madrigals to the press without first replying to the objections that L'Artusi[1] has brought against some very minute details in them, for being in the service of His Most Serene Highness of Mantua, I have had not at my disposal the time that would be required.

Nevertheless, to show that I do not compose my works haphazardly, I have written a reply which will appear as soon as I have revised it, bearing the title *Seconda pratica, overo Perfettione della moderna musica.*

Some, not suspecting there is any practice other than that taught by Zerlino [Zarlino], will wonder at this, but let them be assured that, with regard to the consonances and dissonances, there is still another way of considering them different from the established way, which, with satisfaction to the reason and to the senses, defends the modern method of composing. I have wished to say this to you so that the expression 'Second Practice' may not be appropriated[2] by anyone else and so that the ingenious may reflect meanwhile upon other secondary matters concerning harmony and believe that the modern composer builds upon the foundation of truth. Live happily."[3]

[1] Referring to the treatise *L'Artusi overo Delle imperfettioni della moderna musica* (Venice, Giacomo Vicenti, 1600) and *Seconda parte dell'Artusi* etc. (Venice, Giacomo Vicenti, 1603).

[2] Monteverdi claims the term *Seconda Prattica* knowing that he was not the only one composing thus. The term however was introduced in the *Seconda Parte dell'Artusi* (fol. 16) when quoting a letter of L'Ottuso academico: "...*con tutto ciò tal forma di modulatione `e communamente usata da tutti gli Moderni, massime che hanno abbracciata questa nova seconda pratica*,..."

[3] Translation Tim Carter in: Carter/Fabbri, *Monteverdi,* (Cambridge 1995) p.48.

How to read the '*lettera ai studiosi lettori*' and its defence?

The following comments on the letter published by Claudio Monteverdi as a postscript to his fifth book of madrigals and his brother's defence in the clarification of that letter in 1607 should be considered in the light of the project of *La Tragedia di Claudio M.* There has been an interesting musicological discourse since Palisca's comprehensive article in the Monteverdi Companion of 1968.[4] My analysis of both the letter itself, as well as its clarification are not intended to add new insights to the highly specialised studies by the named authors. On the contrary, I have been using their work to address the necessary backgrounds for my narrative while constructing the opera and mostly for the staging of the Artusi-Monteverdi conflict.

The controversy between the views of the practitioner Monteverdi and the theorist Artusi is accentuated in its polarisation for clarity in a dramaturgical sense. But certainly, underneath this theatrical stream, the epistemological quest colours my statements and selection of material '*à charge*' and '*à décharge'.*

The whole quarrel has a forensic flavour, and the remark by Bottrigari about Artusi behaving as a 'public censor' (see The Narrative, Chapter 2, p. 40.) is not just meant ironically. If we bear in mind that Monteverdi's son Massimiliano (as a 23-year-old doctor) was later imprisoned for reading a forbidden book, we realise that the times were very different than today.

Also, Monteverdi's experience of losing a court case in 1625 when trying to secure his inheritance of the house in Mantua of his late father-in-law recalls his association with a labyrinth. In a letter about the case, he quotes Socrates, saying the labyrinth is nothing but quarrelling. (see Chapters Contexts, p. 132 and The Libretto on page 124, note 37.)

To catch the 'tone' of all this quarrelling, I limited myself to sticking as much as possible to the direct sources.

What we tend to forget as readers is that the writing of both parties tacitly addresses an audience. With all its rhetoric and verbal gestures, a high level of theatrical energy is implicitly conducted to a third party that is expected to judge.

In the first analysis (*analysis* is used here in a literal meaning of loosen-up) **A**, I intend to look behind the mask of Monteverdi, just by using a direct exegesis.

In part **B**, the dramatic line-up becomes more complex with the (erudite) brother as one of the protagonists (having the great and busy maestro behind his back), who replies his opponent in a style that matches the bluntness of the attacks.

The payoff for historians is an insight into professional musicians' way of thinking and their vision of their own significance as creators.

[4] I have used Palisca's revised version in; Claude Palisca, *The Artusi-Monteverdi controversy* in the *[New] Monteverdi Companion*, New York, Norton, 1968 [repr.1985], p.127-58. The most informative further contributions to the discourse were for me: Massimo Ossi, *Divining the Oracle: Monteverdi's 'Seconda prattica*, (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2003); Pierre-Henry Frangne et al. *L'Ombre de Monteverdi, la querelle de la nouvelle musique (1600-1638),* Rennes, Presse Universitaire, 2008.; Tim Carter, '"E in rileggiendo poi le propprie note": Monteverdi Responds to Artusi?', *Renaissance Studies,* 26 (2012), 138-55.; Seth J. Coluzzi, '"Se Vedesti Qui Dentro": Monteverdi's "O Mirtillo, Mirtillo Anima Mia" and Artusi's Offence', *Music & Letters,* 94/1, (February 2013), pp. 1-37.

A) Analysis of the *Lettera* from *Libro Quinto* 1605

1. Do not marvel that I am giving these madrigals to the press without first replying to the objections that L'Artusi *has brought*

Though the previous madrigal book (*Libro Quarto*, 1603) included one madrigal that Artusi attacked ('Anima mia, perdona'), the publication of *Libro Quinto* can be seen as a statement in itself by opening with 'Cruda Amarilli'. From this madrigal, Artusi took five examples to demonstrate what he considered violations against the rules of counterpoint and good taste as determined by Gioseffo Zarlino and, after him, generally accepted.

Monteverdi plunges into the subject without introduction, as if all his "studious readers" would know about *L'Artusi,* Artusi's condemnations in his publications of 1600 and later in 1603.

2. ...*against some very minute details (minime particelle) in them, …*

By reducing Artusi's objections to "alcune minime particelle" (a few tiny details), Monteverdi confronts him with the view of a mature practitioner. The comments by Artusi are, so to speak, automatically categorised as those from a theorist who is not entirely in touch with the musical practice and missing the point of their meaning within the whole.[5] Giving the madrigals without changes in the manuscript to the press stands here for making them public in a superior, confident way. Confidence may have been gained by the success of the fourth book, which after two years was already being reprinted, also in 1605.

3. …for being in the service of His Most Serene Highness of Mantua, I have had not at my disposal the time that would be required...

Actually, not having time to respond because of his obligations to one of the greatest patrons in the arts of his time shows Monteverdi as someone who has more important things to do than quarrelling about minor details. By adding this perspective of priorities, Artusi's arguments seem even more futile; while feigning polite willingness to have otherwise answered, Monteverdi preserves his own noble standard.

*4. ...Nevertheless, to show that I do not compose my works haphazardly ('*a caso'*),*

From this response, we can see that Monteverdi had not only read the allegations in the *'Ragionamento Secondo'* that directly concerned his work. In the first part of *L'Artusi,* the author ridicules the practitioners by suggesting they would ignore the rules of previous theorists, and put their intervals randomly in their compositions, because for them it is enough if they make a noise according to their liking.

"...e giova alla cognitione di saper cognoscere, la natura, la proprietà, e la passione degli intervalli in qual luoco particolare debbano collocati, e disposti di modo che faccino miglior

[5] See the Chapter Michael Polanyi, footnote 19.

effetto [....] che non sarebbono come essendo talhora, e per i piu delle pratici posti nelle Cantilene **a caso;** & le basta che secondo la volontà loro faccino romore."[6]

("...and it is useful to know the nature, the property, and the passion of the intervals in what particular place they should be placed, and arranged so that they have a better effect [.....] than they would have, as they are sometimes, and for the most practical reasons, placed in the voices **at random**; and it is enough that they make a noise according to their will.)

5. ...*I have written a reply which will appear as soon as I have revised it, bearing on the title page:"* Seconda pratica, overo Perfettione della moderna musica."...

However, to demonstrate that the "minor details" are part of a greater concept that defines his style and no weak spots in the composition, Monteverdi boasts that he already has written something that, as a theoretical work, could compete with Artusi's.[7] This phrase is added to dress up his profile as an intellectual and knowledgeable composer and even a spokesman for the generation of composers writing in the new style. At the same time, he positions himself by this announcement with remarkable historical awareness as an essential representative of that new style.

But if anything at all, that theoretical work was certainly not nearly finished as he suggested because even thirty years later, it would not appear as a publication, despite his repeated promise.[8]

*6. …Some, not suspecting there is any practice other than that taught by Zerlino [*Zarlino*], will wonder at this…*

Monteverdi challenges Artusi's positioning of the authority of Gioseffo Zarlino (misspelling his name was probably not intentional, this was common), whose *Istitutioni Harmoniche* dominated half a century of music theory and practice.[9] He categorises Artusi indirectly among a minority (*alcuni* = some) that cannot believe another practice is possible than the perfection achieved by Zarlino. The Monteverdi-Artusi controversy thus became much more polarised than the arguments of both parties would justify.

7. …but let them be assured that, with regard to the consonances and dissonances, there is still another way of considering them, different from the established way, …

Even though Monteverdi was arbitrarily attacked for incidentally deviating from the rules by his treatment of dissonances, in his defence, he overlooked or ignored detailed nuances that Artusi had published sixteen years earlier about the importance and various functions of

[6] *L'Artusi, Raggionamento Primo*, fol. 33v.
[7] Pierre-Henry Frangne et al. *L'Ombre de Monteverdi, la querelle de la nouvelle musique (1600-1638),* (Rennes, Presse Universitaire, 2008) p. 25: 'Tardivement, Monteverdi s'engage donc dans la construction philosophique d'un equivalent aux thèses artusiennes.'
[8] In a letter of 22 October 1633 to Giovanni Battista Doni, as he says he would "pay his debt" by a theoretical treatise with an altered title since the first announcement. Even after his passing away, the mysterious treatise is mentioned by Caberloti in his obituary: about *Laconismo* see Chapter 5, Contexts. p. 134)
[9] Gioseffo Zarlino, *Le Istitutioni harmoniche,*(Venice: Francesco Sense, 1558).

dissonances.[10] It is clear that the theorist and the practitioner are here losing contact with each other's view and end up in miscommunication.

8. …which, with satisfaction to the reason and to the senses, defends the modern method of composing…

Here, Monteverdi gives no explanation, not even a hint about the specific nature of that defence, though reason and senses are covered by it. Artusi's attack often included the accusation that the modern way of composing was causing confusion and offended the intellect (*ragione*) and/or the ear (*il senso*).[11] The fact that the role of the words (*oratione*) was decisive for the composers of the *seconda prattica* is not even mentioned in the letter, though this would have been the most appropriate place to bring it to the surface.

9. …I have wished to say this to you so that the expression 'Second Practice' may not be appropriated(confiscated) by anyone else, …

The reason for Monteverdi to claim this expression as his own and call his studious readers directly as witnesses, is one of the most strategic moves of the whole letter with consequences for his long-lasting reputation. The historical awareness is illustrated in the dedication of that same edition to his patron, Vincenzo Gonzaga. By the protection of the 'Prencipe', so it says, the madrigals "would live eternal life, to the shame of those tongues that had been seeking to cause death to the works of others." In this way, the madrigals of the fifth book can flourish in the embrace of the protection of one of the major patrons of the arts at the front and the announcement of the institutionalisation (through a treatise) of the modern style at the back.

10*. …and further, that the ingenious may reflect meanwhile upon (= consider) other secondary matters concerning harmony…*

Monteverdi addresses intelligent and skilful colleagues with this remark and invites them to scrutinise harmonic issues in that vein after having reserved the term *seconda prattica* for himself. 'Meanwhile' (*fra tanto*) suggests that until he publishes his treatise, they can work on this second practice and, as the end of the letter confirms, eventually enrich the musical world. The characterisation '*ingeniosi*' might have been chosen to underline the contrast with theorists like Artusi, who obviously don't see the new possibilities.[12]

11*. …and believe that the modern composer builds upon the foundation of truth…*

This last phrase of the letter is a rhetorical gesture directly aiming to confront Artusi with his own taunting words. The studious reader is asked to have confidence and believe there will be proof of the truthfulness of modern music. Pointing at the foundation of that music is a

[10] L'Artusi, *Seconda parte dell'Arte del contrapunto nella quale si tratta dell'utile & uso delle dissonanze* (Venice, Giacomo Vincenti, 1589). See on this item Claude Palisca, *The Artusi-Monteverdi controversy* in the *[New] Monteverdi Companion*, (New York, Norton, 1968 [repr.1985]) p.128.

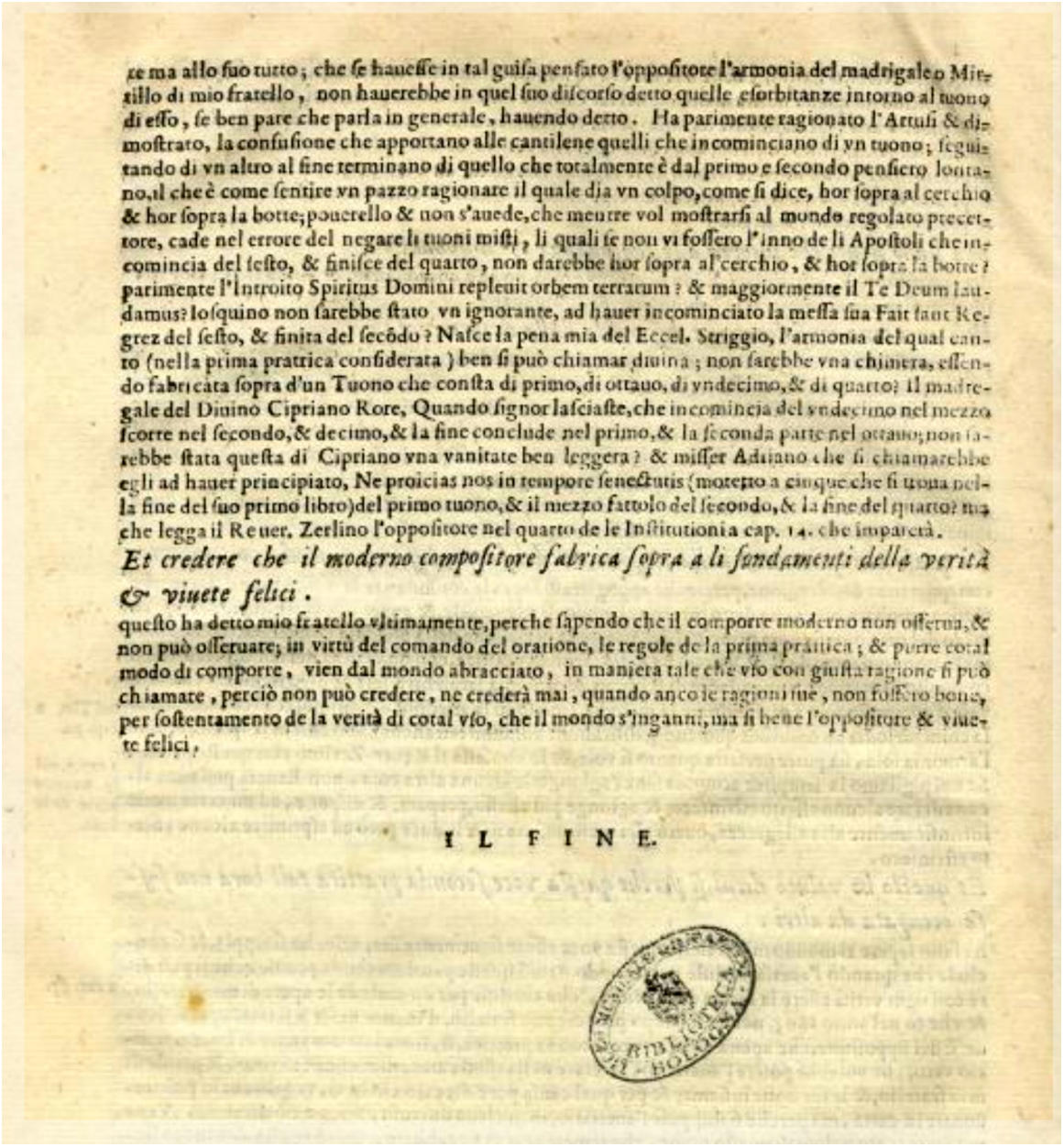
[11] *L'Artusi*,…*Ragionamento secondo*. fol. 43v and 44v.

[12] As even Zarlino pointed out in his third chapter, that his approach is also the practice. See Palisca, *The Artusi-Monteverdi controversy,* p.152-153.

reaction to the allegation in one of Artusi's conclusions that "all that was put together with haste and without fundament."[13]

The last words refer directly to Artusi's claim of rules based on the truth ('*regole, che siano fondate sopra il vero'*).[14]

By concluding this message to the readers (including the opponent) with the word *verità* (truth), Monteverdi seems to have calculated its subliminal effect and let its echo resonate with the happy life he wishes all readers.



se ma allo suo tutto; che se hauesse in tal guisa penſato l'oppoſitore l'armonia del madrigale o Mirtillo di mio fratello, non hauerebbe in quel ſuo diſcorſo detto quelle eſorbitanze intorno al tuono di eſſo, ſe ben pare che parla in generale, hauendo detto. Ha parimente ragionato l'Artuſi & dimoſtrato, la confuſione che apportano alle cantilene quelli che incominciano di vn tuono; ſeguitando di vn altro al fine terminano di quello che totalmente è dal primo e ſecondo penſiero lontano, il che è come ſentire vn pazzo ragionare il quale dia vn colpo, come ſi dice, hor ſopra al cerchio & hor ſopra la botte; poueretto & non s'auede, che mentre vol moſtrarſi al mondo regolato precettore, cade nel errore del negare li tuoni miſti, li quali ſe non vi foſſero l'inno de li Apoſtoli che incomincia del ſeſto, & finiſce del quarto, non darebbe hor ſopra al cerchio, & hor ſopra la botte? parimente l'Introito Spiritus Domini repleuit orbem terrarum? & maggiormente il Te Deum laudamus? Iosquino non ſarebbe ſtato vn ignorante, ad hauer incominciato la meſſa ſua Fait faut Regrez del ſeſto, & finita del ſecõdo? Naſce la pena mia del Eccel. Striggio, l'armonia del qual canto (nella prima prattica conſiderata) ben ſi può chiamar diuina; non ſarebbe vna chimera, eſſendo fabricata ſopra d'un Tuono che conſta di primo, di ottauo, di vndecimo, & di quarto? il madrigale del Diuino Cipriano Rore, Quando ſignor laſciaſte, che incomincia del vndecimo nel mezzo ſcorre nel ſecondo, & decimo, & la fine conclude nel primo, & la ſeconda parte nel ottauo; non ſarebbe ſtata queſta di Cipriano vna vanitate ben leggera? & miſſer Adriano che ſi chiamarebbe egli ad hauer principiato, Ne proicias nos in tempore ſenectutis (motetto a cinque che ſi troua nella fine del ſuo primo libro) del primo tuono, & il mezzo fattolo del ſecondo, & la fine del quarto? ma che legga il Reuer. Zerlino l'oppoſitore nel quarto de le Inſtitutioni a cap. 14. che imparerà.

Et credere che il moderno compoſitore fabrica ſopra a li fondamenti della verità & viuete felici.

queſto ha detto mio fratello vltimamente, perche ſapendo che il comporre moderno non oſſerua, & non può oſſeruare; in virtù del comando del oratione, le regole de la prima prattica; & porre cotal modo di comporre, vien dal mondo abracciato, in maniera tale che vſo con giuſta ragione ſi può chiamare, perciò non può credere, ne crederà mai, quando anco le ragioni ſue, non foſſero bone, per ſoſtentamento de la verità di cotal vſo, che il mondo s'inganni, ma ſi bene l'oppoſitore & viuete felici,

IL FINE.

Giulio Cesare Monteverdi's defence in the postface of *Scherzi musicali,* 1607.[15]

[13] *L'Artusi, Ragionamento Secondo* fol. 42 "perche sono fabriche fatte senza fondamento presto dal tempo"
[14] *Idem*, fol.41v.
[15] Claudio Monteverdi, *Scherzi Musicali a tre voci, Raccolti da Giulio Cesare Monteverde, suo Fratello, & novamente posti in luce.* (Venice, Ricciardo Amadino, 1607)

B) Analysis of the *Dichiaratione* by Giulio Cesare Monteverdi in *Scherzi musicali,* 1607

Truth was, as he says, the main reason for Monteverdi's brother Giulio Cesare to clear him from the ongoing defamation, for instance by someone with the fake name Antonio Braccini (sic,) da Todi,[16] if not the priest himself, clearly from the Artusi camp. Braccini (little arms) might be an intentional pun. Misspelling of names in this controversy is often something ambiguous, as we can learn from Claudio's letters.[17]

Out of brotherly love, he figures as an interpreter of the very dense text of the 1605 letter in order to reinforce Claudio's defence. Two years after the publication of the letter and after the very successful performances of Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, it was apparently time for a next move in the strategy of giving Claudio's reputation a boost. And so, the *Scherzi musicali*, published in July 1607 by Giulio Cesare, are accompanied by a 'clarification of the letter.' (*Dichiaratione della lettera, stampata nel Quinto libro de' suoi Madregali*)

It is unknown how much of this explanation directly comes from Claudio himself.

1.... *"Do not marvel that I am giving these madrigals to the press without first replying to the objections that* L'Artusi *has brought"*

Giulio Cesare starts by indicating that with *L'Artusi* not the person, but the treatise is meant. An attack on the person would be below the dignity of the Monteverdi brothers, in contrast to their opponent with his treatise. Therefore, he allows himself a bit of public shaming by quoting Horace to 'not praise your own work, nor blame that of others.'

2. ...*against some very minute details in them...*

That the blaming by Artusi was about futile notes ('*particelle')* that in the concept of modern composing concerned only details of harmonic shaping or colouring of melody, and while the opponent upgraded them to passages ('*passaggi'*), it revealed, according to the Dichiaratione the ignorance in Artusi's deprecation of the madrigal at stake, 'Cruda Amarilli'.

3. …for being in the service of His Most Serene Highness of Mantua, I have had not at my disposal the time that would be required…

The profile of Claudio is further sketched by his brother to illustrate his status as a court composer and the importance of his role. Having to curate music for both the church and the chamber as a regular occupation, there are, on top of that, extra services such as tournaments, ballets, comedies and concerts. As the last speciality, the playing of the two

[16] The lost first pamphlet by Antonio Braccino da Todi [as agreed by the scholars an alias of Artusi], who published its sequel after Giulio Cesare's reaction: *Discorso secondo musicale sopra la dichiaratione dellla lettera posta ne Scherzi Musicali del sig. Caudio Monteverde*, (Venice, Giacomo Vincentini, 1608).

[17] In his begging letters to Vincenzo Gonzaga to mobilize the non-paying treasurer Ottavio Benintendi, Monteverdi consistently named the latter Bel'Intenti (good intentions). Maybe punning with names was a family habit.

violas bastarda is listed (*concertar le due Viole bastarde*),[18] which was a workload and required study that probably was underestimated by the adversary.

Then Giulio Cesare put forth an important reason for his brother's late response, which goes beyond his many occupations. Claudio takes his time for everything because he is convinced that quality depends on it.[19] A Latin saying is presented here to pay back Artusi's frequent showing off with his own wisecracks: '*prosperantes omnia perverse agunt'* (the hasty do all things badly). Even more important is his next remark that "true virtue requires the whole man" ('la verità della virtù vol tutto l'homo'). To me, this has to be understood in a holistic way (the whole human being).[20] Even more needed, as the argument continues, when treating things that are barely touched by the intelligent theorists on harmony, instead of Artusi's stuff that is 'known to every blear-eyed or barber.'

4. …*Nevertheless, to show that I do not compose my works haphazardly, …*

In this part of the *Dichiaratione*, an essential argument is introduced, namely the dominating role of the text. Claudio, in his letter, refrained from mentioning text (*oratione,* see above), and so Giulio Cesare is introducing a lot of arguments, including the famous phrase that was actually never written down by Claudio himself but by posterity always attributed to him: "che l'oratione sia padrona del armonia e non serva;" ("that oration (= poetic verses) will be the mistress and not the slave of harmony (=music)"

Giulio Cesare then quotes Marsilio Ficino's translation of Plato's *Republic*[21] to provide his defence with substantial intellectual authority. By extracting some lines, he argues that the order Plato gives is significant and determinative for the setting of music (*melodia*); "Melodia consists of three elements, text (oration), harmony and rhythm." *Oratione* is to be understood as the shaping of words with their meaning and expressive diction. He found some more lines where Plato stresses that speech itself follows the passions of the soul and that all the rest follows the text. The impudence of Artusi to present Claudio's madrigals as examples without adding their text and then criticising them is demonstrating blatant stupidity. To make his point even more clear to the reader, another generally respected authority is called in. What would happen if the madrigals of Cipriano de Rore were measured textless along the lines of the *prima prattica*? The music would appear as 'bodies without a soul.'

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[18] Up to the present day, the mention of 'the' two viole bastarde remains enigmatic. It is also remarkable that after having obtained his court position through his viol playing (see preface *Terzo libro de madrigali*), by 1607 Claudio Monteverdi would have those performances still among his responsibilities. On the other hand, there are some indications that Monteverdi kept the instrumental skills which made him enter the court music. See also Bates (2002) and Seth Coluzzi, "Licks, polemics and the viola bastarda: unity and defiance in Claudio Monteverdi's Fifth Book." *Early Music,* 47/ 3, (July 2019), pp. 333-344.

[19] Several letters of Claudio Monteverdi refer to the lack of time to do his work properly. i.e. No. 24, 20-I-1617: "il presto con il bene insieme non conviene" (fast and good together will not match). I am using the latest critical edition available of the Letters, following the numbering adopted there: Annonciade Russo, and Jean-Philippe Navarre, *Monteverdi, Correspondance, préfaces et épîtres dédicatoires,* (Sprimont, Mardaga, 2001), p.70.

[20] I have my doubts about the reading of Suzanne Cusick, who, in her article, connects 'the whole man' with masculinity and builds a gender theory on it. Suzanne Cusick, "Gendering Modern Music: Thoughts on the Monteverdi-Artusi Controversy," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 46/1, (Spring, 1993), p.14.

[21] Marsilio Ficino, posthumous edition of Plato's opera omnia: *Omnia divini Platonis opera tralatione Marsilii Ficini,* (Basel, Officina Frobeniana, 1539), p.564, ("Melodiam ex tribus constare, oration, harmonia, rhythm.") See also p.565, line 19.

Giulio Cesare continues by referring to the facts and proofs that Claudio delivered and contrasting these with his opponent's bare words. Here follows the comparison with a sick person who would have to hear the doctor orate about Hippocrates and Galen instead of obtaining his health by the practitioner's diagnosis.

The world judges the intelligence of a musician not by the twisting of his tongue on theoretical affairs but by his practice. Therefore, he says, Claudio invites his opponent (apparently by direct communication because this is not in the letter) to such a practical act. He is interested in singing and not in writing, with the single exception of the promise he made.[22] Here follows a listing of the composers of what he calls the *Eroica scola* (heroic school):[23] 'the divine Cipriano de Rore, il Signor Prencipe de Venosa (Gesualdo), Emiglio del Cavaliere, il Conte Alfonso Fontanella, il Conte di Camerata, il cavalier Turchi, il Pecci.'

5. …I have written a reply which will appear as soon as I have revised it, bearing on the title page: Seconda pratica, …

Indeed, his brother declares that Claudio announces to explain the difference between the old style and the modern music in the way consonances and dissonances function. And because this was unknown to the opponent, the truth of this matter should be made clear to everybody. Both practices are honoured, venerated and praised by Claudio.

In the first, therefore called *prima prattica*, harmony rules over the text. It was founded by the first composers who wrote 'songs in our notation'[24] for more than one voice.' Giulio Cesare names the following composers (his spellings): "Occeghem, Josquin de pres, Pietro della Rue, Iouan Mouton, Crequillon, Clemens non papa, Gombert & others." Master Adriano (Willaert) perfected this style in a practical way (*con l'atto prattico*) and Zerlino (sic) with the most judicious rules.

The divine Cipriano de Rore was the first to renew in mensural notation the so-called second practice, followed not only by the composers mentioned above but also "Ingegneri, Marenzo (sic), Luzzascho, Giaches Wert and likewise by Giacoppo (sic) Peri, Giulio Caccini and finally by loftier spirits with a better understanding of true art."

Claudio Monteverdi interprets this true art as the perfection of the 'melodia' by making the words in command of the harmony. He, therefore, calls this 'second' and not new and 'practice' and not 'theory' because of his practical approach in the way he uses consonances and dissonances.

6*. …overo Perfettione della moderna musica"…*

Giulio Cesare points at perfections after the authority of Plato, who wrote: "Does not music have the perfection of melody as a final goal?" Plato here again is used for an 'intellectual' justification. However, there is not much argumentation in this quote from Plato's Gorgias, being Socrates' question of one line only, in a large discourse about something much broader.

[22] The exception he wanted to make by writing his treatise on the *Seconda Prattica*.
[23] As a comparison see the reference to the heroic school that is repeated by Banchieri ("Accademie Heroiche"). Adriano Banchieri, *Conclusioni nel suono del Organo,* (Bologna, Heredi di Gio. Rossi, 1609) p.60.
[24] Mensural notation.

7. *…Some, not suspecting there is any practice other than that taught by Zerlino [*Zarlino*], will wonder at this, …*

Giulio Cesare explicitly indicates that by "some", Artusi and his followers are intended.

This party is criticised for not even understanding the *prima prattica* completely because the nuances of Zarlino are not reflected in *L'Artusi.* Here Zarlino is quoted[25] to prove that he did not deny other teachings in his theoretical approach but just named the practice of master Adriano Willaert as realising the ideal. This is the reason why Claudio based his own theory on Plato and his practice on the music of the 'divine Cipriano.'

8. *…but let them be assured that, with regard to the consonances and dissonances, there is still another way of considering them, different from the established way, …*

In the clarification of Claudio Monteverdi's position concerning the treatment of consonances and dissonances, his brother sketches a black-and-white situation. By the established way he intends the rules as laid down by Zarlino in the third part of his treatise dealing with the perfection of the harmony, which are not paying attention to the text (*oratione*). He calls it a demonstration that harmony is the mistress and not the servant.[26]

9. …which, with satisfaction to the reason and to the senses, defends the modern method of composing…

The satisfying reason apparently had to be through the justification of mathematics. But then Giulio Cesare states things his brother would have said but are not found in the *Lettera*: "and the way to apply them" (consonances and dissonances) and equally use them by command of the text, the principal master of the art, leading to the perfection of melody (*μελῳδίᾱ*). As Plato confirms in the third book of the *Republic*.[27] In this way, the affects of the soul are moved and - as the dichiaratione continues by quoting the Latin translation of Marsilio Ficino - *sola enim melodia ab omnibus quotunque distrahunt animum retrahens contrahit in se ipsum*, (For melody alone draws the soul back from all that would draw it away, and draws it together into itself).

Giulio Cesare uses this passage to even include Zarlino in the Monteverdi-camp with a quote about the impossibility for harmony to produce any extrinsic effect just by itself.[28]

"*percioche se noi pigliaremo la semplice Harmonia, senza aggiungerle alcuna altra cosa, non hauerà possanza alcuna di fare alcuno effetto estrinseco delli sopranarrati; ancora che hauesse possanza ad vn certo modo, di dispor l'animo intrinscamente, ad esprimere più facilmente alcune passioni, ouero effetti; si come ridere, o piangere."*

(For if we pick the simple Harmonia, without adding anything else to it, it will have no power to produce any extrinsic effect of the above; although it may have the power in a certain

[25] Gioseffo Zarlino, *Sopplimenti musicali,* (Venice, Francesco dei Franceschi Senese, 1588) libro 1, chapter 1, p.9.
[26] Anonciade Russo in his *Monteverdi, Correspondances,* p.251, points at the injustice done to Zarlino, who in chapter 32 of the fourth part of the *Istitutioni harmoniche* says exactly the same thing as Monteverdi in his *Lettera*.
[27] *Republic*, book 3, page 398D. See also Palisca, *The Artusi-Monteverdi Controversy*, p.141 on the (extended) meaning of 'melodia' in this context.
[28] Zarlino, *Istitutioni*, II, chapter vii. p.71 line 12.

way to dispose the soul intrinsically to express more easily certain passions or effects, such as laughing or crying.)

10. *…I have wished to say this to you in order that the expression "Second Practice" may not be appropriated by anyone else, …*

Apparently, it was important to 'claim the brand' because Giulio Cesare underlines once more that Claudio was the first to use this term. According to this *Dichiaratione* of the defending letter, the term *seconda prattica* had barely left the mouth of Claudio, when the opponent would like - while they are still in the air[29] - to rip apart (litt. *lacerare = tear apart*) the writings as well as the music. This by naming the second practice the 'dregs' (*la feccia*) of the first practice.[30]
Giulio Cesare quotes in this passage most probably from the (lost) first pamphlet of Antonio Braccino da Todi, when he mentions the resentful remarks about Claudio's undue concern that his expression *seconda prattica* would be stolen by others. Artusi pulls the sarcastic register here by saying it was not a thing that one would even want to imitate.

Hereafter, to stress his status as an innovator, a bit of biography follows about Claudio Monteverdi importing the '*canto alla francese'* in Italy after returning from the baths of Spa in 1599.[31] Giulio Cesare points to the style of the *Scherzi musicali,* of which the *Dichiaratione* was a postface or an appendix.

And according to this paragraph, there were more things that could be said to the advantage of Claudio as an innovator, but his brother keeps silent about them because they did not fit in this context. The focus is on the *seconda prattica*, which he says could have been called 'prima' when considering its origin.

11. *…and further that the ingenious may reflect (or consider) meanwhile upon other secondary matters, concerning harmony…*

By the ingenious are meant, according to Giulio Cesare, those who will not keep strongly believing in the unique legitimacy of the *prima prattica,* in which case harmony would always be the same optimised thing, no matter the text.

By the addition of the word secondary is meant that the *melodia* (music) is perfected according to the *seconda prattica*.

So, the criticised 'little details' contribute not only to the perfection of the cantilena but even more to the whole composition.[32] Here, the brother starts reasoning about the presumed confusion of Artusi about mixed modes. He even puts the words in his mouth 'as if one hears the reasoning of a madman' ('*il che è come sentire un pazzo ragionare'*) in relation of mixing

[29] Massimo Ossi, "Claudio Monteverdi's Ordine novo, bello et gustevole*:* The Canzonetta as Dramatic Module and Formal Archetype," *Journal of the American Musicological Society,* 45/2 (Summer, 1992) p.273. Ossi gives another reading of this passage in the *Dichiaratione* that is much more plausible than Oliver Strunk in his *Source Readings*.
[30] *Seconda Parte dell'Artusi* (1603) fol.33.
[31] In 1599, Claudio Monteverdi accompanied his patron, Vincenzo Gonzaga, on a journey to Spa, Brussels, and Antwerp. See Fabbri, *Monteverdi,* p.47.
[32] I accept Coluzzi's opinion that there is a misreading by Strunk, 'frutto' should be 'tutto' which means 'the whole.' (= the entire madrigal) Seth Coluzzi, "'Se Vedesti Qui Dentro': Monteverdi's 'O Mirtillo, Mirtillo Anima Mia' and Artusi's Offence", *Music & Letters,* 94/1, (February 2013), p.3, n. 6.

modes.[33] But using as a defence that one could say the same of the mass Fait tan Regrez (sic) (‘*Faisant regretz’*) by Josquin des Prez, he goes wrong himself. Claude Palisca suggested that Giulio Cesare lacked the courage to proclaim the end of “the tyranny of the modes.” Whereas Palisca sees Galilei purposefully going towards a system of tonality in the way of the ancient Greeks, he concludes that Monteverdi was heading intuitively and pragmatically in the same direction just by putting it into practice.[34]

12. *…and believe that the modern composer builds upon the fundaments of truth. Live happily.*

Giulio Cesare concludes by explaining that in the modern way of composing, it is impossible to obey the rules of the *prima prattica* (which is already embraced by the world as the usual way) just because the text commands otherwise. But even if his reasoning would not be convincing to underpin the truth of such a practice, his brother says it is the world that is deluded and, for sure, his opponent.

[33] *L’Artusi*, fol. 48v, see Palisca, *The Artusi-Monteverdi Controversy,* p.144.
[34] *Idem,* p.146, “Claudio could not yet foresee the theoretical implications of his creative impulses.”

The Concept

Concept of the opera within the research project

Many people occasionally silently wish to experience what it would be like to meet an important artist from the remote and buried past. The desire is most felt in the realm of ephemeral arts like music or theatre. True, there are the extant notes that represent the sounds of musical action or the written language that contains clues of emotional declamation. How would it be to know how they did what they did and what their main goal was? The voice is lost, and so is the knowledge that lived exclusively inside the artist.

For historical music performances, old instruments are copied, or extant originals are reanimated by specialists. By playing them again, that vanished sound is partly back or at least pointing in an unusual direction. After handling the instrument for some time, knowledge about the meaning or possibilities of ancient musical messages is tacitly (re)gained.
Singers never, or always, have this opportunity. The living voice is flexible and moldable in all sorts of directions by a plethora of training methods. Most of them are based on an epistemic archive combined with cultural predestination. It is hard to liberate oneself from these biases. On top of that, mechanical boundaries, which always limit the musical instrument, fail for the voice, so in that sense, there is no signposting to the past.

Ironically, in many methods and player instructions of that remote past, one was often recommended to pay attention to singers for good performance. They were the best example of tasteful and expressive music making, and by imitating them, one was told to come closest to a perfect performance.
It is very intriguing to read about the achievements of those singers, and beyond praise, there are some small clues in those texts that trigger our imagination. With some phantasy

and the orientation of acoustic bedding of the appropriate instruments and their sounding space, it should be possible to approach, at least to some extent, the vocal centre of it all.

This mainly happened in the second half of the last century. All kinds of wonderful results can be admired on recordings, but also in live performances offered as a mature segment of the classical music industry.
But still, if I start comparing the way of singing early opera with late opera, the differences in vocal delivery nowadays are getting increasingly smaller. How can this be if the historical instruments are so different from their descendants? Why do I have the impression that singing in speech or speaking while singing is now so often lacking the intended declamation with all its nuances and subtleties?
I decided to feign asking the specialists, the creators and performers of the time when this was the most urgent question in the avant-garde of the musical world. The time that particular style of 'parlar cantando' was born.
I needed Claudio Monteverdi, who, according to his competitors, was the most successful composer in this field, to tell me directly. For that purpose, he needed to be embodied first, and preferably also his best singers, who supported him while he made the most important discoveries of his life. Only by creating an opera again for these singers and evoking its composer might they be able to tacitly reveal a part of the knowledge they had been buried with.
Reliving the year that brought the essential transformation to Monteverdi, the year between his two first operas would be the ideal space to dwell in for my research. But, not alone. A collective of searchers was essential to arrive at a broad scope of reliving experiences. Five composers, five singers, seven actors, ten historical instrumentalists and an entire professional opera crew were needed to embody the tragedy of Claudio and discover its meaning.

Writing the Libretto

The letters

In 2013, the Dutch *Muziekcentrum van de Omroep* library had to close down due to budget cuts by the Culture Secretary of State, Halbe Zijlstra. A unique collection of 5 kilometres of sheet music and a rich library of musicological works, biographies, monographs and international music journals had to be removed from the public domain. A team of librarians carefully selected to preserve rare books that were unique in The Netherlands and should be safely stored. Nevertheless, books also available in other Dutch libraries risked being destroyed.
Because the chief librarian is a good friend of mine, a rare book from the collection escaped the shredder and came my way. It concerns Henry Prunières, *La Vie et L'Oeuvre de Claudio Monteverdi,* 1926, with engravings by Maxime Dethomas. This bibliophile edition contained a substantial part of Monteverdi's extant letters in their original language.
Prunières biography was the first twentieth-century attempt to tell the story of Monteverdi's life based on all the accurate musicological information available at his time.

Significantly, he offered a well-chosen anthology of Monteverdi's letters as an appendix to his book, with very reliable reading and factual information that found its verifiable way into this biography. Prunières' imaginative writing inspired me to think along his lines, which were freer than those of the generations of critical musicologists after him. Just like the engravings of Maxime Dethomas reflect the spirit of his time with their hint of romanticism mixed with art nouveau, so does the narration in this book. An inkling of the composer's daily reality formed the basis of this book, bringing the protagonist closer to the reader as a human being of flesh and blood.

Knowing of Dennis Stevens' translation and comments on the complete letters of Monteverdi, I started curiously rereading them. Soon, the content appeared to me as material for a film script or theatrical play. The idea to write an opera about Claudio Monteverdi emerged from reading several of his most personal letters. A letter like the one sent to his patron Vincenzo Gonzaga on 2 December 1608 is so rhetorical and close to direct speech that one feels implicitly the dramatic potential underneath. The tone directed at his superior is as straightforward as his music, arguing with solid reasons why he rejected the command to return to Mantua. This letter marks a culmination point in a troubled relationship with Vincenzo Gonzaga and his administration. A bit more than a year after the death of Claudia Cattaneo, Monteverdi's wife, the composer was looking back on a chain of disasters and harsh experiences mixed with great moments of triumph.

Not all letters inform us so explicitly about the emotional life of Monteverdi and others. But the majority gives us at least a glimpse and often more while dealing with practical information. There are many examples of practical or artistic discussions around singers and what is expected from them. About the style and technique of performing and the nature of the voice, we have first-hand information that leads us to impressions of the declamatory aspects and theatrical priorities. In this sense, Monteverdi's 127 extant letters are a vital addition to the treatises, prefaces and letters of his contemporaries.
For instance, about the favourite tenor of his time, Francesco Rasi, we learn that Monteverdi considered him capable of composing his own part for an opera that the court demanded but for which he saw no point in writing himself. Via others, we learn that Rasi was not very faithful to his patron, Vincenzo Gonzaga, and performed without permission for Aldobrandini in Rome. Rasi's own letter about his discussion with Caccini about Martinelli portrays him as a very self-confident tenor.

An intensive exchange of letters from the Mantuan court to their connections in Rome aimed to convince the parents of 13-year-old Caterina Martinelli to allow her to leave Rome for the court music of the Gonzaga's. They are revealing a glimpse into the recruitment of young singers. Several of the discussed organisational practicalities initially only seemed to be minor obstructions but, after further thinking, appeared to be dramatic experiences for the young girl. Without the many letters reporting its circumstances, her early death would have been more difficult to work out with such emotional impact for staging.
The efforts made for her replacement as the main singer in Monteverdi's *Arianna* could be reconstructed by an intensive exchange of information between the members of the ducal family and their administration. Significantly, this coincided with the birth of opera in the modern sense: the creation and production of *Arianna.* About the successful audition of the commedia actress Virginia Andreini Ramponi, we read the detailed reports that secretary Costanini and the court general Carlo Rossi have written.

Without all these personal reports and their expressive word choices, it would be difficult to have a proper idea of the atmosphere and feelings of urgency that surrounded the growth of a legendary opera.
Because *L'Arianna's* score (or rather the set of parts) is lost, its artistic value can only be estimated by the information from the extant letters, the libretto and the iconic *lamento*.

The plot - a sequence of historical facts.

There was no need to invent a plot. The circumstances during the period from the first performance of *Orfeo* until the completion of *Arianna* and *Ballo delle Ingrate*, were unique and full of drama.

In the summer of 1607, Monteverdi needed all his attention for the aftermath of *Orfeo* and the publication of the *Scherzi musicali* with its famous *Dichiaratione* as a final blow in the Artusi polemics. Shortly after, Claudia fell ill and died at Monteverdi's parental home in Cremona, soon followed by a letter with a call to return to Mantua and prepare an opera for the wedding of crown prince Francesco Gonzaga. The commission for this opera to Ottavio Rinuccini and Monteverdi was not immediately sure; others attempted to get this honourable commission. When both men had finished the work with great haste, the court postponed the wedding for political reasons, and thus, the opera performance was delayed as well. A competing opera by Marco da Gagliano, *La Dafne,* was performed during the carnival in Mantua, using the singers intended for *Arianna.* One of them was the 17-year-old Caterina Martinelli, Monteverdi's star soprano and pupil who had lived three years in his house. After successfully making her debut in the *Dafne,* she contracted smallpox and died soon after. Everyone felt the loss, but Monteverdi expressed it only two years later in six madrigals he wrote (*La Sestina*), commissioned by Duke Vincenzo.

The court was in need of a new soprano to take the role of Arianna. Fortunately, in the visiting troupe of comedians, I Comici Fedeli, there was a prima donna who was not only a great actress but also had a good singing voice. Her audition in front of Duchess Eleonora was nothing short of sensational. Virginia Andreini Ramponi's acting prowess brought a new dimension to the musical drama. The culmination of these events was marked by legendary festivities (*le sontuose feste)*, providing several opportunities for this star to shine. While Claudio Monteverdi composed most of the music she sang at the various representations, it was his lamento that moved the audience to tears.

The opera indeed brought Monteverdi unprecedented fame, but there was no reason for joy because he had worked himself into what we now would call a burnout. His repetitive pleas for proper payment remained unanswered, and half a year after the triumph of *Arianna,* he begged his patron Vincenzo Gonzaga to grant him resignation. The expectations that had been raised since *Orfeo* had been proven illusory and fallen flat, and he chose to remain true to his dignity and acknowledge this truth.

Shaping the libretto

With all the things that happened in one year, the libretto as I imagined it, needed to be multilayered to cover as much as possible of the coherence between history, mythology and artistic representation. The storyline was already provided by a convincing historical narrative track. Locations and dramatis personae did not need much thinking either, and after visiting several times the original locations in Cremona and Mantua, all my imagination was incited to determine (virtual) stage settings.

Prologue

As a 'primal scene' – the igniting incident- I chose the death of Monteverdi's wife, Claudia. The mirroring of the story of Orpheus and Eurydice, which was presented in a sensational composition by Claudio half a year earlier, was a very strong stroke of fate. Reality had taken revenge on fiction. Of course, my libretto had to start with a bit of *Orfeo.*
Initially, I had in mind having Monteverdi conduct a performance of his opera. When it came to the moment that Orpheus turned his head, we should suddenly see Eurydice as Claudia. The upheaval caused by that tragic moment should have triggered the drama.
After discussing this opening with the composers, the idea was rejected as too much drama at the beginning, with complicating consequences for all other theatrical parameters.
Finally, *Orfeo* entering into a dream of Monteverdi was a more workable option with more suspense. The revelation of Claudia as Eurydice could be maintained and the drama could be built up gradually.

I. The act of *Ragione*

The next image I had was a remorseful Monteverdi talking softly to his dead wife in the church, from where she would be buried. His confusion came out through incidental quotes from his own *Orfeo*, with a mixture of consolation and a reflex of burying his sorrow in his art.
Immediately at the start of the opera, the importance of letters had to be stressed.
This was solved by a time contraction and have the letter by the Mantuan court come in at this moment of farewell to his wife. The letter contained a request to return, an order that would in reality arrive two weeks after Claudia's death.
This opened the opportunity to share with the audience a lot of background information concerning the bitterness of life (hard work, poverty by delayed payments, illness), accompanied by Monteverdi's full emotional palette quoted from his letters.
A first *coup de théâtre* is the voice of Caterina Martinelli suddenly being heard in the complaint of the nymph. It functions as a call from Mantua (aligning the order from the letter that just arrived), and introduces the vulnerability of the young singer, being without the protection of her master subjected to the amorous whims of her patron, Vincenzo Gonzaga.

The return to Mantua against his will is symbolised by arriving at a labyrinth. The representation of struggle for transformation and quarrel with real or imaginary opponents. Not seeing his familiar city of Mantua, the way he left it with his wife and children, to go spend his vacation with his father in Cremona, is bringing Monteverdi in a state of confusion. Dedalus, the architect of the labyrinth, sounds like an oracle and is of no help. In this exteriorised inner struggle, the existential fight of creating something completely new, he meets his challenger in the person of Artusi. The insensitive theorist fires all his rational arguments like unguided missiles of accusation on the composer.

Finally, Monteverdi turns his back on the self-indulgent intellectual. By making this decision, he is confronted with the Minotaur of the labyrinth. Witnessing the beheading of the Minotaur by the hero (who might be Theseus), Monteverdi is overwhelmed by this prophecy and collapses. It is the prediction of the transformational work in the year to come.

II. The act of *Piacere*

Caterina Martinelli is the central figure in the second act of the opera. She represents youth, innocence, the potential of the new, awakening sensuality and agility, and, of course, vulnerability. In the subtext, there is a threat that is not yet manifest but always present. This suspense is caused by the possessive but hidden amorous attention of the Duke. Because of the mentioned qualities, Caterina opposes the intellectual poet Ottavio Rinuccini, who has a serious mission with his opera *Arianna*. It must evoke ancient Greek tragedy. When the vain tenor Francesco Rasi makes his bombastic entrance, all the ingredients are there to generate an atmosphere of frantic confusion.
Here is the moment for Duchess Eleonora to expose her power and take the lead in preparing for the upcoming festivities. Her entrance is well articulated by her grand voice, which symbolises her superiority. Her message does not stop the confusion but makes it even worse, although the artists suppress it. The announcement that the preparation of *Arianna* will have to be put on hold, is highly frustrating and humiliating to Monteverdi. He chooses not to partake in this jolliness and to wait for his moment, witnessing the loss of his protegée Martinelli.

The others are satisfied, all for their own reasons, but mainly because all of their work will receive the full attention in the opera *Dafne,* staged at the occasion of the carnival.
Here, the second act develops in the direction of superficial pleasure, which is enhanced by the intermezzo of the Commedia dell'arte company, I Comici Fedeli.
After Dafne (Caterina) metamorphoses into a tree, the culmination of rough entertainment reaches the top when drunken carnival revellers interrupt a subtle aria of Apollo, roaring *L'Innamorato*, a song dedicated to Duke Vincenzo. There is a relation to this song and what follows. Right after her moment of triumph, with a virtuosic aria, Martinelli loses all her energy and becomes increasingly ill. Two drunken comics (Zanni and Arlecchino) create a long painful contrast, only later discovering the poor girl after urinating, thinking she was a tree. A sudden awareness of the helplessness of the fragile singer determines the course of all the events that follow in the opera.
The severity of Caterina's suffering increases, and finally, when a (comic) doctor arrives, she is diagnosed as having contracted smallpox. Not only are all bystanders shocked, but the duchess is even working herself in a state of hysteria by denying the verdict and accusing the girl of inordinate drinking during the carnival. Monteverdi cannot believe he is losing Caterina until denial is no longer possible. The end of Martinelli is, as her entry at the end of Act I, another coup de théâtre, now through a madrigal that has been composed by

Monteverdi and commissioned years later by Vincenzo. This time contraction on the historical level elevates the sacrifice of youth at this point of the drama.

III. The act of *Verità*

The dramatic and silent ending of the second act is followed by the comedians' extreme liveliness in their rehearsal of *L'Idropica*, the play they will perform at the wedding festivities. Somehow indifferent to the bewildering circumstances after the heart of the opera in the making passed away, the actors' energy points out that life goes on.

For the third time, the duchess manifests herself as the representation of power and summons the comedians to stop their nonsense. She orders the leading lady, nicknamed 'la Florinda', to audition for the role of *Arianna.* This underlines that the structure of power makes things possible in developing art that otherwise would have been withheld from the creative process.

The actress's audition astonishes everyone present with her command of the words and the dramatic impact of acting through singing. The tenor's vain attempts to outshine his counterpart crumble and reduce his performance to a pale presence. At the same time, Florinda's intensity of expression raises an unprecedented curiosity in Monteverdi.

A dialogue between the two reveals the true nature of the actress, whose mission is to go far beyond entertainment in her profession and bring her audience in contact with the truth. This moment of vital recognition stimulates the composer to pick up his work again and finish the opera with an extraordinary imagination. This is the point where the narrative is transposed into a temporarily different time experience. The audience is taken into the timeless reality of Monteverdi's art, given voice by the actress, a viol and a theorbo.

At the end of *Arianna's* long monologue, that atmosphere is broken by jealousy and the frustration of Orpheus's vain personification. Whispered by reason (Ragione in the person of Rinuccini, the architect of psychological drama), Orpheus calls on women to learn to show compassion and empathy while he encourages the present men to dominate them. Florinda stands up as Verità and warns about the possible escape of Orpheus, which would recycle the endless projection of ideals on women and prolong their suppression. Monteverdi ratifies the decision to finally silence his voice. Consequently, in an orgiastic dance, the half-god is torn apart by the furies.

After this third death in the opera, a conclusive ceremony brings all forces together and unites them for one goal only: Monteverdi's surrender to Verità and acceptance of his mission to serve her for the rest of his life.

The dialogues

As mentioned above, those who want to dig deeper into Claudio Monteverdi's life and circumstances are blessed with his 127 extant letters. If we read them out loud, as was the habit until the far in the 19th century, we can imagine hearing his voice again. He was, most of the time, very direct in his formulations and, consistent as he was, did not avoid 'dissonances' in his wording. Luckily, the larger picture can be reconstructed thanks to the ecological environment of the people with whom he was in direct contact. One of them is the librettist of his *Orfeo,* Alessandro Striggio jr. Most (82) of the letters are addressed to him in his function as the duke's secretary.[1] I suspect that the tone of writing was influenced by Monteverdi's close contact with Striggio. Those letters deal with a wide variety of subjects, many of them providing relevant information about artistic matters.
Apart from Monteverdi's letters, some others, such as those by the Duchess Eleonora de Medici, Federico Follino, Claudia Monteverdi and Secretary Antonio Costatini, were very useful for the dialogues of the libretto.

Verbatim

Because letters were meant to be read by only one or two persons, they carry a certain intimacy mixed with a more distant and formal attitude. After a targeted search through the most relevant letters, I collected highlights of quotations that were both expressive and informative. A collage of these quotations was the basis of my script.
Later, I found out that this method of compiling a text has been used in theatre in a genre that is called *Verbatim Theatre*.[2] Effects can be found in my libretto, that are comparable with this verbatim process. Certainly, in the scene of the dying Caterina Martinelli, it generated a sense of immediacy.
A second source for text to be spoken or sung is using quotations from treatises and prefaces. Though less personal, they still have a certain directness in the use of language. This counts for Artusi in the first place, a logical consequence of the fact that he used the style of dialogue in his treatises. Shaping a book as the conversation between a master and pupil is modelled after Greek philosophers. But in Artusi's case, the master's character is quite fierce, a welcome property for drama. Polemics such as his dispute with Monteverdi, who, together with his brother, offered many replies, are obvious subjects for theatre that do not need much more dramatisation.

A third source for the text is the libretti of relevant drama from Monteverdi's

[1] For my story, only Vincenzo I is relevant, but Striggio stayed in his function with the Gonzaga successors Francesco, Ferdinando, Vincenzo II, and Carlo I. Monteverdi's letters always address "Illustrissimo mio Signore et patron Collendissimo". The last letter was from 8 July 1628.
[2] The most recent and impressive play of that kind was *Is this a Room?,* about the FBI interrogation of Reality Winner, for which the transcript served as a direct feed into the script. Tina Satter wrote the play, which premiered in January 2019 in The Kitchen, New York. More information is on the University of Michigan's website.

contemporaries and texts from songs or madrigals. The latter are mostly used as pointers to subtext meanings for their implicit connotations. Gagliano's *Dafne* is represented by the two arias, both of which have an extra meaning in the narrative[3] embedded in the creative use of fragments of recitative to sketch the story.
I allowed myself some borrowings from Emilio de Cavalieri's *Rappresentatione di Anima e di Corpo.*[4] He is mentioned in many contemporary writings about the new style of recitar cantando and announced this way of performance on the front page of his print. For me, his use of allegories was most welcome. 'Piacere' comes directly from this example, and 'Intelletto' is an alias of 'Ragione'.
By coincidence, I found an important source for 'Verità' directly related to Florinda because it was written for her by her husband, Giovanni Battista Andreini.[5] The discovery of the *Prologo in Dialogo fra Momo e la Verità* added substantially to the proposition of my libretto because in it, I found an articulated confirmation of Florinda's role representing 'Truth'.

The fourth part of the text is written by myself, often in a mock poetic style that suggests a 17th-century libretto without respecting the appropriate formal rules. The first monologue, "Cadavero infelice," has its borrowings, but because of the lack of any words from Monteverdi about his wife that could be of use, I had to invent them for him. The same goes for his dialogues with Caterina Martinelli, whose close relationship with her master is not reported anywhere. It was left to my imagination to fill this void, although, from the many reactions after her death, it is clear that 'Caterinuccia' (also La Romanina) was very much loved by everyone.

For the Comici Fedeli, the dialogues had to be close to classical Commedia dell'arte. I initially wrote a text for Zanni and Arlecchino in the scene with the tree. This was an attempt in modern Italian slang and did not work well in the historical setting. Keeping the narrative as I designed it, the actors invented their own words and expressions in improvisation sessions. The same procedure was applied in the adaptation of the scene of *L'Idropica*. The quote from the shocked Ambassador Annibale Roncaglia, who thought the play was done by rude people, and it made him turn red by the dirty humour was leading me to the right passage in Guarini's *L'Idropica.*[6]
Il Medico takes on a special position in the group. He rivals the serious act and balances on the threshold of ruining the moving end of Act II and lifting it to a higher level of engaging theatre. The gibberish culture in Comedia is well represented by this actor.

[3] The aria "Chi da' lacci d'amor" was sung by Martinelli and praised by the composer in the preface of the edition of this opera. Apollo's aria "Non curi la mia pianta" is brutally interrupted by the balletto *l'innamorato* composed by Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi for Vincenzo Gonzaga, whose spirit is thus represented.
[4] Emilio del Cavalliere, *Rappresentatione di Anima e di Corpo,* (Rome, Nicolò Mutij, 1600).
[5] Giovanni Battista Andreini, *Prologo in Dialogo fra Momo e la Verità*, (Ferrara, Vittorio Baldini, 1612).
[6] Giovanni Battista Guarini, *L'Idropica,* dedicated to Cesare D'Este, (Venice, Ciotti, 1613). Atto primo, scena sesta, p.14v ff.

Synopsis

Prologue

Monteverdi is in the house of his father in Cremona, where his wife has just died.

He has fallen asleep at his desk and sees in his dream a scene from his opera Orfeo, which premiered half a year earlier.

Orfeo (*Vanità*) is singing about his lyre and their triumph in convincing Pluto to release Eurydice from Hades. There is only one condition: he should not look behind him before they have left the underworld.

After a while, his initial self-confidence wanes, and doubt creeps up on him whether his bride is still following. Then he hears a noise behind him and can no longer resist the temptation to turn his head.

For a very brief moment, he sees the eyes of his beloved, who starts vanishing at the same moment, while a ghost (*Ragione*) reminds him that he broke the law.

Monteverdi now sees that Eurydice (*Verità*) is his own wife and sings her last lines, which speak of too much love that prevents her from ever seeing the light again or her most beloved husband.

Act 1

scena prima

Alone in the church of Ss. Nazzaro e Celso, where his wife Claudia will be buried, Monteverdi speaks his burdened mind to her dead body. He regrets neglecting her for a long time while busy composing his *Orfeo*.
In this church where he was baptised precisely 40 years ago, he now has to let go of his wife, baptising her for the afterlife with his tears.

On the ground, he finds a letter that, in his grief, he must have failed to notice carrying with him. It is from the court of Mantua, offering their condolences but at the same time ordering him to return to the city because very important work is awaiting him.
Fame will be his part when he returns to write another opera for a very special occasion.

But Monteverdi is enraged by the impertinence of ordering his return to a city that is hostile to his person. Payments are delayed to the point that he can hardly cope, and the air of Mantua endangers his health, which his father, who is a doctor, confirms.

Monteverdi responds with a letter to tell the duke about the urge to change his situation first and pay him the five months' salary he is due.

While writing, he gets carried away by anger again and starts shouting until suddenly he hears a distant voice singing.
First, he thinks he hears his dead wife's voice, but then he recognises the sound of Caterina Martinelli, a young singer who lived for some years in their house. It sounds like she is begging for help. Just for her, he finds the urge to return to Mantua and release her from her solitude. He decides to write another opera with her as the prima donna.

Act 1

scena seconda

Monteverdi has arrived in Mantua, but he does not recognise the town. He sees a man working and measuring. It is Dedalus creating a labyrinth.

The conversation with the engineer is not very helpful for Monteverdi, who wants to find his way home. Dedalus advises him to follow the 'good' rules, but he rejects this advice.

When Monteverdi enters the labyrinth, his path is immediately obstructed, and Artusi appears.
The theorist starts orating about the decadence of modern composers who neglect the fundaments laid down by the great masters whose examples should be followed. The new makers, on the contrary, listen to their instruments which they play day and night, trying to satisfy the senses.

Monteverdi gets very upset and more sarcastic in his answers to Artusi, who simply ignores what his opponent is saying and keeps glorifying the rules of the old masters. The contempt of his argumentation is increasingly maddening. Monteverdi thus gets entangled in the labyrinth of reason.
Finally, he finds his exit by no longer discussing rational arguments and following the essential path of nature.

Artusi disappears.

Act 1

scena terza

Monteverdi hears a noise that is approaching from the dark labyrinth until he suddenly stands in front of the Minotaur. The raw manifestation of instinct paralyses him.

The monster is moving ferociously and seems ready to attack when a man pops up and jumps to fight it. We recognise Vanità, who is now playing the role of Theseus and clings to the head of the Minotaur. After a short struggle the hero clearly has won and is beheading the monster.

He steps to the fore and triumphantly shows everybody the enormous horned head of the animal-man.

Monteverdi is left alone after he collapses and lays unconscious on the floor.

Act II

scena prima

A hall in the Palazzo Ducale.

Monteverdi wakes up by the singing of Caterina Martinelli. She promises him to be a lascivious Arianna and a consolation for his grief. Her idea of the role of Arianna is corrected by Rinuccini, who points out the noble status of this princess of Crete.

Then Rasi enters in triumph with the Minotaur mask in his hands. He claims to be able to compose the music for his part of Theseus because he is a composer and a tenor. He starts to sing Teseo's part from the libretto, but Monteverdi stops him. A discussion between all four characters unfolds, and this results in a quarrelling quartet where no one listens to the other. Suddenly, the squabbling is overpowered by the duchess, Eleonora de Medici, who has entered the room unnoticed. She announces that this opera, which should become less dry, will be postponed. Because the nuptials are suspended, another opera will have to be chosen for this carnival.

Rasi suggests his own opera, which Rinuccini promptly rejects. He has a Dafne on the shelf with music by Marco da Gagliano. The protagonists are already available: Martinelli and Rasi, perfect as Dafne and Apollo.

Before leaving, the duchess asks Rasi to return the mask to its owner, her husband, Duke Vincenzo. When she is gone, the squabbling starts again, this time about *Daphne*. Monteverdi withdraws in woe, upset about the useless hurry he had made to finish the work in time.

Act II

scena seconda

Carnival

A group of saltimbanchi, I Comici fedeli, sets the mood with their masked mime and burlesque introduction of the story of Apollo and Dafne.

The figure Amor is being introduced and will be played splendidly by Caterina Martinelli. Later, she is chased by Apollo as Dafne and appears on stage with her arms turned into branches of a laurel tree. Apollo deplores the metamorphose in a touching aria, which the singer performs with great self-indulgence.

Suddenly the exhibition of vanity is brutally disturbed by carnival music (Giacomo Gastoldi *l'innamorato*) chaotically sung by a drunken crowd.

The people take no notice of the suffering laurel tree.

Act II

scena terza

When the carnival troupe disappears, only two men are hanging around. Arlecchino and Zanni have a drunken conversation until they suddenly need to pee. After looking for a tree, they find the new laurel tree, Caterina, as the converted Dafne. She is suffering from pain and anguish. The two men examine the girl, and noticing her fever, they start looking for a doctor, who promptly arrives.

The doctor concludes that the woman is suffering from smallpox and that her life is in danger.

Duchess Eleonora is alarmed and objects to the diagnosis because it is inconvenient and frightening for her son, who did not have smallpox as a child.

Monteverdi comforts the girl and prays to God that she might live.
The girl's condition worsens, and she finally dies on the spot, surrounded by a large group of people.

The corpse is taken away accompanied by a madrigal written for her commemoration.

Act III

scena prima

The Commedia dell'Arte company I comici fedeli rehearse their play *Idropica*, which they will later perform at the ducal crown prince's wedding festivities.

Duchess Eleonora, Rinuccini and Monteverdi make their appearance because, in their search for a new singer for the Arianna, an audition has been arranged with the prima donna Viriginia Andreini (Verità), also known as La Florinda. She is called to order by Eleonora, who finds it hard to imagine that an actress from such a group of comedians could convincingly perform the noble role. Francesco Rasi, as Theseus in the audition, thinks he can prove his superiority once more, but Virginia amazes everyone by singing the role by heart with stunning conviction.

Monteverdi is immediately intrigued by this woman and wants to know why she engages in the vulgarity of the commedia. Virginia reveals that under her disguise, she is actually Truth, sent by Jupiter to offer comfort and show people the right way. When she shows herself in her true form, people do not accept her.

Act III
scena seconda

To prove what she can do, she sings the great monologue from Arianna. In this lamento, all the moods of a desperate but vainly loving woman are truly captured in music.

When Arianna sings her conclusion about the fate of a woman who loves and trusts too much, Orpheus rudely breaks in and demands attention for himself.

Act III

scena terza

He points out women's duty not to reject men but to have compassion for them and submit to them. By urging men to follow him in this, Orpheus ends up calling fate upon himself. The women turn into vengeful furies and tear apart the demigod.

When Orpheus is deported, all the Allegories convene in a ritual circle around Monteverdi and Truth. In the end, having found truth, the composer surrenders by laying his head in her womb.

La Tragedia di Claudio M

Libretto

PROLOGUE	**PROLOGUE**
Orfeo/Vanità[1]	**Orpheus/Vanità**
Qual onor di te fia degno, Mia cetra onnipotente, S'hai nel tartareo regno Piegar potuto ogni indurata mente?	What honour will be worthy of you, my all-powerful lyre, since you have succeeded in softening every stubborn heart in the realm of Tartarus?
Luogo avrai fra le più belle Imagini celesti, Ond'al tuo suon le stelle Danzeranno in giri or tardi or presti.	You shall have a place amid the loveliest images of the heavens, where the stars shall dance in circles, now slowly, now quickly, to your sound.
Io per te felice appieno Vedrò l'amato volto, E nel candido seno De la mia donna oggi sarò raccolto.	Completely happy through you, I shall see the beloved face and be gathered today to my lady's snow-white breast.
Ma mentre io canto, ohimè, chi m'assicura Ch'ella mi segua? Ohimè, chi mi nasconde De l'amate pupille il dolce lume? Forse d'invidia punte Le deita d'Averno, Perch'io non sia qua giù felice appieno, Mi tolgono il mirarvi, Luci beate e liete, Che sol col' sguardo altrui bear potete? Ma che temi, mio core? Ciò che vieta Pluton, comanda Amore. A Nume più possente Che vince uomini e dei ben ubbidir dovrei.	But while I sing, ah me! who can assure me that she is following me? Alas, who hides the sweet light of her beloved eyes from me? Perhaps the gods of Avernus, impelled by envy, so that I should not be fully happy down here, prevent me from looking at you, blessed and radiant eyes, which can bless others with a mere look? But what do you fear, my heart? What Pluto forbids, Love commands. I must obey a more powerful divinity who conquers both men and gods.

(Qui si fa strepito dietro la tela) Ma che odo? Ohimè lasso S'arman forse a miei danni Con tal furor le furie innamorate Per rapirmi il mio ben, ed io 'l consento?	*(There is a noise behind the curtain)* But what do I hear? Woe is me! Perhaps the enamoured Furies are taking up arms with such frenzy against me to snatch my treasure from me? And I allow it?
(Qui si volta Orfeo) O dolcissimi lumi, io pur vi veggio, io pur... ...Ma quale eclissi, ohimè, v'oscura?	*(here Orpheus turns around)* O sweetest eyes, now I see you, now I ... but alas! What eclipse obscures you?
Uno spirito/Ragione Rott' hai la legge, e se' di grazia indegno	**A spirit/Ragione** You have broken the law and are unworthy of mercy.
Euridice/Verità Ahi, vista troppo dolce e troppo amara: Così per troppo amor, dunque, mi perdi? Ed io, misera, perdo Il poter più godere E di luce e di vita e perdo insieme Te d'ogni ben più caro, o mio consorte.	**Euridice/Verità** Ah, sight too sweet and too bitter! Thus, then, through excess of love you lose me? And I, unhappy one, lose the power any longer to enjoy either light or life, and lose you too, O my husband, more precious than all else.
Sinfonia	*Sinfonia*

ATTO I,1 *(quasi come una preghiera)* **Monteverdi:** Cadavero infelice,[2] in vita sei stata lasciata dal duca, patir di freddo, già gravemente ammalata[3] tante volte ti ho trovato come morta, così pallida. O Claudia, durando i mesi scorsi, in van erano i miei rimorsi, lavorando, senza fermarmi, occupato dell'altra Euridice[4], cadavero infelice, con tutte le viscere del mio core ti prego di perdonarmi[5]…. ti dia pace il ciel[6], amore.	**ACT I,1** *(like a prayer)* **Monteverdi:** Unfortunate corpse, in life you were left by the duke, suffering from cold already severly ill so many times I found you as dead so pale. O Claudia, during the past months in vain were my remorses, working, without limiting myself occupied with the other Euridice unfortunate corpse, with all the interns of my heart I pray you to pardon me… may heaven give you peace, love.

Gli anni sono già quaranta, che in questa chiesa[7] ricevei l'aqua santa, O Claudia, permettimi di battezarti, per una vita prossima, con i pianti e le lagrime[8] mie e degli nostri filioli. Tu sei da me partita[9], mia cara sposa, il tuo core non è più meco[10], con le viscere del mio core di perdonarmi ti prego, ti dia pace il ciel, amore. *(silenzio)*	The years are already forty that in this church I received the holy water O Claudia, give me permission to baptize you for a life to follow, with the plaints and tears, of myself and our sons. You left me, my dear spouse, you heart is no longer with me, with the interns of my heart to pardon me I pray you may heaven give you peace, love. *(silence)*
(vede la lettera in sua mano) Ma, cos'è questa lettera? [11] Da Mantova Ducale. "Claudia, è una lettera dei nostri padroni. Dicono che finalmente il compenso arriverà. Ahi lasso, per te è troppo tardi…"	*(sees the letter in his hand)* But what is this letter? From Mantova's Duke "Claudia, it is a letter of our patrons. They say that finally the payment will arrive. Alas, for you it is too late…"
(legge)	*(reads)*
"Ma, che diavolo, che legg'io? Questa lettera è il comando atiò me ne venga quanto prima a Mantova.**[12]**	"But what the hell am I reading? This letter is an order to me that I should return directly to Mantua."
(legge)	*(reads)*
"*... La perdita di tanto rara donna e dotata di tanta virtù..."*[13] Parla di te Claudia ... mia rara donna morta …	"*... the loss of such a special woman and gifted with such virtue..."* He is talking about you Claudia … my special dead woman …
(legge)	*(reads)*
"*il punto d'acquistarsi il sommo di quanta fama puo avere un uomo in terra*"[14] … quanta fama? … quanta fama!? … vuole dire fame … quanta fame!! Claudia, sei prova che sol dell'aria viver non si può[15]. … certamente non l'aria di Mantova, ed io, … rimango … in quest'aria, che mi è *cont*raria[16] come dice il medico padre mio, la causa di questo prurito… *(Si gratta)* …mi rende pazzo… Se tornerò a Mantova fra poco quest'aria sarebbe anche per me la mia morte[17]…	"*the point to obtain the top of fame that can be reached by a man on earth"* … so much fame? … so much fame!? … he means hunger ... so much hunger!! Claudia, you are the proof that alone from the air one cannot live. ….certainly not the air of Mantova, and I,…stay…in this air, that is against me as says the doctor my father, is the cause of this itch… *(scratches)* … makes me mad… if I will return to Mantua, shortly this air could be also for me my death…
(legge)	*(reads)*
L'anno scorso ho già aquistato un dolor di testa	Last year I already obtained a headache and

et un prurito cosí potente et rabbioso per la vita da non saper più che fare.[18]	itch so strong and maddening that to live I don't know what to do anymore.
(si gratta)	*(scratches)*
Monteverdi Forse... posso supplicare l'Altezza Serenissima Sua dignarsi di commisionare ch'io habbia paghe tali che ascendano dalla somma de' cinque mesi … *cinque* mesi![19] Senza il qual fondamento tutta la fabbrica mia restera come il mio corpo cadente e ruinosa… Poichè di giorno in giorno sovravegnendo danni et non ho niente con che ripararli[20]. Senz'aiuto finirò in rovina! Sono sicuro che Sua Altezza Serenissima mi potrebbe dare qualche sodisfazione[21], almeno di parole ... se non di fatti almeno di honore ... se non di effetti almeno una volta ... se non per sempre!![22]	**Monteverdi** Maybe… I can beg Your Highness to deign himself to direct that I have payments such as mounting up to five months … *five* months! Without this support my whole house will remain as my body falling apart and a ruin… because day after day overcoming damages and I have nothing to repair them. Without help I'll end in ruins! I am sure that Your Highness could give me some satisfaction at least in words … if not in deeds at least the honor… if not its effect at least once … if not for ever!!
Music: *lamento della ninfa*[23]	**Music:** *lamento della ninfa (original)*
Voice *taci, taci, non mi tormenti più.*	**Voice** *Hush, hush, do not torment me any longer.*
Monteverdi Giusto ciel! sei tu Claudia? Che spavento.	**Monteverdi** Good heavens! is that you Claudia? such a shock.

Voice *amor, amor, amor...*	**Voice** *love, love, love…*
Monteverdi: Riconosco quella voce… ma, cos'è questa sirena ch'io sento? Ninfa honesta e innocente, essendo quasi tuo parente[24], mi fa male udir tal tormento.	**Monteverdi** I recognize that voice… But, what is this siren I hear? honest and innocent nymph, being almost your father, it hurts me to hear that suffering.
Voice *Dove, dove è la fe che'l traditor giurò?*	**Voice** *Where, where is the fidelity that the traitor has sworn?*
Monteverdi: È questa la figlia che abbiamo abbandonata per soddisfare le orecchie dei padroni? (*questi sovversivi ladroni*) Sol per te trovo piacevole tornare, quest'Arianna non lascerò sola, in circostanze amare. O melodie serene, e pure,[25] piacendo a Dio,[26] per voi vivrò fra i miei tormenti e le mie cure.[27]	**Monteverdi** Is this the daughter/girl that we have left behind to satisfy the ears of our patrons? (*these subversive thieves*) Only for you I find pleasure to return, this Arianna I will not leave alone, in bitter circumstances. O melodies, serene and pure, if it pleases God, for you I will live between my torments and my worries.

Atto I,2	**Act I,2**
Monteverdi Di mi chi sei..., Dedalo[28]?	**Monteverdi** tell me who you are…Daedalus?
Dedalo Forse[29] che si…	**Daedalus** Maybe yes…
Monteverdi Questa è la via al palazzo[30]?	**Monteverdi** Is this the way to the palace?
Dedalo Forse che no…	**Daedalus** Maybe not…
Monteverdi Siamo a Mantova? Non riconosco le strade…	**Monteverdi** Are we in Matua? I do not recognize the streets…
Dedalo Forse che si…	**Daedalus** Maybe yes…
Monteverdi Si lavorà per conto del duca?	**Monteverdi** Are you working for the duke?
Dedalo Forse che no…	**Daedalus** Maybe not…
Monteverdi Forse che si! Forse che no!! Sei mai sicuro de qual cosa?	**Monteverdi** Maybe yes! Maybe no!! Are you never certain about anything?

Dedalo La sicurezza è fragile. Sono la ragione a prepararti un fondamento.[31] Parte il più importante della costruzione.[32]	**Daedalus** Certainty is fragile. I am the reason to prepare for you the fundaments. Most important part of the construction.
Monteverdi Grazie mille… ma senza la cognizione della via non si può arrivare a posto determinato[33]. Per piacere, dimmi dove andare per trovare casa[34] mia, la mia destinazione.	**Monteverdi** Thanks a lot… but without knowing the way one can not arrive at the determined destination. Please, tell me where to go in order to find my home, my destination.
Dedalo Segui le regole[35]	**Daedalus** Follow the rules
Monteverdi Quali regole?	**Monteverdi** What rules?
Dedalo Le buone regole.[36]	**Daedalus** The correct rules
Monteverdi Regole? ... Non credo che per l'antichi il labirinto intendessero altro che litigare[37]… Addio. *(exit)*	**Monteverdi** Rules? ... I don't think that for the antiques a labyrinth meant anything else than to quarrel… Goodbye.

Artusi *(a se stesso)* ... è come sentire un pazzo ragionare. I modi! ... cominciare in uno, poi cambiare a un secondo e poi[38]? Alla fine siamo tutti perduti!	**Artusi** *(to himself)* …it is like listening to a madman reasoning. The modes! ...beginning in one, then changing to a second one and then? In the end we are all lost!
Monteverdi Come?	**Monteverdi** What do you say?

Artusi *(avvisi Monteverdi)* ... Che tanto siano di se stessi innamorati, Che le pare di poter corrompere, guastare e rovinare quelle buone Regole, che di già hanno lasciate tanti Theorici e Musici Eccellentissimi. Vado credendo che non ci sia altro nel capo di questi compositori moderni che fumo[39].	**Artusi** *(notices Monteverdi)* …so much they are with themselves in love, that it seems to them it's allowed to corrupt, destroy and ruin these good rules, that since long have left so many Theorists and excellent musicians. I am beginning to believe that there is nothing in the head of such modern composers than smoke.
Monteverdi Aspettate un po' di chi voi intendete ? Io non faccio le mie cose a caso![40]	**Monteverdi** Wait a moment, about whom are you talking? I make not my things at random!
Artusi *(sognante, come se non stesse ascoltando)* Le buone regole[41]…	**Artusi** *(dreamy, as if not listening)* The good rules…
Monteverdi *(cinico)* Certo! Abbiamo delle regole, la parte più importante della musica!	**Monteverdi** *(cynical)* Certainly! We have rules, the most important part of music!
Artusi Dov'è l'intelletto[42]… I nuovi inventori! A loro basta soddisfare il senso, che perciò il giorno e la notte s'affaticano intorno gl'instromenti per sentire l'effetto che hanno cosi fatti passaggi[43].	**Artusi** Where is intelligence… The new inventors! For them it's enough to satisfy the sense(s), because day and night they exhaust themselves at the instruments to hear the effect that such passages have made.
Monteverdi Si preferisce sentire le regole invece de la musica? Vi raccomando d'ascoltare le vostre composizioni.	**Monteverdi** You prefer to hear the rules instead of the music? Then I reccomend you to listen to your compositions.

Artusi *(senza reagire a M)* … I meschini non s'accorgono che gl'instromenti le dicono il falso… Basta di fare un rumore di suoni ; una confusione d'impertinentie, una congregatione d'imperfettioni, e'l tutto nasce da questa ignoranza, dal quale sono offuscati.[44]	**Artusi** *(without reacting to M)* … The narrowminded don't realise that the instruments tell them wrong things… it is enough to make noise; a confusion of impertinent things, a gathering of imperfections, and all this is born out of this ignorance, by which they are clouded.
Monteverdi Rumori che vivranno eterna vita ad onta di quelle lingue, che cercano (di) dar morte all'opre altrui[45]…	**Monteverdi** Noises that will live an eternal life to the shame of those tongues, that seek to cause death to the works of others…
Artusi Queste novità … sono degne di biasimo.	**Artusi** These novelties…deserve to be blamed.

Castelli in aria, chimere fondate sopra la rena[46]!	Castles in the air, chimeras founded on sand!
Monteverdi Certo! sentiamo invece le regole… *(che buffone!)* Come l'ammalata ottiene la sanità per udire l'orazione del medico, trattare d'Hyppocrates e Galone.[47]	**Monteverdi** Sure! Let us listen instead to the rules…. *(such a clown)* As if the sick regains his health by listening the oration of the doctor, talking about Hyppocrates and Galen.
Artusi Giusto! Cantatanti quasi come in stato febrile. Le loro Cantilene con molti movimenti del corpo… accompagnando la voce con quei moti, nel fine si lasciano andare di maniera, che paia apunto che moiano.[48]	**Artusi** Correct, singers almost like patients with a fever. Their Melodies with lots of movements of the body... accompanying the voice with these movements, in the end they let themselves go in such a manner, that it seems they are dying.
Monteverdi Si, ch'io vorrei morire[49] … morire in questo noioso labirinto che non serve ad altro che litigare, ho già detto. Litigare, litigare, litigare. Addio, vo a cercare un'altra via, la via naturale alla immitatione[50] la via della verità.	**Monteverdi** Yes, I would like to die ... die in this boring labyrinth that serves nothing but quarrel, I already said so. Quarrel quarrel quarrel. Goodbye, I am going to look for another way, the natural way of imitation… the way of truth.

Atto I,3 *Ballo del Minotauro e Teseo*	**Act I,3** *Ballo of the Minotaur and Theseus*
ATTO II,1 **Caterina** Spero ch'io posso essere per te la consolazione. Ti farò dimenticare la tristezza, in una grande rappresentazione, di una donna, con tanta dolcezza, per cantare come *augelli pargoletti*.[51] Spero che anche Arianna potrà godere di tali versetti.	**ACT II,1** **Caterina** I hope that I can be for you a consolation. I will make you forget your sorrow in a grand performance of a woman, with great sweetness, by singing like baby birds do. I hope that Arianna will have these merry verses too.
Caterina/Piacere Si può, *ti apre il petto* *al piacer e al diletto*[52]. Ti canterò come vuoi, o maestro caro e forte, per vincere ancora, l'ingiusta'e trista sorte, aprite, *aprite il core,* *a la gioia e a l'amore*[53]…	**Caterina/Piacere** If you can, open your heart, for pleasure and delight. I will sing like you prefer, oh dear and strong master, by defeating once more that unjust and sad fate, open, open your heart, to joy and love…

Monteverdi	**Monteverdi**
Giusto ciel! Sei veramente una sirena Che mi costringe a lavorare E, nonostante le perdite amare Voglio accettare questa catena.	Heavens! You are really a sirena, Who is strangling me to get to work, And despite my bitter losses and pain I want to accept this chain.
Caterina/Piacere	**Caterina/Piacere**
Rappresentando un'Arianna *vezzosa*[54] *e lasciva* posso sedurre tutto il pubblico del mondo ad amarmi come una diva.	Impersonating a charming and lustful Arianna I can seduce all the public of the world, to love me like a godess.

Rinuccini/Ragione	**Rinuccini/Ragione**
Mi dispiace, ma Arianna è una donna vera, *nobile e degna*[55]. Con assoluta sincerità, la principessa regna.	I am sorry, but Arianna is a real woman, noble and dignant, With absolute sincerity, the princess reigns.
Vanità	**Vanità**
Essultate! [56] è morto il Minotauro!	Rejoice! the minotaur is dead!
Teseo/Vanità	**Teseo/Vanità**
Ben la nobil vittoria del Minotauro estinto, *ben dolce è la memoria del cieco laberinto;*	Sweet is the noble victory on the slaughtered Minotaur, sweet also the memory of the blind labyrinth;
ma s'il bel volto tuo lieto non miro, *ogni gloria, ogni palma, ogni dolcezza* *al cor si fa martiro.*[57]	but if I do not see thy beautiful happy face, every glory, every palm, every sweetness to my heart will be torture.
Monteverdi	**Monteverdi**
Un attimo signore... Da dove vengono queste melodie strane? Servano l'orazione? O son solo sprezzature vane?	One moment sir… Wherefrom are these strange melodies? Do they serve the words? Or are they just vain gestures?
Vanità/Rasi	**Vanità/Rasi**
per voi forse è una sorpresa, ma io son tenore e compositore,[58]	To thee it is probably a surprise but I am tenor and composer.
Rinuccini	**Rinuccini**
Restiamo tutti al suo proprio lavoro e via.	Let us all stay with our proper work and way.
Monteverdi	**Monteverdi**
D'accordo, io non cambio le parole, perché *questa professione della poesia non è mia*[59].	Right, I do not alter words, because this profession of poetry is not mine.

Piacere Mi sento come Arianna, dimenticata, abbandonata e[60] ... subordinata a una virilità ch'inganna.	**Piacere** I feel as Arianna, forgotten, abandoned, and… subordinated to a deceitful virility.
Vanità Sono tenore e compositore...	**Vanità** I am tenor and composer…
Ragione a tutt'il suo proprio lavoro...	**Ragione** Everyone his own work…
Monteverdi *(parla)* La poesia non è mia	**Monteverdi** *(speaks)* this poetry is not mine…
Piacere Dimenticata, abbandonata	**Piacere** Forgotten, abandoned.
Potere/Eleonora Grazie,….. Grazie, Grazie!!	**Potere/Eleonora** Thank you,…. Thank you, Thank you!!
Eleonora Grazie per questo silenzio cortese, ma oggi porto un messaggio ingrato ch'interrompe il vostro buon lavoro. Prima da completarlo, con i sposi aspettando le nozze loro, dopo il carnavale la preparazione de l'Arianna riprese. Adesso abbiamo bisogno d'un alternativa e vi prego di trovarlo. Inoltre trovo questa tragedia *assai sciuta*[61], cambiate qualche scene durante le prossime mesi.	**Eleonora** Thank you for this corteous silence, but today I have an ungrateful message that will interrupt your good work. Before completing it, with the nuptials waiting, after carnival the preparations of Arianna will be retaken. For now we need an alternative and I beg you to find it. Anyway I think this tragedy is rather arid. Change some of the scenes during the coming months.

Rasi l'ho già detto tante volte, così la storia non puo dilettare, Il ruolo di Teseo è di un codardo e non come un eroe appare. Ho scritto una favola di *Cibele ed Ati*, [62] che potrebbe servire a questo carnevale. È una storia abbastanz…	**Rasi** I said so many times, this way the story cannot please, the role of Teseo is one of a coward and he does not appear as a hero. I wrote the fable of *Cibele and Atys*, it could serve this carnival. This story is quiet…
Eleonore *(interrompendo)* Vedo che lei ha trovato la maschera di mio marito. Vi prego di ritornarla al Palazzo.	**Eleonore** *(interrupting)* I see that you have found the mask of my husband. I ask you to return it to the palace.
Rinuccini Scusate, ma forse da Firenze Vostra Altezza *la Dafne*[63] ricordate? Questa mia favola recitata incredibilmente piaque a quei pochi che l'udirono[64]. Abbiamo pronti già i cantanti giusti per Dafne, Amore e Apollo. Per questo occasione Quando Vostra Altezza esitate, voglio raccomandarlo come soluzione.	**Rinuccini** Excuse me, but Your Highness probably remembers from Florence the *Dafne*? This recited fable of mine incredibly pleased those few who have heared it. We already have the right singers for Daphne, Amor and Apollo. For this occasion, if Your Higness hesitates, I would like to recommend as a solution.
Potere Una regina non dubbia. E già deciso, sarà questa favola. Addio.	**Potere** A queen does not doubt. It is decided already, this will be the play. Goodbye.
Caterina Che devo fare? Non cognosco questa storia.	**Caterina** What do I have to do? I don't know this story.
Rasi Amore[65]…	**Rasi** Amore…
Caterina Io non son il tuo amore! Voglio sapere che devo cantare.	**Caterina** I am not your love! I want to know what should I sing.
Rasi Amore! dovrei fare entrambe Amore e Dafne. Al meno t'inseguirò come Apollo, dopo tu m'hai ferito con la freccia d'Amore. E tutto questo mi fa cantare in gruppi, trilli, passaggi e esclamazioni![66] come un dio innamorato.	**Rasi** Amore! you should sing both Amor and Daphne. At least I will follow you as Apollo, after you have wounded me with the arrow of Love. And all this will make me sing gruppi, trills, passaggi and exclamations like a god in love.

Caterina Che diletto incredibile!	**Caterina** Such an incredible delight!
Rinuccini La favola e composta da me, solo per fare una semplice prova di quello che potesse il canto dell'età nostra[67]. Ma senza gli affetti giusti non vale, è meglio che lascisi del tutto ogni ornamento[68]. Così l'orazione va restare[69]…	**Rinuccini** I composed the fable just to make a simple proof of what singing can achieve these days. But without the right affects it is worth nothing, it would be better to omit all those ornaments. That way the oration will remain…
Caterina *(interrompendo)* Come sei pallido, Claudio?	**Caterina** *(interrupting)* You look so pale, Claudio!
Monteverdi Mi sento male, c'è sempre la testa![70] Io ti lascio con questo lavoro 'nuovo.' Addio.	**Monteverdi** I feel sick, always the head! I leave you with this 'new' work. Goodbye.
Che cosa brutta. Tutti mesi passati ho lavorato come un pazzo[71]! Per niente. I soldi e l'onore sonno per un altro amore.	How horrible. All these months I have been working like mad. For nothing. The money and the honor are for another love.
TERZETTO **Vanità** Trilli, gruppi, … far nobil preda puoi con tuoi begli occhi…	**TERZETTO** **Vanità** Trills, gruppi, … you can catch a noble prey with your beautiful eyes.
Piacere Amore e Dafne, che diletto incredibile.	**Piacere** Amor and Daphne, such an incredible delight.
Ragione Torna, torna al lavoro, …	**Ragione** Back, back to work,…

ATTO II, 2 *Pantomime degli Comici Fedeli playing the story of La Dafne.* **Vanitá** Ecco il mio costume! Cambia la scena e lasciate cantare la mia voce. Sono pronto già per il mio primo entrata…	**ACT II, 2** *Pantomime of the Comici Fedeli playing the story of La Dafne.* **Vanitá** Look! my costume. Let us change the scene and let my voice sing. I am ready for my first entry…
Piacere *(da lontano)* Apollo, dove sei? Ti aspetta!	**Piacere** *(from far)* Apollo where are you? We are waiting for you!

Apollo *Dimmi potente arciero,* *qual fera attendi o qual serpente al varco,* *ch'ai la faretra e l'arco?*[72]	**Apollo** Tell me, potent bowman, what beast do you expect or what snake on your way, that you have quiver and bow?
Amor *Non son però degno di riso!*	**Amor** I do not deserve to be laughed at.
Apollo *O mi perdona, Amore,* *o, se mi vuoi ferir, risparmi 'l core*	**Apollo** O forgive me, Amor, o, if you want to wound me, spare my heart.

Amore *So ben che non paventi la forza d'un fanciullo,* *saettator di mostri e di serpenti* *ma, prendi pur di me gioco e trastullo!*	**Amore** I know well that you do not fear the power of a child, slayer of monsters and serpents, but you are still making fun and sport of me!

Chi da' lacci d'amor vive disciolto *della sua libertà goda pur lieto,* *superbo no d'oscura nube involto* *stassi per noi del ciel l'alto decreto; s'or non* *senti d'amor poco né molto,* *avrai dimani il cor turbato e 'nqueto.* *E signor proverai crudo e severo Amor,* *che dianzi disprezzasti altero.*	He who lives unfettered by the bonds of love, let him enjoy his liberty happily, but not arrogantly: wrapped in a dark cloud for us is the high decree of heaven; if now of love you feel neither little nor much, tomorrow you will have a disturbed and restless heart. And my lord, you will find cruel and harsh Love, whom you so haughtily despised before.
Coro *Nudo Arcier, che l'arco tendi,* *che velat' ambe le ciglia,* *ammirabil meraviglia!* *mortalmente i cori offendi,* *se cosi t'infiammi e 'ncendi* *verso un Dio, quai saran poi* *sovra noi gli sdegni tuoi?*	**Coro** Nude archer who draws the bow, whose eyes are both veiled, a marvel to admire! mortally you do hurt hearts. If thus you are aroused and incensed by a God, what then will be your anger for us?
Apollo *Ah, ben sent'io se son pungenti i dardi,* *di tuoi soavi sguardi.*[73]	**Apollo** Ah, I can feel how they are stinging the arrows, of your sweet glances.
Dafne *Dove mi volgo?* *Dove movere il passo che la fera trove.*	**Dafne** Where do I turn? Where shall I direct my steps to find the beast?
Apollo *Far nobil preda puoi c'o tuoi begl'occhi.*	**Apollo** You can have a noble prey with you beatiful eyes.

Dafne *Ma per giuoco il mio cammin ritardi?* *Altri che l'arco mio meco non voglio.*	**Dafne** Are you playing a game to delay me on my steps? Other than the bow I do not want to have with me.
Apollo *Qual teme avesti beltà semplicetta?* *Ohimè, volgesti il passo[74]. Non tanta fretta.* *Aspetta, ninfa, aspetta![75]*	**Apollo** O what fear do you have simple beauty? O dear, you turn your pace. Not so much haste! Wait nimph, wait!
Apollo *(aria)*[76] *Non curi la mia pianta o fiamma o gelo,* *sian del vivo smaraldo eterni i pregi,* *ne l'offenda giammai l'ira del cielo.* *I bei cigni di Dirce e i sommi regi* *di verdeggianti rami al crin famoso* *portin segno d'onor, ghirlande e fregi.*	**Apollo** *(aria)* Let my tree not fear either fire or frost, and let her eternal finery be of bright emerald, nor shall the wrath of-Heaven ever hurt her again. Let the fine swans of Dirce and the sovreign kings bear on their famous brows as a sign of honour garlands and wreaths of green boughs.
Coro *A lieta vita[77]* *Amor c'invita,* *Fa la la* *Chi gior brama,* *Se di cor ama,* *Donorá il core* *a un tal Signore,* *Fa la la*	**Coro** To a merry life, Amor invites us, Fa la la etc. He who longs to enjoy, If sincerely loving; Gives his heart To such a Lord, Fa la la (etc.)

ATTO II 3 **Arlecchino** Zanni, sono ubriaco fradicio!	**ACT II 3** **Arlecchino** Zanni, I'm really drunk ....
Zanni Ah, si?	**Zanni** Oh , yes?
Arlecchino Ho bevuto cinque bichiere di vino.	**Arlecchino** I drunk five glasses of wine.
Zanni Io dieci.	**Zanni** I did ten.
Arlecchino Do birre	**Arlecchino** Two beers.

Zanni Io cinque	**Zanni** I drunk five.
Arlecchino Oh…Zanni, io un male che non me passa	**Arlecchino** O, Zanni I have an unbearable pain.
Zanni Hè?	**Zanni** What?
Arlecchino Un male!	**Arlecchino** A PAIN
Zanni Ossa?	**Zanni** Huh?
Arlecchino Il male de primavera!	**Arlecchino** The pain of Spring.
Arlecchino Quando ti senti un fuoco che parte da qui, e che scende, scende, scende....	**Arlecchino** If you feel a fire that starts here, and then goes down, down, down
e poi sale, sale, sale... al pensier dell'Azzurrina.	And then goes up, up, up… when I think of Azzurina
Zanni Azzurrina? **Arlecchino** Si, con quelli occhi grandi… - ferma gli'occhi – E quelle gambe bianche, morbide di panna.. (fermo) e quei capelli biondi, Con quel particolare, Zanni… Zanni, mi accompagni dalla bella Azzurrina? **Zanni** No, io devo andare dalla mia Pepa **Arlecchino** Fermo! Non si fa! Metti dentro! -abbiamo niente bisogno di persone inutile.. prendiamo la bella rosa rossa, la portemo a l'Azzurrina, e quando li arrive dice: "Che è quel bel bambino che ma porta questa roselina che me strapazzo tutto e poi me lo sposo" **Arlecchino** Vai! Che questa bel figuro… di giorno, de notte.. e me non posso aspettare…	**Zanni** Azzurrina? **Arlecchino** yes with those big eyes. - close your eyes – And those white, creamy legs… And that blond hair, With that special look, Zanni.. Are you coming to Azzurrina? **Zanni** No, I have to go to my Pepa **Arlecchino** Stop! one does not do such a thing, put it in! - we don't need useless people at all. Let us take a beautiful red rose, we bring it to Azzurrina, and when we arrive there she says: "What nice kid brings me this beautiful rose that mixes me all up and will I marry him? **Arlecchino** Go, to see this nice figure… day and night.. I can not wait…

Zanni Fatto. **Arlecchino** Ah bravo, addesso noi,….Oh… Mi scappa la pipi! **Zanni** Oh, anche a me. **Arlecchino** Cerchiamo un albero. Che pisso lungo, che cha **Zanni/Arlecchino** Un albero! **Arlecchino** Zanni, mi pisso lungo. **Zanni** O, delle pere! **Arlecchino** C'è un pero **Zanni** Ma no, le tette	**Zanni** Done. **Arlecchino** Ah, bravo, now we…oh…. I have to pee! **Zanni** Oh, me too **Arlecchino** Let us look for a tree. I have to pee for a long time. **Zanni/Arlecchino** A tree! **Arlecchino** Zanni, I will pee long. **Zanni** Oh, pears! **Arlecchino** It's a pear tree **Zanni** No, tits!
Arlecchino Tette? Sono maturata?	**Arlecchino** Tits? Are they matured?
Zanni Non so, tasto io. **Arlecchino** No tasto io!	**Zanni** I don't know, I will touch them. **Arlecchino** No, I will touch!
Zanni/Arlecchino Insieme! Uno, due, tre	**ZANNI/ARLECCHINO** Together! One, two, three
Tree ...aaaii Aaaih… mi sento male…	**Tree** …aaaiii. Aaaaih… I feel bad/sick…
Arlecchino Ah, sto male, do caresso e do baccio. --- Oh, c'e calda Bravo Zanni, continua….fermo, fermo! Oh, c'e calda sempre più come si fa?	**Arlecchino** Ah, it's sick, I will caress and kiss it. --- Oh, it is hot Bravo, Zanni, keep going….stop, stop! Oh, it is even hotter, what can we do?
Zanni Portiamolo as casa	**Zanni** Let us take the tree home
Arlecchino Come si fa con le radici? Vai!	**Arlecchino** How to do this with the roots? Go ahead!
Tree AIUTO…	**Tree** Help…

Arlecchino Oh, come si fà?	**Arlecchino** What should we do?
Monteverdi Caterina che succede?	**Monteverdi** Caterina, what is wrong?
Arlecchino C'E VORREBBE UN BOTANICO. BOTANICO	**Arlecchino** WE SHOULD FIND A BOTANIST. BOTANIST
Monteverdi Romanina, hai bevuto troppo?	**Monteverdi** Romanina, have you drunk to much?
Arlecchino C'e vorrebbe un veterinario. VETERINARIO	**Arlecchino** We should find a veterinary. VETERINARIO
Monteverdi CATERINA, TU SEI CALDISSIMA!	**Monteverdi** Caterina, you are very warm!
Arlecchino Ci vorrebbe un dottore. DOTT…	**Arlecchino** We need a doctor. DOC…
Zanni Il dottore è arrivato.	**Zanni** The doctor has arrived.
Dottore Posso passare? Grazie. Ma ho bisogno d'un tavola per essaminare la patiente.	**Doctor** Can I pass? Thank you. But I need a table to examine the patient.
Dottore Sei molto calda.. e la causa del rossore mi sembra una febribus causalis constitutionis morbidus.	**Dottore** You are very warm and the cause of the red color seems to me febribus causalis constitutionis morbidus`.
Zanni Esattamente che penso anch'io.	**Zanni** Exactly what I also thought.
Dottore Ma non pensare, tu ripori la mente detto.	**Dottore** Don't think. Put your mind back!
Zanni SUBITO! VIA, VIA ,VIA..	**Zanni** Immediately. go, go, go…
Dottore PRESTO!....FERME!	**Dottore** FAST!...STOP!
Dottore Inghiotti con manco fastidio?[78]	**Dottore** Are you swallowing problematically?
Caterina …mmmhhhhh	**Caterina** …mmmhhhhh
Dottore Signore, signori, questa donna è molto aggravata di male[79].	**Dottore** Ladies and gentlemen, this woman is taken by a serious disease.

Arlecchino Il dottore ha studiato tanto a Bologna per dire la cosa così.	**Arlecchino** You must certainly have studied a long time for such infallible knowledge…
Dottore è molto probabile che c'e le varole[80].	**Dottore** Most probably it is smallpox.
Eleonora Varole?? Ma, come varole! Questa donna è la cantatrice per l'Arianna, *la ragione per la malattia è l'haver voluto la meschina bere tutto questo Carnivale vini grandi.*[81]	**Eleonora** Smallpox?? But, how smallpox! This woman is the singer for Arianna. The reason of her illness is that the stupid girl drunk too much heavy wines this carnival.

Dottore È in un stato pericolosissimo e non è sicura di campare[82]…	**Dottore** She is in a most dangerous state and not likely to survive…
Eleonora *... da bere disordinamente … senza aquarli*[83],	**Eleonora** drinking recklessly without watering them down
Eleonora *(a se stessa)* *Un gran furia del male sopravenutole*[84]*… sto con tanta paura di questo benedetto male, non l'avendo hauto il Principe*[85]*…che mi trema il core*	**Eleonora** *(to herself)* A horrific illness came over her… I am so anxious with this cursed disease, because the Prince did not have it…my heart trembles
Caterina Oh, Dio… Aaah mi sento male…	**Caterina** Oh, God... Aaah I feel so sick…
Rasi *Vo dubitando che questo negotio andrai tanto alla longa… remingo sepolto nell'otio…* *mi supererà la febre*[86].	**Rasi** I have a suspicion that this affair is going to last a long time… and I will be burried in boredom… getting a fever of the thought alone.
Caterina *Beato è il cor ch'ha per conforto un Dio*[87]	**Caterina** Blessed is the heart that has a God for comfort
Monteverdi Prego e preghero Dio[88] che tu resta con noi,	**Monteverdi** I pray and will pray God that you stay with us
Caterina Piacendo a Dio…. ch'io vado in pace[89] *(silenzio)* O, madre, o padre… addio[90].	**Caterina** If it pleases God… I will go in peace *(silence)* O, mother, o father... farewell.

Darà la notte il sol lume alla terra,	By night the sun will shed light on the earth,
splenderà Cinzia il di, prima che Glauco	the moon will shine by day, ere Glaucus cease
di baciar, d'honorar lasci quel seno	to kiss, to venerate that breast
che nido fu d'Amor,	where Love once nestled,
che dura tomba preme.	that an unyielding tomb encumbers.
Né sol d'alti sospir, di pianto,	Nor for all his sighs and tears
prodighe a lui saran le fere e 'l cielo[91].	will he be pitied by the beasts and heaven.

ATTO III,1. ***L'IDROPICA***[92]	**ACT III,1** ***L'IDROPICA***
Signorina, voi siete amalata, andiamo in casa.	Miss, you're sick, we're going home
La donna piu bella ch'io abbia mai visto…	The most beautiful woman I have ever seen ...
Il fazzoletto![93]	the handkerchief!
Il Fazzoletto	the handkerchief
Ah, senti che profumo soprafine	Smell what a finest perfume ...
Proprio addesso ch'io ho incontrato la mia anima gemella.	but just now that I meet my twin soul ...
io so trata così a causa della sua malattia..	I have been treated like this because of his illness...
Ma come possa fare a sfondare le sue porte?	How can I open her doors now?
A violare la sua prigione...	... breaking open her prison ...
A penetrare nella sua Fortezza.	... penetrate her fortress.
Così aggravata di male…come posso fare?	So .... exasperated by pain. How do I do that?
Vorrebbe un fabbro.	I should have a blacksmith.
Ci vorrebbe un dottore	you need a doctor!
Ci vorrebbe un arriete	I should have a battering ram.
Un dottore	A doctor!
Ci vorrebbe un cattapulta	I should have a catapult!
Un dottore!	A doctor!
Ci vorrebbe un dottore!	I should have a doctor!
Io!	I....
In quanto primo dottore assolutamente della compagnia dei Comici fedeli…	As a doctor of the company of comici fedeli ...

Ho l'onore qui seduta stante... di honorarti de la carica di ...	have the honor here in the on-site session ... to appoint you to the office of ....
dottore magni in tutte le scienze mediche e diagnotiche.	doctor in all medical sciences and diagnostics.
Ahi, il dottore.	I'm a doctor.
(bussa alla porta)	(*knocks on the door*)
Chi è?	Who is there?
Ma come chi è, sono io. Il dottore.	How so? It's me, the doctor.
Ma si, son qui per curare la malata	I come here to heal the sick girl
Qui non c'è nessuno malata..	There is no sick girl here ....
Dale prove ch'io ho raccolto… Qui abbiamo un'amalata di…..	According to the evidence I collected ... is a sick person here at home with ....
Di?	with...?
Acne	acne.....
Meteorismo	meteorism ....
Polmonite	pneumonia ...
Gonnorea	gonoroo ...
diarrhoea	diarrhea
pyorrhea	pyorrhea
nymphomania	Nymphomania!
E quale sarebbe la vostra cura per la nymphomania	What can that mean, your cure for nymphomania?
Ma una gran cura a lunga durata.	A great cure, working with a long duration.
Da somministrare da stomaco vuoto e gambe aperte…	to use on the empty stomach, legs wide ....
A tutte le hore in tutti gli orifizi.	at all hours and in all body openings.
Anche subito?	Even now?

Ma certo signora cara	Certainly dear lady ...
Sbrigave mi a scendere..	Make haste to come down...
Ch'io una cura proprio qui che aspetta..	I've been waiting here for the cure ...
Arrivo…	I am coming...
Si he, fattemi entrare vai non fattemi aspettare	Quick, open up and don't make me wait.
Siete pronto?	Are you ready?
Ma certo signora cara, sbrigatemi	But certainly, dear wife, let me get farther ...
Chiudete gl'occhi	close your eyes ....
A volete fare le cose misteriose he?	Ah, you want to do mysterious things ...
Io le chiudo.	I close them.
Sono qui signor dottore…	Here I am mister doctor ....
Sono tutta sua…	I am entirely yours ...
Alora cominciamo subito la visita	Then we will immediately start the investigation ...
A senti le curve tutti a posto giusto…	I feel all those curves, all in the right place ....
(*Grillo smaschera il falso medico e lo caccia di casa*)	(*Grillo unmasks the fake doctor and kicks him out*)
Grillo, mio eroe!	Grillo, my hero!

Eleonora	**Eleonora**
Torna signora Florinda al mondo! Da dove viene tanta volgarità? Parlate noi, ma questa volta con la bocca della verità. Cerchiamo un'Arianna.[94]	Return to this world miss Florinda. Where is all that vulgarity coming from? Speak to us, but this time with the mouth of truth, we are looking for an Ariadne.

Teseo *(Rasi)* *Ma deh, ch'io miri lieto* *quel bel ciglio seren, che m'innamora* *troppo, troppo m'accora quel nubiloso velo, ch'il bel viso gentil turba, e scolora.*[99]	**Teseo** *(Rasi)* But, that I look gladly into these serene eyes which make me fall in love, too much, too much grieves me this cloudy veil, that disturbs this gentle face, and pales it.
Arianna (Virginia) *Sì caro al cor mi scende* *il ragionar cortese,* *che del natio paese* *ogni memoria omai spargo d'oblio,* *addio padre… addio madre... O patria addio.*[100]	**Arianna** (Virginia) So lovely sinks into my heart, this courtuous reasoning, that of the land of my birth, Every memory henceforth disperses into oblivion, Farewell father, farewell mother, … O homeland farewell.

Monteverdi Sapete chi son io?	**Monteverdi** Do you know who I am?
Virginia Voi siete Mo mo[95]… Monteverdi, il maestro di musica del duca, compositore ... *E chi son io?*	**Virginia** You are a MomoMonteverdi The master of the Duke's music, the composer … And who am I?
Monteverdi ...*un personaggio della Comedia*…	**Monteverdi** ...a character of the commedia…
Virginia *Oh?..... v'ingannate questa fiata;*	**Virginia** Oh? ... this time you are mistaken.
Monteverdi Perché?	**Monteverdi** Why?
Virginia *Perché non sono personaggio della Comedia, … ma sotto questo habito, e sotto questi pani... presi per non esser conosciuta da tutti,* Io sono… la Verità, la verità che voi cercate.[96]	**Virginia** Because I am not a character of the commedia, ...but underneath this dress, and under this disguise … taken not to be recognized by everybody, I am ...Truth, the truth you are looking for.
Monteverdi *Ma come difenderai le Comedie de'moderni tempi, ... che sono piene di parole oscene, sporche, & scandalose?...* è questa la verità*?* [97]	**Monteverdi** But how can that be in these modern comedies, …which are full of obscene words, filthy and scandalous?... is that Truth?
Virginia *Sono mandata da Giove à trarre questa gente dall'errore, nel quale l'havete posta; Imperroché la Comedia è loro conceduta,*[98]	**Virginia** I was sent by Jupiter to draw these people away from their errors, that have betaken them; Inasmuch that comedy is allowed to them,
Monteverdi ma come…	**Monteverdi** but how…

Virginia aspetta… *non solo per le dette ragioni, ma vi è più,* *perche è stata da Giove mandata in terra per la pietà, che esso ha in Cielo della misera, & affanata vita de' mortali;*[101]	**Virginia** Wait… Not only for the reasons I said, but there is more, because it is sent by Jupiter out of mercy, which he has in Heaven for the misery and suffering in the life of mortals;
Monteverdi *non resta però, che i gioveni di sua natura, licenziosi... da queste Comedie lascive, & da lascivi amori mischiate…, non divenghino troppo effeminati… molli... & più facilmente si diano in preda all'amor carnale ... di cose disdicevoli & così tralassino le virtuose operationi…*[102]	**Monteverdi** But it nevertheless should not end up in such a way that the youth just by its lascivious nature, … through these horny comedies mixed with salacious love … will become too effeminate...and soft…and more willing to offer themselves as prey for the carnal love of indecent things, and thus omitting virtuous behaviour. …

ATTO III,2 *LAMENTO D'ARIANNA*	**ACT III,2** *LAMENTO D'ARIANNA*
Arianna Lasciatemi morire,[103] lasciatemi morire, e che volete voi, che mi conforte in così dura sorte, in così gran martire? Lasciatemi morire.	**Arianna** Leave me to die, Leave me to die, And what do you think can comfort me In so harsh a destiny In so great martyrdom? Leave me to die.
O Teseo, o Teseo mio, sì che mio ti vo dir, che mio pur sei, benché t'involi, ahi crudo, a gl'occhi miei. Volgiti Teseo mio, volgiti Teseo, o dio, volgiti indietro a rimirar colei, che lasciato ha per te la patria, e il regno, E in queste arene ancora cibo di fiere dispietate, e crude lascerà l'ossa ignude. O Teseo, o Teseo mio se tu sapessi, o Dio, se tu sapessi, ohimè, come s'affanna la povera Arianna, forse, forse pentito rivolgeresti ancor la prora al lito; ma con l'aure serene tu te ne vai felice, ed io qui piango. A te prepara Atene liete pompe superbe, ed io rimango cibo di fere in solitarie arene. Te l'uno, e l'altro tuo vecchio parente stringerà lieto, ed io più non vedrovvi, o madre, o padre mio.	O Theseus, o my Theseus, For mine I say, since you are that, Although you flee, ah cruel, from mine eyes. Turn back, my Theseus, Turn back, oh God! Turn back to look again on he Who left for you her native land and realm, And on these sands, Food for pitiless and cruel wild animals, Will leave her bare bones. O Theseus, o my Theseus, If you knew, o God! If you knew alas, how suffers poor Arianna, Perhaps, perhaps repentant, You would turn your prow towards the shore. But with gentle breezes you depart happily while I weep; For you Athens is preparing Joyful, magnificent celebrations, and I remain Food for wild beasts on solitary sands. Every aged relative of yours will happily Embrace you, while I will never again see you, o Mother, o father of mine.

Dove, dove è la fede, che tanto mi giuravi? così ne l'alta sede tu mi ripon de gl'avi? Son queste le corone, onde m'adorni il crine? Questi gli scettri sono, queste le gemme, e gl'ori? Lasciarmi in abbandono a fera, che mi strazi, e mi divori? Ah Teseo, ah Teseo mio, lascerai tu morire in van piangendo, in van gridando aita la misera Arianna, ch'a te fidossi, e ti diè gloria, e vita?	Where, where is the faith, That you swore so often to me? Is this how you place me on the High throne of your ancestors? Are these the crowns With which you adorn my hair? These the scepters, These the gems and the gold: To leave me abandoned to a Beast who will tear me apart and devour me? Ah Theseus, ah my Theseus, Will you leave to die, Weeping in vain, calling in vain for help, The pitiable Ariadne Who trusted you and gave you glory and life?
Ahi, che non pur risponde; ahi, che più d'aspe è sordo a' miei lamenti. O nembi, o turbi, o venti sommergetelo voi dentr'a quell'onde. Correte orche, balene, e de le membra immonde empite le voragini profonde. Che parlo, ahi, che vaneggio? Misera, ohimè, che chieggio? O Teseo, o Teseo mio, non son, non son quell'io, non son quell'io, che i feri detti sciolse, parlò l'affanno mio, parlò il dolore, parlò la lingua sì, ma non già il core. Misera, ancor dò loco a la tradita speme, e non si spegne fra tanto scherno ancor d'amor il foco? Spegni tu morte omai le fiamme indegne. O madre, o padre, o de l'antico regno superbi alberghi, ov'ebbi d'or la cuna una o servi, o fidi amici (ahi fato indegno) mirate ove m'ha scorto empia fortuna, mirate di che duol m'han fatto erede l'amor mio, la mia fede, e l'altrui inganno, **Arianna/Orfeo** così va chi tropp'ama, e troppo crede.	Alas, He does not even respond! Alas, he is more deaf than an asp to my laments. O storm-clouds, o tornados, o winds, Submerge him under these waves. Hurry, orcs and whales, And with his filthy limbs Fill the deep abysses. What am I saying, alas, or raving? Wretched, oh dear, what do I ask? O Theseus, o my Theseus, It is not I, I am not the one, Who unleashed such fierce words, My anguish spoke, my grief spoke, My tongue spoke, yes, but not my heart. Poor me, do I still hold onto A betrayed hope, and is not extinguished, despite so much scorn, of love the fire? Extinguish, Death, at last the unworthy flames! O Mother, o Father, o of my old realm magnificent palaces, where I had the golden cradle: O servants, o trusted friends (alas, mean Fate), Look where evil fortune has brought me, Look what grief I am heir to through My love, my faith, and another's deceit. **Arianna/Orfeo** Thus goes who loves and trusts too much.

ATTO III,3	**ACT III,3**
Rasi/Vanità (Orfeo) *Hor l'altre Donne son superbe e perfide.* *Ver che li adora dispietate instabili* *Prive di senno e d'ogni pensier nobile* *Onde ragione opra di lor non lodasi;*[104]	**Rasi/Vanità** (Orfeo) Now… other women are proud and false, pitiless and changeable to those that adore them, without judgement and every noble thought, whence rightly their behaviour is not praised;
Ragione (sussurando) *Apprendete pietà.*[105]	**Ragione** (whispering) Learn to have compassion.
Rasi/Vanità/Orfeo Apprendete, Apprendete pietà **Tutti uomini** Apprendete pietà donne e donzelle!	**Rasi/Vanità/Orfeo** Learn, learn to have compassion **Tutti uomini** Learn to have compassion, ladies and maidens!
Verità *Fuggito è pur da questa destra ultrice* *L'empio nostro avversario il Trace Orfeo* *Disprezzator deí nostri pregi alteri.*[106]	**Verità** He has escaped from this avenging hand, our wicked adversary, Thracian Orpheus, despiser of our high value.
Monteverdi *Non fuggirà, che grave* *Suol esser più quanto piu tarda scende* *Sovra nocente capo ira celeste…*[107] Possa tacere la sua voce![108]	**Monteverdi** He will not escape, for the heavier does it fall the later it comes, upon his guilty head the heavenly anger. Here may his voice be silenced!

LA MORTE D'ORFEO	THE DEATH OF ORFEO
END	**END**

[1] Alessandro Striggio/Claudio Monteverdi, *Orfeo,* (1607)*,* Atto Quarto.
[2] From: *Euridice,* Jacopo Peri (music) and Ottavio Rinuccini, Dario Zanotti, transcript of the libretto http://www.librettidopera.it/zpdf/euridice.pdf p. 11/27
[3] Paolo Fabbri, *Monteverdi*, (Torino, Edizioni Di Torino,1985) p. 124: letter from Claudia Cattaneo to Annibale Chieppio, 14-XI-1606, "*infermità grave avuta" "le provigionei nostre síano pagate sopra il dacio de Viadana"* and asking for a dress and a sottana because of the expected cold: *"che molto mi prese, venendo il freddo come fa"* Monteverdi, letter No.6, 2-XII-1608 *"patire di freddo, de vestiti, de servitute et quasi di magnare con perdita de la provigione della sig.ra Claudia"*
[4] Occupied working on *Orfeo* which was performed in Mantua on 25 February 1607.
[5] From letter No. 83, to Ercole Marliani from 23-VIII-1625, Annonciade Russo, and Jean-Philippe Navarre, *Monteverdi, Correspondance, préfaces et épîtres dédicatoires,* (Sprimont, Mardaga, 2001), p.152.
[6] Scipione Agnelli (1586-1653), *La Sestina*: from the madrigal "Dunque amate reliquie".
[7] Cremona, SS. Nazaro e Celso in the parish of San Sepolchro. Monteverdi was baptized there: "Die 15 Magio (sic) 1567 Claudio et Zuan Antoni filiolo de m. Baldasar Mondoverdo compar il s. Zuan Batista Zacaria comar madona Laura de la Fina."
[8] Bernardo Tasso, *Rime divise in cinque libri*,(Ferrara, Gabriele Giolito, 1560), libro secondo, p.183. via Google Books
[9] Libretto *Orfeo,* Atto II, trans. Gilbert Blin, 2012, "tu se' da me partita." p. 8.
[10] *Idem*, (p.11), Atto III, from the aria *Possente Spirto;* "mia cara sposa, il cor non è piu meco."
[11] Letter dated 24-IX-1607 from Federico Follino (Fabbri, *Monteverdi,* p.124)
[12] Letter (No.6) 2-XII-1608, Cremona, to the duke "*…ho ricevuto una lettera di Vostra Signoria Illustrissima dalla quale ho inteso il comando di Sua Altezza Serenissima, atio me ne venga quanto prima a Mantova.*."
[13] See fn.10.
[14] *Idem*.
[15] See note 2, letter by Claudia, begging for payment.
[16] Letter No. 6, 8 XII 1608, "il signor padre atribuisce la causa […] del prurito all'aria di Mantoa che m'e contraria"
[17] *Idem*, "et dubita che solamente l'aria fra poco di tempo sarebbe la mia morte"
[18] *Idem*, "ho aquistato un dolor di testa, et un prurito cosí potente et rabbioso per la vita"
[19] Letter No.2, 27-VIII-1604, (Russo, *Monteverdi, Correspondance,* p.22.)
[20] *Idem,* (Russo, *Monteverdi, Correspondance,* p.24.)
[21] *Idem*
[22] *Idem*
[23] Monteverdi, Madrigal book VIII, Venice,1638.
[24] Caterina Martinelli lived three years in the house of Monteverdi. See Barbara Furlotti, *Le Collezioni Gonzaga, Il carteggio tra Roma e Mantova (1587 -1612),* (Milan, Silvana Editoriale, 2003), record 548, p.402. letter by Lelio Arrigoni to the court "[…] al metterla in casa del Monteverdi per la commodità dell'imparare, acciò che costui non entrasse in qualche sospettione vedendo egli mutarsi totalmente gli ordini […]'
[25] Libretto *Arianna*, Scena quarta, Coro di pescatori, 'Fiamme serene e pure.'
[26] Letter No. 95, 24-V-1627; (Russo, *Monteverdi, Correspondance,* p.170), 'the letter should arrive in Venice in 2 or 3 days, if it pleases to God.'
[27] Madrigal from book III (1592) on a text by Torquato Tasso, *Gerusalemme liberata,* canto duodecimo 77.*"* Vivró fra I miei tormenti e le mie cure."
[28] The scene of the labyrinth is based on the ceiling in the Stanza del Labirinto from the Palazzo Ducale in Mantova. In the middle there is the text: "Dedalee industrie et Teseie virtutis" Clearly referring to the labyrinth of Crete and the myth of Ariadne. The woodwork is done by Lorenzo Leonbruno (1489-1536) constructed for Francesco II Gonzaga and Isabella d'Este Gonzaga (1474-1539) in the years 1506-1508 for Palazzo San Sebastiano. In 1601 the ceiling was transported to the Palazzo Ducale of the architect Antonio Maria Viani (1555-1635) for a room of Vincenzo I Gonzaga (1562-1612). The latter had made the workers add a text at the border: "*Dum sub arce Canisiae /Contra turcas pugnam/ Vinc Mant IV /et MontFerr II dux."* [While under the fortress of Canessa /against the Turcs / fought Vincenzo the fourth duke of Mantova and second of Monferrato.] This reference is about the military operation of the year 1601 in Hungary, where Vincenzo participated with his troups in a war against the Turcs.
[29] A frottola from the circle around Isabella d'Este on the barzeletta of an anonymous poet "Forsi che sí, forsi che no" set to four-part frottola by Marchetto Cara (1474-ca.1525). The frottola survived in a unique copy in a convolute *Frottole, libro tertio,* Venezia, Petrucci 1505 cc 33v-35r. Now in München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, rar. 878/3. See: Paola Besutti, '"Forse che sì, forse che no," in Musica: Frottole e Reminiscenze,' *Miscellanea 20,* (Florence, Olschki, 2011), pp. 67-92.
[30] Palazzo Ducale di Mantova, residence of Monteverdi's patron Vincenzo I Gonzaga.
[31] *L'Artusi,* 1600, p.39v "mi piacerebbe ch'io vedessi che questi passaggi fossero fondati sopra qualche ragione"

[32] *L'Artusi,* 1600, p. 40v. Daedalus speaks with the words of Artusi here.
[33] Letter No. 56, 10-V-1620, to Alessandro Striggio. Russo, *Monteverdi, Correspondance,* p.118.
[34] The exact address of Monteverdi's house is unknown to us now, but he lived in the parish of the Sant'Andrea.
[35] see footnote 32.
[36] *L'Artusi,* 1600, ragionamento secondo, p.42v.
[37] Letter No.84, 19 IX 1625 to Ercole Marliani. "[…] che non creddo che altro labirinto intendessero quelli antichi che questo del litigare."
[38] Giulio Cesare Monteverdi, Scherzi musicali, 1607. *Dichiaratione della lettera, che si ritrova stampata nel Quinto libro de suoi Madrigali.* (Russo, *Monteverdi, Correspondance,* p. 254).
[39] *L'Artusi*, 1600, ragionamento secondo p. 42.
[40] Giulio Cesare Monteverdi, *Dichiaratione,* Russo, *Monteverdi, Correspondance,* p. 246.
[41] see note 39.
[42] *Idem,* 39v sotto.
[43] *Idem,* p. 42 sopra.
[44] *Idem,* p.43v sopra.
[45] Monteverdi, Madrigal book V, 1605. Dedication *Al serenissimo signore don Vincenzo Gonzaga,* "Sotto la protettione di cosi gran Principe vivranno eterna vita ad onta di quelle lingue, che cercano dar morte all'opere d'altrui."
[46] *L'Artusi,* p.39v.
[47] *Dichiaratione*, Russo, *Monteverdi, Correspondance,* p.248.
[48] *L'Artusi,* p. 43.
[49] Monteverdi, Madrigal book IV, 1603.
[50] Letter No.124, 22-X-1633, to Giovanni Battista Doni, (Russo, *Monteverdi, Correspondance,* p.214) […] ho provato in pratica che quando fui per scrivere il pianto del Arianna non trovando libro che mi apprise la via naturale all immitatione [..]
[51] *Rappresentazione di Anima, e di Corpo,* Piacere con due compagni; Atto secondo, scena quarta, libretto p.13, "Gli augelli pargoletti, cantan su gli arbuscelli:" Libretto Agostino Manni, Roma, 1600. Transcript, Dario Zanotti.
[52] *Idem,* p.14.
[53] *Idem.*
[54] *Rappresentazione,* scena settima, where Vita Mondana describes herself and Angelo Custode replies, libretto p.17/18.
[55] *Idem*, Atto terzo, Intelletto: "…qual premio in ciel avete più nobile e più degno?" libretto p.22.
[56] *Otello,* Verdi/Boito, 1887, the famous entry of Otello. See also chapter 5 Contexts, p. 145.
[57] Libretto *Arianna*, p.9.
[58] Francesco Rasi, known as a singer, but composed and published two anthologies: *Vaghezze di musica* (1608) and *Madrigali* (1610). See Susan Helen Parisi, "Ducal Patronage of Music in Mantua, 1587–1627: An Archival Study." Ph.D. diss. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1989.
[59] Letter No.19, 9-XII-1616, (Russo, *Monteverdi, Correspondance,* p.60).
[60] Referring to the *Lamento d'Arianna* at that point most probably still to be written. See: Tim Carter, "Lamenting Ariadne?" (*Early Music*, 27/3, (Autumn 1999), pp. 395-405.
[61] Letter 27-II-1608 by Carlo Rossi: "Madama è restata con il Sig. Ottavio di arrichirla con qualche azione essendo assai sciutta"(Fabbri, *Monteverdi*, p.129).
[62] Parisi, Susan Helen, Francesco Rasi's La favola di *Cibele ed Ati* and the Cybele Legend from Ovid to the Early *Seicento*, in: Music Observed: Studies in Memory of William C. Holmes (Detroit Monographs in Musicology), 2004.
[63] Rinuccini, Prefazione dell'Euridice, 1600, (Solerti, *Le Origine,* p. 40). In the house of Jacopo Corsi, 20-I-1599.
[64] Dedication to Maria de Medici, print of *Euridice,* 4-X-1600, Rinuccini, (Solerti, *Le Origini,* pp. 40/42).
[65] According to Fabbri, Gagliano confirmed in his preface of the 1608 edition that Martinelli sang the role of Amor. This was taken as a starting point when creating the libretto. The proof of Reiner's article (see Chapter 5, Contexts, page 149) came later to my attention: Stuart Reiner, 'La vag'Angioletta (and Others)', *Analecta Musicologica*, 14 (1974), pp. 44ff.
[66] Giulio Caccini, *Le Nuove Musiche* (Solerti, *Le Origine,* p.55) "Ai lettori" "quella antica maniera di passaggi che già si costumarono, più propria per gli strumenti di fiato e di corde che per;le voci, et altresì usarsi indifferentemente il crescere o scemare della voce, l'esclamazioni, trilli e gruppi, et altri cotali ornamenti alla buona maniera di cantare.[…]. Marco da Gagliano, prefazione per *La Dafne*, October 1608, (Solerti, *Le Origini,* p.79) "E qui s'ingannano molti, I quali s'affaticano in far gruppi, trilli, passaggi ed esclamazioni, senza aver riguardo per che fine e a che proposito."
[67] Dedicatione e Prefazione a *L'Euridice*, le musiche, Jacopo Peri, 1600, (Solerti, *Le Origine,* p.45).
[68] Gagliano, 1608, ai lettori, (Solerti, *Le Origini,* p.76), "Ma dove la favola non lo ricercar, lascici del tutto ogni ornamento; per non fare come come quell pittore, che sapendo ben dipingere il cipresso, lo dipigneva per tutto."

[69] Referring to the principle of 'parlar cantando' as described in the preface the edition of *l'Euridice* by Jacopo Peri: "veduto che si trattava di poesia dramatica e che però si doveva imitar' col canto chi parla (e senza dubbio mai parlò mai cantando)"
[70] Letter No. 6, 2-XII-1608, (Russo, *Monteverdi, Correspondance,* p.30).
[71] *Idem*
[72] Marco da Gagliano/ Ottavio Rinuccini, 1608, *La Dafne*, scena seconda.
[73] *Idem*, scena terza
[74] *Idem*, scena sesta
[75] *Idem*, scena terza
[76]*Idem*, scena sesta
[77] Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi, *Balletti a cinque voci,* printed by Amadino, Venezia 1591. "L'innamorato" dedicated to Vincenzo Gonzaga.
[78] Letter from Antonio Costatini to Duke Vincenzo Gonzaga [in Milan?], 28 February 1608 (Busta 2712, Fasc.IV, letter 4): "La Sig.ra Catherina sta al suo solito con le varole, ma pero con un poco remissione della febre, rossore e colore, inghiotisse con manco fastidio, et in somma mostra qualche remissione , la quale se persevere si puo sperare." P[aolo] C[ontotto]. See Edmond Strainchamps, "The Life and Death of Caterina Martinelli: New Light on Monteverdi's 'Arianna'." *Early Music History* 5 (1985), p.166.
[79] Letter from Francesco Campagnolo to Prince Francesco Gonzaga [in Milan?], 29 February 1608 (Busta 2712, fasc. XXIII, letter 30), Strainchamps, *The Life and Death*, p.180.
[80] *Idem*: "e particolarmente le varole" Smallpox was a highly contagious lethal disease.
[81] Letter from Duchess Eleonora Gonzaga to Alessandro Striggio in Turin, 10 March 1608 (Busta 2163): "ma che molto più [….] vini grandi." Strainchamps, *The Life and Death,* p.185.
[82] Letter 2-III (by mistake signed II)-1608, from Ferdinando Gonzaga to his brother Francesco, Strainchamps, *The Life and Death,* 1985, p.181.
[83] Mistake of librettist: the word Eleonora uses is *adacqui,* ["…vini grandi, sapendo noi che tali sono in cotesto paese, et che li adacqui bene..."], Strainchamps, *The Life and Death,* p.185.
[84] Letter footnote 31.
[85] *Idem,* side letter: '*Di Mantova a' x di Marzo 1608. Constantinus subscripsit.' "*sto con tanta paura di questo benedetto male, non l'avendo hauto ii Principe, che mi trema il core."
[86] In fact, these are not the words of Francesco Rasi, but from the other tenor, Francesco Campagnolo, see Strainchamps, *The Life and Death,* appendix doc. 10 ASM, Archivio Gonzaga, Busta 2712, fasc. xxm, letter 30.
[87] Libretto Arianna, from "Drammi musicali di Ottavio Rinuccini, Livorno, ed. Tommaso Masi e compagno, 1802. p.119 no. 940. http://accademiabardi.parallelo.it/files/Drammi_musicali%20(1).pdf
[88] Letter No.95, 24-V-1627, (Russo, *Monteverdi, Correspondance,* p.170).
[89] *Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda*: Clorinda's final words: "s'apre il ciel(o), io vado in pace." (Tasso, canto dodecesimo, parte 3, 68).
[90] Caterina quotes the Lamento d'Arianna, but as far as we know she had not seen her parents anymore since she moved to Mantua in 1603.
[91] La Sestina by Scipione Agnelli (1586-1653), dedicated to Caterina Martinelli, commissioned by Vincenzo Gonzaga. (letter by Bassano Cassola 26-VII-1610 to Ferdinando Gonzaga: […] the third given to him by His Most Serene Highness, of a shepard whose nymph is dead, to words by the son of Lord Count Lepido Agnelli on the death of Signora Romanina…." quoted by Fabbri, *Monteverdi,* 1985.)
[92] Giovanni Battista Guarini, *L'Idropica,* dedicated to Cesare D'Este, published in Venice, Ciotti, 1613. Atto primo, scena sesta, p.14v ff.
[93] The handkerchief is a second reference to *Otello* (Act II) by Giuseppe Verdi and Arrigo Boito.
[94] The Comici Fedeli were rehearsing for some months in the Palazzo Ducale to prepare *L'Idropica* for the nuptials. The letter to the duke (15-III-1608) of Antonio Costatini, which provides the most information about this audition scene is quoted in full by Paola Besutti, "The 'Sala degli Specchi' Uncovered: Monteverdi, the Gonzagas and the Palazzo Ducale, Mantua." *Early Music*, 27/ 3, 1999, p. 460. See also in the same volume Tim Carter, "Lamenting Ariadne?" p. 395. Emiliy Wilbourne, *Seventeenth Century Opera and the Sound of Commedia dell' Arte,* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2016) p. 54 ff.
[95] Giovanni Battista Andreini, *Prologo in Dialogo fra Momo e la Verità:* (Ferrara, Baldini, 1612) p.6 see Gallica; https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k51080q/f6.image
[96] Lettera ai studiosi lettori Book V, 1605. (see Chapter 2, *Dichiaratione*, p. 68)
[97] Andreini, *Dialogo,* p.12.
[98] *Idem,* p.6.
[99] Libretto *L'Arianna*, Scena terza.
[100] *Idem*

[101] *Idem.*
[102] Andreini, *Dialogo,* p.12.
[103] The lamento is the only scene of Monteverdi's opera *L'Arianna*, which is preserved in its entirety. It was printed in 1623 and a copy is in the University library of Ghent (B/GU: RISM M3451 R 671: *Lamento d'Arianna del Signor Claudio Monteverdi* (Venice: B. Magni,1623). Even though this print was made a few years after Monteverdi had prepared material for a reprise of *L'Arianna*, there are rhythmic and chromatic alternatives found in other sources (in manuscript). The modern edition used in this performance, is the critical performing edition *Claudio Monteverdi, Lamento d'Arianna, and addendum*, for soprano & basso continuo, ed. Barbara Sachs, Greenman Press, Richmond (UK), 2001.
[104] Original ending Act V of Alessandro Striggio's libretto for *Orfeo,* for which the music is lost.
[105] *Ballo delle Ingrate*, 1608*,* Monteverdi/Rinuccini; una delle ingrate, quattro ingrate insieme.
[106] *Orfeo,* Act V, Baccante.
[107] *Idem*, Un altra Baccante.
[108] Reminiscence to Richard Strauss/Oscar Wilde, *Salome*, 1905, (the last line by king Herod): "Man töte dieses Weib."

Contexts

The storyline of *La Tragedia di Claudio M* consists of a chain of interrelated facts centred around Claudio Monteverdi's biography. In other words, the basis is the personal cultural archive of our protagonist during his artistic development in the year from *Orfeo* to *Arianna.* Where possible, part of this historical reality is represented by my libretto of *La Tragedia di Claudio M*. What follows underneath is a step-by-step contextualisation of the libretto. Apart from testimonials that provide a biographical narrative, the opera is based on historical and musicological information endorsed by scores, iconography and the literature that was available to Monteverdi when he created *Orfeo* and *Arianna.*

Prologue

Mantua

10 September 1607 Claudia Cattaneo, the wife of Claudio Monteverdi, died after repeatedly falling ill for more than a year. Her death is registered at the parish of San Sepolchro in Cremona[1], where she died at the house of her father-in-law, Baldassarre Monteverdi.

She stayed at his place with her two young sons, but although Baldassarre was a medical doctor and a respected member of the city's college of surgeons, he apparently could not save her life.

Monteverdi had returned to his father's house from Milano in time to witness his wife's passing away. In Milano, he had been meeting his colleague from the Mantuan court, the theologian Cherubino Ferrari. We know he had shown his friend the score of *Orfeo* because Ferrari praised this work in a letter to their patron, Vincenzo Gonzaga, from 22 August 1607.

'Il Monteverdi m'ha fatto veder i versi et sentire la musica della comedia che V.A. fece fare, et certo che il poeta et il musico hanno sí ben rappresentati gli affetti dell'animo che nulla piú.
La poesia quanto all' inventione è bella, quanto alla dispositione migliore, et quanto all'ellocutione ottima, et in somma da un bell'ingegno quall'è il Sig. Striggi non si poteva aspettare altro. La musica altresí stando nel suo decoro serve sí bene alla poesia che non si può sentir meglio [...]'[2]

Monteverdi has let me see the verses and hear the music of the comedy which Your Highness had done, and it is certain that the poet and the musician have so well represented the affects of the soul that [it] cannot be

[1] "Claudia Monteverdi Catanea Mantovana confes. com. con l'estrema oncione (=unzione) morse adi 10 settembre 1607. Nella parochia di San Sepolchro, et fu levata dalla Cattedrale come forastiere et sepolta in San Nazaro." Elia Santoro, *La famiglia e la Formazione di Claudio Monteverdi,* In *Annali della biblioteca governativa e libreria civica di Cremona.* Volume XVIII, 1967, p. 72. "Claudia Monteverdi Catanea, Mantuan, having confessed with the last rites, died on 10 September 1607 in the parish of San Sepolchro and as a foreigner was taken from the cathedral and buried in San Nazaro.", Paolo Fabbri, *Monteverdi*, Trans. Tim Carter. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p.76.
[2] Paolo Fabbri, *Monteverdi,* (Torino, Edizioni Di Torino, 1985) p.123.

bettered. The poetry as regards its invention is beautiful, is even better as regards its disposition, and is excellent for its elocution, and in sum, one could not expect anything else from so fine an intellect as Signor Striggio's. Moreover, the music, in terms of its appropriateness, serves the poetry so well that one cannot hear it better.[3]

But the purpose of the Milan visit was primarily the publication[4] of eleven of his madrigals from the fifth book as contrafacta with religious texts in Latin.
Although other composers are represented in this book, Monteverdi far outnumbers them with his compositions.
Halfway through 1607, Monteverdi's career reached a new high. By that time, his work was very well received, as is proven by the recent reprints in Venice of all previous madrigal books. Also, unpublished work appeared in print. 26 July his *Scherzi musicali* saw the light of day with the very important postscript (*Dichiaratione*) by his brother Giulio Cesare, as a self-confident counterattack to the allegations of Giovanni Maria Artusi.[5] In this text, the busy life of Claudio is illustrated by several examples, such as 'concertar le due viole bastarde, next to providing music for tourneys, ballets and comedies.' (See the chapter *Dichiaratione*)

But he also kept close contact with his city of birth and even did some work there. Before his departure to Milano, the Cremonese Accademia degli Animosi had paid Claudio honour by appointing him a member of the congregation.
In the past year, most probably also while composing his *Orfeo*, Monteverdi had contributed with his compositions to the events of the accademia.[6]

At this great breakthrough in his career, Monteverdi is confronted with the loss of one of the pillars of his existence, his wife Claudia. She was a very much appreciated court singer and the daughter of the viol player Giacomo Cattaneo. It is possible that Claudio lived in the house of this colleague just after he was appointed in 1590/91 to court musician as a singer and viol player by Duke Vincenzo Gonzaga. It is certain that he had at least close contact with the Cattaneo family, hence his marriage with Claudia, which took place in 1599.

During his first years in Mantua, his reputation as a singer (tenor) and composer outshadowed his viol playing. Only once did he mention mastering the instrument in an extraordinary way. In the dedication of his third book of madrigals, he states that he owed the position as Duke Vincenzo's professional musician to the noble practice of the 'vivuola', which must have been the viola bastarda.
...col nobilissimo esercitio della Vivuola che m'aperse la fortunata porta del suo servitio..'
(with the most noble practice of the viola that opened the fortunate portal to your service)

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[3] Translation by Tim Carter in Fabbri/Carter, *Monteverdi*, (Cambridge, 1995) p 76.
[4] *Musica tolta dai madrigali di Claudio Monteverdi e d'altri autori, a cinque et a sei voci.* 1607
Latin texts on sacred subjects by Aquilino Coppini, published by Agostino Tradate and dedicated to Cardinal Federico Borromeo.
[5] Giovanni Maria Artusi, *L'Artusi overo Delle imperfettioni della moderna musica.* (Venice, Vicenti, 1600). Divided in two parts, *Raggionamento primo e secondo*. A sequel followed in 1603. See chapter 2, The Narrative, p. 34.
[6] Elia Santoro mentions in his book the possibility that the academy had access to material of Monteverdi's *Orfeo* and eventually performed part of it in Cremona on 23 February 1607, so the night before the première of *Orfeo* at the court of Mantua. Santoro, *La Famiglia,* p. 71.

The instrumental skills must have been more than mere viol playing. It is obvious that the word noble in this practice pointed to an instrument of the viola da gamba type, which in this case was played with the bastarda technique.[7] It is very likely that this instrument was initially for him what the lyre was for Orfeo, as stated in the first line of the libretto. (*mia cetra omnipotente*).

Orfeo

In August 1609, the full score of the opera appeared in print by the publisher Amadino in Venice, with a dedication to Prince Francesco Gonzaga. In his dedication, which is humble and proud at the same time, Monteverdi mentions the transition from a small stage ('*angusta Scena*') of the first performance for the Accademia degli Invaghiti under the auspices of Francesco, into the *'gran Teatro dell'universo.'* He writes the work could not be linked to any other name than his patron, and thanks to His Highness, it would be lasting as long as mankind. ('*che sia durabile al pari dell'humana generatione.'*)

This was a bit of a visionary statement considering that almost 300 years later, this *Orfeo* would be revived in Paris by the composer Vincent D'Indy. The first performance in modern times (1904)[8] would be the beginning of a new glorious life for Monteverdi's first opera, obtaining an iconic status.

Prince Francesco Gonzaga interfered heavily during the making of *Orfeo*, as we can conclude from his correspondence with his brother Ferndinando about all sorts of production matters, such as the casting. At the wedding festivities of their aunt Maria de Medici and the French King Henri IV in Florence, the Gonzaga brothers witnessed the first performance of the opera *Euridice* in Palazzo Pitti on 6 October 1600. There obviously was a close link between Monteverdi's *Orfeo* and Jacopo Peri's *Euridice* set on Ottavio Rinnucini's libretto. (see Tomlinson, 1981)

We have, however, no evidence at all that Claudio Monteverdi was among the ca. 200 spectators who attended the Florentine performance of page Peri's *Euridice*. This might seem probable, and authors like Lucien Rebatet even added some presumed utterances by Monteverdi on the 'boring' performance, as quoted by Laura Rietveld.[9] But more likely, Monteverdi and Striggio Jr. somehow obtained their information from the score, either in

[7] James Bates, "Monteverdi, the Viola Bastarda Player." In *The Italian Viola da Gamba; Proceedings of the International Symposium on the Italian Viola da Gamba, Magnano, Italy*, *29 April–1 May 2000*, ed. Christophe Coin and Susan Orlando, (Turin, A. Manzoni, 2002) pp. 53–72.
[8] The new première of Monteverdi's *Orfeo* (Act 2,3,4) took place in the Schola Cantorum of Paris, Rue Saint Jacques, on 25 February 1904, with 150 performers in a French translation that was made by Vincent d'Indy. (See also chapter 2, the Narrative, p. 64).
[9] Laura C.J. Rietveld, Il trionfo di Orfeo: la fortuna di Orfeo in Italia da Dante a Monteverdi, PhD diss., Universiteit van Amsterdam, 2007, p.300, n.889.

manuscript or the two printed versions.[10]
Throughout several generations, Gonzaga court has had a vivid interest in the myth of Orpheus. In the ducal palaces, the iconography witnesses the fascination for several aspects of the myth, particularly the death of Orpheus.

Act I

According to the parish register, Claudia Monteverdi Catanea (sic) was buried, the Ss. Nazzaro e Celso, the same church where Claudio received his baptism exactly forty years earlier. She had been seriously ill a year earlier, as documented by her letter from 14 November 1606 to the court and suffered health problems regularly. The letter from Claudia to Annibale Chieppio, the ducal counsellor, tells that she had been very sick, '*infermità grave avuta',* their salaries should be paid from the taxes of Viadana '*le provigioni nostre síano pagate sopra il dacio de Viadana'* and that a dress should be given because she was worried about the cold that was coming, *'che molto mi prese, venendo il freddo come fa'.*[11]

Two weeks after his wife's death, Claudio received a letter from that court written by Secretary Federico Follino.[12] The letter expressed condolences and praise for the deceased but stressed that his return to Mantua was urgently needed. Monteverdi must have arrived on 9 October 1607 or a bit earlier since he spoke to Prince Francesco Gonzaga about the new opera on the evening of that day.

Monteverdi's refusal to return from Cremona to Mantua came only a year later but is for dramaturgical reasons inserted at this spot of the libretto. We know this from the famous letter of 2 December 1608, where he complained with rhetorical conviction about illness caused by the fetid air[13] of the marshes around Mantua and the poor living circumstances caused by the lack of payment and the extreme workload. A plea for the resignation of his son by Baldassare Monteverdi to both the duke and the duchess had achieved nothing. This explains the vehement tone of Claudio's letter and his confident attitude towards his patron. Complaints about failure to pay and the humiliating low wages date back several years earlier but apply equally well to the glorious years of the operas *Orfeo* and *Arianna*.

The insertion of the *lamento della ninfa* is an anachronism in this scene because the piece was composed and presented later in Venice. The way it is used here (*quel traditor*) hints at Vincenzo, the Duke of Mantua's (suggested) pressing interference in Caterina Martinelli's life. The fact that the duke's beloved singer was chosen to sing the leading role

[10] *Le musiche di Jacopo Peri … sopra l'Euridice,* Florence, Marescotti, 1600; *L'Euridice composta in musica in stile rappresentativo da Giulio Caccini,* Florence, Marescotti, 1600.
[11] Fabbri, *Monteverdi,* p. 124.
[12] *Idem*, a letter dated 24-IX-1607.
[13] Dennis Stevens, *The Letters of Claudio Monteverdi,* (London, Faber, 1980) pp. 56,57.

in *Arianna* indicates that by 1607, she performed at an exceptionally high level. Moreover, she must have been an intimate apprentice after three years of musical education in the vicinity of the master.

Ragione

The labyrinth was a favourite emblem or symbol in the Gonzaga palaces. In the original garden of Palazzo Te in Mantua, there was a maze of boxwood, which now no longer exists. The palace was built on an island and more or less around a labyrinth surrounded by water. The fictitious return of Monteverdi in Mantua could be situated here. There is an intriguing fresco by Lorenzo Leonbruno combining two favourite Gonzaga emblems, the labyrinth and Mount Olympus. This last symbol was connected to Duke Federico II,[14] who commissioned the construction of Palazzo Te. The respected emblem was granted to him and the Gonzaga family in 1530 by emperor Charles V on the occasion of promoting him from marquis to the first duke of Mantua.
At the top of Mount Olympus stands the altar of Faith. In the Leonbruno fresco, the labyrinth symbolises the transformative journey that must be made to start an individuation process of climbing Mount Olympus, ending at the altar of Faith.

Very prominent is the carved ceiling in the Stanza del Labirinto of the Palazzo Ducale in Mantua. Originally constructed for the San Sebastiano palace in that city, it was transferred to its present location in 1601, as ordered by Vincenzo Gonzaga. This spectacular enterprise will have had much attention, even more, because the proud duke used it as a personal symbol of triumph for his part in the last of his battles against the Turcs at the Hungarian city of Kanisza. (Canissia) The first of three expeditions in 1595 to Viszgrád was accompanied by a small 'capella', which was led by Monteverdi. The musicians served the masses but also provided musical entertainment at the different stations towards the destination and at the war location. By adding at the border of the sculptured ceiling a text about the war on the Turcs, Vincenzo Gonzaga turned the labyrinth into a personal memorial.

'*Dum sub arce Canisiae /Contra turcas pugnam/ Vinc Mant IV /et MontFerr II dux.'* [While under the fortress of Canessa (Kanizsa, Hungary)/against the Turcs / fought Vincenzo, the fourth duke of Mantova and second of Monferrato.]

The image of fights is related to the metaphorical meaning of a labyrinth as a non-linear way to a goal, on which it is often hard to orientate. The core text here is an obsessive repetition of the theme of a frottola[15] from Isabella d'Este's court music. 'Forse che sì, forse che no.'

[14] Federico II (1500 -1540) was the son of Isabella d'Este and Francesco Gonzaga II.
About the emblem see: Rodolfo Signorini, *Imprese Gonzaghesche,* (Mantova, Sometti, 2013), p 48.
[15] 'Forsi che sí, forsi che no' set to a four-part frottola by Marchetto Cara (1474-ca.1525).

This phrase can be interpreted in many ways. However, because of the centre of this monumental labyrinth, we are supposed to understand the direct link to the labyrinth of Crete, where Arianna helped Theseus escape after he killed her half-brother, the Minotaur.

The only extant reference by Claudio Monteverdi to a labyrinth is in a letter which compares the legal battle about his inheritance of the house in Mantua of his late father-in-law, Giacomo Cattaneo, to the Socratic metaphor of a labyrinth. In Plato's *Euthydemus*[16] concerning the so-called Eristics - outsmarting each other with arguments rather than finding the truth - Socrates states that those disputing with each other are not getting any further as if thrown back in a labyrinth, having to start from square one every time.

This perception most likely motivated Monteverdi to write in 1625 that he was longing for a settlement in the conflict to liberate himself from further intrigues because: 'non credo che altro labirinto gli antíchi intendessero che questo del litigare.'[17]

More labyrinthic than the lawsuit of 1625 was the conflict, which he was challenged to fight twenty years earlier and the indignation that he expressed in a letter to Doni more than thirty years after the row started. For his *Trattato della musica scenica* (1633-1635), the Florentine historian Giovanni Battista Doni was collecting information about the first composers of opera. Monteverdi's letter was a substantial contribution, also by sketching the argument with 'a theorist' who tried to humiliate him:

'[...], come se fossero statte solfe fatte da un fanciullo che incominciasse ad imparar notta contra notta, [...]'
as if they were solfege exercises made by a child that is beginning to learn note against note (counterpoint),

In 1605, in his fifth book of madrigals, Monteverdi gave his first and only public response to the Bolognese theorist and clergyman Giovanni Maria Artusi, who attacked the composer in his treatise published in 1600 about the 'imperfections of the modern composers.'[18] The response was wrapped up in a compact rebuttal of the allegations, a postface in the shape of a short letter to the 'studious (informed) readers'.[19]

A few months before he started working on *Arianna,* a new publication was released with the title *Scherzi musicali.* In this edition, his brother Giulio Gesare added a text that clarified the statements that Claudio had made in 1605. This *Dichiaratione della lettera* was probably

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The frottola survived in a unique copy in a convolute *Frottole, libro tertio,* Venezia, Petrucci, 1505. ff. XXXIII v-XXXV r, now in München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, rar. 878/3. See: Paola Besutti, '"Forse che sì forse che no" in musica: frottole e reminiscenze,' in: *"Forse che sì forse che no" Gabriele d'Annunzio a Mantova*, ed. R. Signorini (Florence, Olschki, 2011), pp. 67-92.

[16] Elisa Ravasio, Ivan Faiferri, "In the Labyrinth of the Dialogue", in *An Anthology of Philosophical Studies*, 12, pp. 139-148. https://www.atiner.gr/docs/2018PHI-INTRO.pdf

[17] ...for I don`t think those ancient writers understood labyrinth anything other than litigation." Stevens, *The Letters,* p.293.

[18] See Chapter 2, The Narrative, p. 34.

[19] See Chapter 2 *Dichiaratione*, p. 69.

inserted to notify the studious readers that, for the time being, Monteverdi was too busy to fulfil his promise and deliver the treatise about the *seconda pratica* and the perfection of modern music. There must have been some excitement among the Monteverdi brothers about putting in print the final blow to their opponent and allowing Giulio Cesare to include the sarcasm below the dignity of the maestro himself. There is little doubt about Claudio's agreement with the expression of this defence. Therefore, it seems legitimate to use these words in the labyrinthic dialogue between Ragione (Daedalus/Artusi) and Monteverdi as his own.
The controversy can be seen as a confrontation between a theorist and a practitioner, both concerned about the public recognition of their values. But in a wider context this debate is not just between the visions of two men. It is rather a culmination of an ongoing discussion of music theorists from the 16th century, which had a decisive breakthrough after Vicenzo Galilei's publication, *Dialogo della musica antica e della moderna* in 1581.[20]

Artusi's reasoning and argumentation often portray him as detached from practice, which Giulio Cesare regularly stresses in the *Dichiaratione*.[21] To remind him of the practical implications of a musician's life, he sketches his brother's many duties, including the viola bastarda—which guaranteed him a position in court music—as by 1607, still a serious occupation.
The remark of Artusi about musicians, who, while exhausting themselves day and night, are deluded by what their instruments make them believe is good music, could very well point to viola bastarda playing. Certainly, in improvisations by these instrumentalists, a lot more freedom was accepted in contrapuntal and harmonic progressions. This is explained as early as 1609 by Adriano Banchieri.[22]

Monteverdi was most probably such a practitioner but, at the same time, much more than just a skilled musician. The creating artist in him refused to be put in that category, and he had always carefully avoided being classified as merely a performing musician. This is also illustrated by his letters showing ambition to get a court position as maestro of court music or master of church music, which he did not get in Mantua.

Feeling challenged in the field of reason (Ragione), he promised in his hubris[23] a book that would refute all his opponent's erroneous allegations. In his letter of 1605, he feigned that the book was nearly ready for the press. As a flag he introduced the title *Seconda Pratica* to

[20] For more information about the role of Vincenzo Galilei in the development of the *seconda pratica* see Chapter 1, Episteme, p. 24.
[21] see Chapter 2, *Dichia*ratione, p. 75/76.
[22] See Chapter 2, The Narrative, Banchieri (p. 37)
[23] As Tim Carter eloquently described it, Monteverdi had entered a "path through a terminological and philosophical minefield." His promise to clarify the principles of the seconda prattica was to solve a "true epistemological crisis" where traditional music theory tried to come to terms with new phenomena in musical practice. Tim Carter, “Artusi, Monteverdi and the Poetics of Modern Music.” In *Musical Humanism and Its Legacy: Essays in Honor of Claude V. Palisca,* ed. Nancy Kovaleff Baker and Barbara Russano Hanning, pp. 171–94. Stuyvesant, (New York: Pendragon Press, 1992), pp.190 and 194.

give the modern way of composing a recognisable identity. This move in the labyrinthic discussion would mark him far beyond the intended effect for centuries to come.[24]

The promised book would never appear, of course, because the only way to really make his point was by realising all the arguments directly through his music.
Nevertheless, even thirty years later, in the letters to Doni (see above), he would still repeat his intentions to publish a treatise explaining everything about the new style. Ironically, even after his death, in the necrology dedicated to him by Matteo Caberloti, his work on a treatise about the *seconda pratica* is mentioned as unfortunately unfinished. As Caberloti writes in his *Laconismo*:
"...*un volume, nelquale notificando i più occulti arcanidella sua disciplina era per impedire, che mai più ne secoli venturi restassero nascoste à studenti le vere stradde per facilitarsi l'acquisto della perfettione dell'arte Musica. Ma l'empia morte affrettatada breve infermità hà cagionato, che come imperfetta resti priva della luce della stampa."*

[...] A volume in which notifying the most occult secrets of his discipline was to prevent that ever again in the coming centuries should the true ways to facilitate the acquisition of the perfection of the art of music remain hidden from students. [.....] 'due to his unholy death, hastened by a brief illness, the unfinished work would remain deprived of the light of the press.'

Thus sealing the myth of the intellectual Monteverdi rather than the practitioner he was.[25]

On the other hand, this same author portrays the deceased as the Orpheus of his time, who had no equal in his viol playing. '...col suono della sua viola' must indicate viola da gamba, because by 1644 there was little confusion about the terminology of string instruments. Moreover, it is improbable that on the cover of *Fiori Poetici* coincidentally, a viola da gamba (obviously the model used for bastarda playing) is the only instrument that comes to the fore and slightly covers the text sheet.
Artusi articulates his objections to the instrumental approach to invention several times in his treatise. He ventilates his contempt for musicians who, as he describes it, 'find through all their practising extravagant things, outside reason and very remote from the experiences of their predecessors, that resulted in secure rules embraced by the ears and confirmed by the intellect'.[26]

The condemnation of instrumentalists is not based on ignorance about their profession. On the contrary, Artusi demonstrates, certainly in the first *Ragionamento*, a profound knowledge

[24] (see Chapter 2, The Narrative, p. 36).
[25] Matteo Caberloti, "Laconismo", in: Giovanni Battista Marinoni, (ed.) *Fiori poetici raccolti nel funerale del molto illustre e molto reverendo sig. Claudio Monteverde, maestro di cappella della Ducale di S. Marco.* (Venetia, Miloco,1644)
[26] *L'Artusi*, *Ragionamento primo*, pp. 8r, 8v.
'Lasciamo, che stia, & resti nella sua ignoranza insieme con quelli che giorno e notte s'affaticano con lo istrumento per ritrovare cose stravaganti, fuori della ragione, e lontani dalla esperienza, gia fatta di nostri passati, e ridotta in regole certe dal senso abbraciate, & dal intelletto confirmate;'

of the technical aspects of many instruments and their role in ensemble playing. Intonation and accordance in temperament is a very prominent one, though most attention goes to the wind players. The role of the trombones and cornetti is specifically discussed in their ability to imitate the voices and adjust intonations easily and with great care for perfection.[27]

'che stij bene auertito il Sonatore, di fare che lo Instromento da lui adoperato, imiti la voce naturale più che puote, s'egli è Cornetto, ò Trombone...'.
(the player should be well aware that the instrument he uses imitates the natural voices as well as possible, be it a cornetto, or trombone…)

Virtuosity is particularly praised for those who give grace to their parts with beautiful bow strokes, but also liveliness by the 'passaggi', and the cornetti and other wind instruments by their precision in tonguing. Artusi copied in detail information about the articulations of the cornetto as if he was very familiar with the playing techniques and possibilities of the instrument. His knowledge, however, comes directly from the 1587 edition by Girolamo dalla Casa, without naming the author. In *Ragionamento primo* 4v, 5 Artusi gives detailed information about the three ways of articulating for the cornetto because the tongue is 'the basis of all good and beautiful playing, apart from the lips which of course produce the sound quality.'[28]

La via naturale all imitatione

Though Artusi respected the skills of the musicians (*pratici*), he held their knowledge and judgement of compositional matters in very low esteem.

In the first part of his treatise, he speaks about the ignorance of mere practitioners because they mix diatonic and chromatic music in total confusion. He concludes that in the end, this will bring them just embarrassment:

'Non è dubio, che il discorere di cose dificili, & di molta speculatione,
non s'appartiene al pratico; ma questo è officio del Theorico,
non potendo il semplice pratico penetrare tanto avanti,
che arrivi alla cognitione di simili particolari: di qui è,
che non potendo col loro intelletto giungere al segno di questa verità:
si vedono molte impertinente, &t imperfettioni nelle compositioni da loro fatte;
il che non apporta se non vergogna infinita.'[29]

(There is no doubt that the discourse of difficult things, & of much speculation, does not belong to the practitioner but is the function of the Theorist since the mere practitioner cannot penetrate so far that he arrives at the understanding of such details: whence it is, that not being able with their intellect to reach the meaning of this truth: one sees many improprieties, & imperfections in the compositions made by them; which brings nothing but infinite shame.)

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[27] *L'Artusi*, Raggionamento primo, 12v.
[28] Even the formulations are copy pasted from Girolamo dalla Casa, *Il vero modo di diminuir con tutte le sorti di stromenti. il primo libro*, (Venice, 1589).
[29] *L'Artusi*, *Ragionamento primo*, pp 20v -21r.

The details that should be known, according to Artusi, are mainly in the field of mathematics, tuning and intonation. Also, when he writes about imitating the Grand System of Nature[30], it is rather the physics in nature that generates the proportions and perfection, which, in his view, art should approach through imitation. When talking about musica ficta, he points to the impossibility of the artist creating something that is equal to nature, even though this artist is put in motion by reasoning and discovers as much as possible about the natural thing. The artefact and nature, however, will never be the same. It turns out that everything music theorists discuss is something that can be measured, but this nature's complexity is beyond measurement.

Only once, though, does Artusi mention the musical work in combination with the text. He did not take poetry into consideration when talking about the imperfections of modern music, and precisely there, his entire attack falls flat. His respect for Cipriano de Rore, who later is mentioned by Giulio Cesare Monteverdi as the first example of a modern composer in the light of the *seconda pratica*, is expressed in relation to merging poetry and music.[31] Artusi calls De Rore 'the first who started to accommodate the words in a beautiful order ' (*che fosse stato il primo, che havesse incominciato ad accomodare bene le parole, & con bell'ordine*).[32] Despite his ability to notice this quality, Artusi did not think to include any other remark about text-related issues somewhere in his treatise, even though all the music in the focus of his criticism is primarily an elevation of text.

In his letter to Giovanni Battista Doni, mentioned above, Monteverdi refers to this period in his life where he had been searching for the 'natural way of imitation' while working on the *Lamento d'Arianna.* Contrary to Artusi's presumption, as a practitioner, he did try to study the *Republic* of Plato on the subject of imitation but did not find any help there. With his limited vision (*con la mia debil vista*), as he calls it, he could not grasp what Plato was demonstrating. But with great effort, he finally delivered proof of what he could achieve in '*immitatione*'.

'Vado credendo che non sara discaro al mondo, posciache ho provato in pratica
che quando fui per scrivere il pianto del Arianna, non trovando libro che mi aprisse
la via naturale alla immitatione *nè meno che mi illuminasse che dovessi essere immitatore,*
altri che platone per via di un suo lume rinchiuso cosi che appena potevo scorgere
di lontano con la mia debil vista quel poco che mi mostrava; ho provato dicco la
gran fatica che mi bisognò fare in far quel poco ch'io feci d'immitatione';'[33]

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[30] idem, p.30 *v*: …*& in questo senso potiamo dire, che quelli, che propongono cose simili, habbino intentione d'imitare il Sistema massimo naturale, essendo l'Arte imitatrice della natura, se bene non può arrivare al perfetto di essa natura.*
(& in this sense, we may say that those who propose similar things have intentions of imitating the Grand System of Nature, the Art being an imitator of nature, even good, it cannot arrive at the perfect of that nature.)
[31] See Chapter 2, *Dichiaratione,* p. 76
[32] *L'Artusi, Ragionamento primo*, pp. 19v, 20r.
[33] Letter No.124, 22-X-1633, to Giovanni Battista Doni, (Russo, *Monteverdi, Correspondance,* p.214). See also Chapter 4, *Librettto* p. 124, note 50.

(I believe that this [book] will not be without its usefulness in the world since I found in practice that when I was composing the lament of Ariadne, not finding any book that explained to me the natural way to imitation, nor one which told me what an imitator should be – except for Plato, who shed so dim a light that I was scarcely able to see with my weak vision what little he showed me - I found, I say, what hard work is necessary to do even what little I did in this matter of imitation.)

Certainly, the poets of his preference provided a major contribution to Monteverdi's musical invention. The third madrigal book, published in 1592, shows a radical change in style, which, to a great deal, can be attributed to the works of Torquato Tasso. As Gary Tomlinson formulated it, a 'new sensitivity to the musical projection of poetic syntax' can be noticed in these works. Monteverdi understood that not only through 'stock iconic gestures' but also the 'projection of its rhetorical structure', music can enhance the significance of poetry.[34] It is a challenging thought to see Tasso's presence at the court of Mantua from March to November 1591 as a unique opportunity for the young composer to learn about the recitation of poems. Even though, as Tomlinson[35] puts it, a direct meeting with the 'tormented soul' is unlikely, the fact that Tasso had been working on the second revision (or rather unsuccessful alteration) of his famous *Gerusalemme liberata* and the collection of his *Rime,* suggests that he was mentally relatively healthy. In my opinion, an encounter with the poet's recitation should not be ruled out.

Four years earlier, a theoretical work by Tasso appeared in print, and he discusses the relation between art and nature several times. In the first part of his *Discorsi dell'arte poetica*, he speaks of imitation in terms of verisimilitude, though according to him, the aspect of marvel can very well be included.

'La poesia non è in sua natura altro che imitazione (e questo non si può richiamare in dubbio) ; e l'imitazione non può essere discompagnata dal verisimile, peroché tanto significa imitare, quanto far simile ; non può dunque parte alcuna di poesia esser separata dal verisimile ; e in somma il verisimile non è una di quelle condizioni richieste nella poesia a maggior sua bellezza e ornamento, ma è propria e intrinseca dell'essenza sua, e in ogni sua parte sovra ogn'altra cosa necessaria. Ma bench'io stringo il poeta epico ad un obligo perpetuo di servare il verisimile, non però escludo da lui l'altra parte, cioè il meraviglioso ; anzi giudico ch'un'azione medesima possa essere e meravigliosa e verisimile ; e molti credo che siano i modi di congiungere insieme queste qualità così discordanti ; e rimettendo gli altri a quella parte ove della testura della favola si trattarà, la quale è lor proprio luogo, dell'uno qui ricerca l'occasione che si favelli.'[36]

(Poetry is in its nature nothing but imitation (and this cannot be called into question); and imitation cannot be separated from the semblance of truth (*verisimile*), because it means imitating as much as it does mean 'resembling'; therefore, no part of poetry can be separated from the appearance of truth; and in sum, the

[34] Gary Tomlinson, *Monteverdi and the End of the Renaissance,* (Berkeley, University of Chicago Press, 1987) p. 53.

[35] Tomlinson, *the End of Renaissance,* p.59 "it is unlikely that the troubled poet (wandering between cities, after being released from the mental hospital St. Anna [in Ferrara, my note] would have had direct contact with a novice of Duke Vincenzo's musical staff, his presence itself at the court could hardly have escaped Monteverdi's notice."

[36] Torquato Tasso, *Discorsi dell'arte poetica e del poema eroica*, (Venice, 1587), (mod.ed.:Bari, Laterza, 1964) p.7. https://archive.org/details/228TassoDiscorsiSi245/page/n11/mode/2up

verisimilitude is not one of those conditions required in poetry for its greater beauty and ornament, but is **proper and intrinsic to its essence**, and in every part necessary above all else. But although I bind the epic poet to a perpetual obligation to serve the verisimilitude, I do not, however, exclude from him the other part, that is, the marvellous (*il meraviglioso*); on the contrary, **I believe that the same action can be both marvellous and truthlike**; and I believe that there are many ways of joining together these discordant qualities; and I refer the others to that part where the text of the fable will be dealt with, which is their proper place, but I seek here the opportunity to speak of one.)

It is not known if the book of Tasso was among those consulted by Monteverdi, trying to find the natural way of imitation. For sure, it illuminates a way of thinking among artists about their profession and, above all, about the relationship between art and nature.

There is a letter from Rembrandt van Rijn, that describes the efforts he made, in a similar way Monteverdi refers to his own diligence to achieve a goal of naturalness. Rembrandt writes to secretary Constantijn Huygens about two paintings for Prince Frederik Hendrik, in which he reached the utmost natural agility in representing the scene of the resurrection.

'..want deese twe sijn t, daer die meeste ende die naetuereelste beweechgelickheijt in geopserveert is, dat oock de grooste oorsaeck is, dat die selvijge soo lang onder handen sij geweest.'[37] (... because these are the two in which the most and most natural agility is observed, which is the main cause they were under my hands for such a long time.)
The painter stressed the great shock of the guards, which is the core of the dramatic impact. Here, the verisimilitude is comparable with that of poetry dramatised by music.

Apart from the musical texture in madrigals and later also monodic settings, it was not just the harmonic and melodic inventions that enhanced the rhetorical conviction. Freedom in delivery played a crucial role and was described as early as 1555 by Nicola Vicentino.[38] He indicated that not everything that concerned the performance could be written down.

This included reciting sometimes louder or softly, going faster and slowing down or changing the measure in accordance with the text to show the effects of the passions of the words and harmony. Vicentino points at the experience of the orator and what he is teaching the musician because 'moving the measure[39] has a great effect on the soul. For that reason, the music will be sung by heart to imitate the accents and effects of the parts of the oration.'

In some letters, Monteverdi is also very clear about the importance of rehearsing his work by the singers before they can truly transmit the whole meaning of it.
In his letter of 28 July 1607, he reports to the court that he moved out of Mantua as soon as the duke had left the city and went to his father's house in Cremona. That was why the

[37] Letter to Constantijn Huygens, 12 January 1639. See also online: https://www.koninklijkeverzamelingen.nl/collectie-online/detail/de67430a-aba5-570c-84da-c808aaa756e0
[38] Nicola Vicentino, *L'antica musica ridotta alla moderna prattica,* (Rome, Antonio Barre, 1555) transcription: https://tmiweb.science.uu.nl/text/reading-edition/vicant.html
[39] *Idem*, p.94v; *(…questo modo di muovere la misura, fà effetto assai nell'animo, & per tal ragione si canterà la Musica alla mente per imitar gli accenti, & effetti delle parti dell'oratione,..)*

duke's request to set a sonnet to music only reached him later; moreover, it had taken a week to complete the composition, which underlines the scrutiny of his work.

Now sending the music, he stressed that, before the duke would hear the madrigal, it should be given to vice-chapelmaster Bassano, to rehearse it thoroughly with the singers.
"..quest è la musica da me fatta, ma mi fara gratia che avanti che Sua Altezza Serenissima l'oda, darle prima nelle mani al signor Don Bassano, atio possa provarla, pigliarne la sicurezza del aria, insieme con gli altri signori Cantori..."
(This is the music I have made, but I would be grateful if, before His Serene Highness hears it, you would first give it to Signor Don Bassano, so that he can rehearse it and take the assurance of the aria, together with the other singers...)
As he formulates it in his letter the music would not be understood by the performers:
"...perche e cosa molta difficile al cantore rappresentare un aria che prima non habbi pratticato, et é di molto danno a quella compositione musicale, come nella prima volta che vien cantata non viene intesa interamente."[40]
(...because it is very difficult for the singer to perform a song that he has not practised before, and it is very damaging to that musical composition if sung like the first time when it was not entirely understood.)

When, in March 1620, the court in Mantua launched plans for taking up the opera *Arianna* again*,* Monteverdi received a request to send copies. He made great haste finishing them, as we know from his letters of that period. For himself, this was, above all, to guarantee enough rehearsal time, which was a whole month or "a bit more". "No time to lose", as he puts it. He also sent the beginning of the lamento to gain time, "it being the most essential part of the opera."
'...essendo un mese o poco piu di prova, non ha ponto da perdere.....; Mando anco il principio del lamento.....essendo la piu essential parte del opera ;'[41]

Just like the attention to compositional details in the madrigal above, the monodic style demanded its rehearsal time. No wonder, with the amount of eventual freedom for the performer, this was a major concern for the composer. If it was in 1620, when there were plans for the reprise of *L'Arianna*, how many more issues to try out would there have been thirteen years earlier, when so much of it was new? In an earlier letter that year[42], Monteverdi reminds Striggio of the five months of rehearsal time for *L'Arianna* before its premiere.
'...l'Arianna, che ci volsero cinque mesi di prova con molta instanza, dopo finita et inparata a mente..'
(...Arianna, it took five months of rehearsing with a lot of persistence before it was ready and learned by heart..)

There are several letters by Monteverdi that give a glimpse of his knowledge about vocal techniques and his priorities for an intelligible delivery of poetry. The little report he wrote

[40] Letter No. 4, 28-VII-1607, to Annibale Iberti, Councillor of the Duke, Annonciade Russo, and Jean-Philippe Navarre, *Monteverdi, Correspondance, préfaces et épîtres dédicatoires,* (Sprimont, Mardaga, 2001), p.28.
[41] Letter No. 51, 21-III-1620 to Alessandro Striggio (Russo, *Monteverdi, Correspondance,* p.110).
[42] Letter No. 38, 9-I-1620, to Alessandro Striggio, (Russo, *Monteverdi, Correspondance,* p.88).

about a singer[43] he auditioned for the duke contains some comments on limited understandability of the text because the singer swallowed the vowel a little (*s'ingorgia la vocale*) or let air 'escape to his nose or between the teeth, which made the word unintelligible' (*'la manda nel naso, et ancora se la lassia sdrussilare [sdrucciolare] tra denti che non fa intelligibile quella parola'*).

When asked eight years later to provide music for a setting of *Andromeda*[44] - despite being positioned in Venice still working for the court in Mantua - he informed who the singer would be so he could take the 'proper nature of the voice' into consideration (*'atio possa pensare sopra alla propria naturale voce').* He also wanted to know if it were one or two messengers who were going to "speak in song" (*'et se sara uno o duoi che parleranno in canto').*

1600 - parlar cantando

In 1600 several works in the new monodic style appeared in print, which in their prefaces mention the technique of "parlar/recitar cantando". On its title page, Emilio de Cavalieri called his work a '*Rappresentazione di Anima e di Corpo* [...] *per recitar cantando*.'[45]

When Jacopo Peri refers in the preface of *Euridice*[46] to Rinuccini's *Dafne,* he mentions the proof it gives of what 'song can do in our times', (*'che potesse il canto dell'età nostra'*). Dealing with dramatised poetry it should imitate while singing someone who is talking (*'si doveva imitar' col canto chi parla')*. But in antiquity, according to him, they would never have sung instead of talking (*'e senza dubbia non si mai parlò cantando'*).

Monteverdi also made this distinction between speaking in song and singing in speech when he rejected a commission to write music for *La favola di Peleo e Tetide* in 1616.[47] Describing the difference between his *Orfeo* and *Arianna* on the one side and this new opera on the other, he wrote that in the first works, the characters tended to speak in song and not, as would now be needed, sing in speech (*'cio e che tendesse al parlar cantando et non come questa al cantar parlando'*). Though for us nowadays, this seems a subtle distinction, apparently, many nuances were possible between the diction-centred way of the first option and the rather vocal delivery of this second.

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[43] Letter No. 9, 9-VI-1610 (Russo, *Monteverdi, Correspondance,* p.42). Monteverdi is positive about the candidate: "... una bella voce, gagliarda, et longa, et cantando in sena giongera benissimo senza discomodo in tutti li lochi,…"
(He has a beautiful voice, bright and with a good reach. On stage, he will mix very well without difficulty in all locations.)

[44] Letter no. 29, 21-IV-1618 to Vincenzo Gonzaga (Russo, *Monteverdi, Correspondance,* p.76).

[45] Emilio del Cavalliere, *Rappresentatione di Anima e di Corpo,* (Rome, Nicolò Mutij, 1600). Title page.

[46] *Le musiche di Jacopo Peri … sopra l'Euridice,* Florence, Marescotti, 1600.

[47] Letter No.19, 9-XII-1616. (Russo, *Monteverdi, Correspondance,* p.62.) Monteverdi did not see anything in this libretto as a basis for an opera. The main reason was that there were no dramatic personalities but winds, sheep and rocks to give a voice.

In the same letter, Monteverdi argues that he does not feel this libretto could ever bring him to a natural order that would raise his emotions. (‘*Ne sento che lei mi porta con ordine naturale ad un fine che mi mova…’*) This remark can be seen in the same light as Giulio Caccini has thrown on the role of understanding the text in the new monodic style.[48] Understanding has to be interpreted here, both in hearing all the words as well as knowing what they mean in the context of the narration. As Caccini compares it to the old polyphonic style;

‘... poi che non potevano esse muovere l'intelletto senza l'intelligenza delle parole, mi venne pensiero introdurre una sorte di musica, per cui altri potesse quasi che ***in armonia favellare****, usando in essa (.....) una certa nobile sprezzatura di canto,’…*[49]

(...because it wasn’t possible to emote the intellect without the understanding of the words, there came to me the thought of introducing a kind of music by means of which someone could, in a way, tell a story in harmony, [...] while using in it a certain noble sprezzatura of song.)

The term *sprezzatura* was first used by Baldassare Castiglione[50] to indicate a noble kind of effortlessness and display of freedom in public performance of a skill. The way Caccini uses it suggests a narrow connection to Monteverdi's intended 'natural way of imitation.' In his *Nuove Musiche* of 1602, Caccini is rather explicit in his explanation of the function of *sprezzatura* concerning the rhetorical implications for the text. Half a century after Vicentino (see page 138 above), he discusses the same ideals and even gives a very concrete example for a better understanding. As Vicentino already remarked, there are rhetorical aspects of the performance that could not be notated in the music, and one of them was alterations in the *misura*, which implied both tempo and measure. As Caccini formulates; ‘one does not submit to the ordinary measure, but many times cuts the value of notes by half, following the meaning of the text […] from where consequently that song is born in sprezzatura...’

For some singers of the cast of *Arianna* this very specialised way of recitar cantando must have been second nature. Francesco Rasi (1574 - 1621) studied with Giulio Caccini from 1594 on, and the soprano Settimia Caccini (1591-1660c.) learned everything she mastered from her father. Her engagements in Mantua were the first big steps in her career outside her father's reach.

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[48] *Le Nuove Musiche*, di Giulio Caccini detto Romano, (Florence, Marescotti, 1601),
See preface in Angelo Solerti, *Le origini del melodramma, testimonianze dei contemporanei,* (Torino, fratelli Bocca, 1903) p. 57.

[49] *Ibidem.*

[50] Baldassare Castiglione, *Il libro del cortegiano,* , Venice, Nelle case d'Aldo Romano e d'Andrea d'Asola suo suocero, 1528, (Mod.ed.: Turin, Einaudi, 1965) p.44; ‘usar in ogni cosa una certa sprezzatura, che nasconda l’arte e dimostri ciò che si fa e dice venir fatto senza fatica e quasi senza pensarvi’ (to use in everything a certain sprezzatura, which hides the art and shows what is done and said to be done without effort and almost without thinking about it).

Francesco Rasi was the star singer at the Mantuan court since 1598, and certainly, after his performance of *Orfeo* in 1607, no tenor equalled his reputation.

Of course, Monteverdi was very knowledgeable about the monodic style and all its possibilities after composing *Orfeo.* Caccini's and Jacopo Peri's *Euridice* of 1600 served as welcome inspiration (see page 129 above). However, he still saw a significant challenge in finding his own way of the *stile rappresentativo* in his next opera. It seems he wanted to integrate all the implications of performative liberties in text expression, made possible by 'parlar cantando' into the essence of his compositions.

The Minotaur

This challenge and the time pressure exhausted Monteverdi in the second half of 1607. No wonder, considering that he began weakened after a summer in which he had settled the final stage of the battle for his reputation with Artusi and not much later lost his wife. The collaboration with librettist Ottavio Rinuccini undoubtedly had a strong influence on Monteverdi's artistic commitment. Also, the fact that all their joint work was destined for the festivities of the forthcoming princely wedding put unprecedented pressure on the final result.

Several of Monteverdi's extant letters testify to his bad conditions during the year of *Arianna*. Probably the most outspoken version about his physical suffering and humiliation that he had endured from the court was sent at the end of that year. He begged his patron to release him from his position in Mantua. The air alone of the city soon would mean his death. (see page 130 above) (*et dubita che solamente l'aria fra poco di tempo sarebbe la mia morte*).
However, on top of that, he never received any proof of appreciation from the court in Mantua, nor the appropriate salary, and soon he was expecting from his ill fortune the final blow.

Si che, illustrissime signore, s'ho da cavare la conclusione dale premisse, diró che mai ho da ricevere gratie ne favori à Mantoa, ma piu tosto sperare (venendo) di haver dala mia mala fortuna l'ultimo crollo. [51]

(If, most illustrious Lordship, I have to draw the conclusion from the premises, I will say that I never received either gratitude nor favours in Mantua but rather should hope (by coming) to have from my ill fortune the final blow.)

Music historians tend to dismiss the many statements about health problems in Monteverdi's correspondence as hypochondria. However, the fact that Monteverdi reminded

[51] Letter No. 6, 2-XII-1608, (Russo, *Monteverdi, Correspondance,* p. 34). Monteverdi had been summarizing all his patron's so-called favours, which turned out to be either financial deceptions or humiliating acts of neglect. Thus, the refusal to return to Mantua at the beginning of the letter is explained.

Alessandro Striggio in a letter twenty years later of his near death as a consequence of too much work in a short time might indicate that he may be taken at his word.[52]
Anyway, it is clear that in the year of *Arianna*, Monteverdi must have been confronted with the darkest corners of his subconscious mind. The perseverance that was needed to come, despite a lack of time, to the highest artistic achievement and the subsequent lack of respect from his patron caused a catharsis. As a consequence, he showed self-respect with his request for resignation in December 1608, which testifies to an awareness of his position among the greatest composers of his time. The recent promise to clarify his views on the composition of modern music in a book[53] must have weighed heavily on him when he started composing *Arianna.*

The image of the Minotaur as a metaphor for our deepest fears and desires lurking in the labyrinth behind the solid walls of our unconscious self[54] illustrates the artist's struggle. It symbolises the choice to allow instinct to guide. The decision to follow the natural way of imitating the essence, *la via naturale alla imitatione,* can be seen as an overwhelming transformation process.

Act II

At the Mantuan court, Caterina Martinelli was often called '*La Romanina'* (the little Roman girl). In my libretto, Caterina is associated with the allegory of Piacere to symbolise her origins and represent her Roman background. Piacere was one of the characters in Emilio de' Cavaliere's *Rappresentazione di Anima e di Corpo.* This first large music theatre work in the new monodic style premiered in February 1600 in Rome. As a ten-year-old singing child prodigy, she might have heard about this exceptional event through her teacher, Arrigo Gabbino. The latter must have been in contact with the singers of the papal chapel, such as the tenor Giuseppe Cenci, whose compositions were sung by the young Caterina.

The Mantuan bass, Paolo Faccone, was also a regular member of the chapel and, from that position, scouted potential singers for the Gonzaga court. There is a very informative extant correspondence between Faccone and the court on the whereabouts of these singers. This informs us in detail about the delicate negotiations to get permission from the young girl's parents in the summer of 1603 to let her go to Mantua. Apart from a heavily discussed examination of her virginity, the blazing heat of that summer delayed the journey.

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[52] Letter No. 92, I-V-1627 to Alessandro Striggio *(Monteverdi, Correspondance,* p. 92). '*Che la brevita del tempo fu cagione ch'io mi riducessi quasi alla morte nel scrivere l'Arianna…'* (That the shortness of time was the cause that I was almost reduced to a dead person in writing Ariadne.)
[53] Announced in 1605, *Seconda Pratica overo Perfettione della Moderna Musica,* (See the lettera ai studiosi lettori, Chapter 2, *Dichiaratione,* p. 68).
[54] Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces,* (Princeton (NJ), Princeton University Press, 1949) p. 57.

Another interesting issue was the idea to first bring Caterina to Florence, so she could study with Giulio Caccini for some time and learn the Tuscan style of singing. This was apparently most to Vincenzo Gonzaga's liking. However, Caccini's condition to have her living in his house made Vincenzo suspicious about losing the soprano to the Medici, and he decided to have her directly come to Mantua. Caccini did not readily accept this decision, and even his former pupil, Francesco Rasi, had to stand up to his old master, which he proudly reported in a letter to the duke.

'*Egli voleva affaticarsi di darmi ad intendere che sarebbe stata sicura, ma gli chiusi la bocca con una parola sola; ma tuttavia però stava nella medesima durezza.*'[55]

(He wanted to strain himself to give me an understanding that she would be safe, but I closed his mouth with one word; nevertheless, he persisted in the same hardness.)

In the letters of Faccone, we read more about the downside of the star tenor's vanity when in Rome. He illegally served other patrons like Pietro Aldobrandini. Only leading to laconic Strainchamps

'*Se il Rasio no ha cervello, suo danno; forse che la necessità gli insegnarà a vivere*'[56]
(If Rasi has no brains, that is his loss; perhaps being in need will teach him how to live)

Later Arrigoni wrote to the court about his diplomatic moves. In his letter from 15 August 1603, we read:

Ho notificato al padre di questa giovane la mente di sua altezza, ma non totalmente, havendo taciuto quel che s'aspetta al metterla in casa del Monteverdi per la commodità dell'imparare, acciò che costui non entrasse in qualche sospettione vedendo egli muttarsi tatalmente gli ordine, ma col tempo andarò dispondendo la materia et gli farò cognoscere che per servitio di Caterina non si po` far altrimenti. [57]

(I have informed the father of this young lady of his Highness's mind, but not completely, as I kept silent about what to expect when she is put in Monteverdi's house for the convenience of learning so that he will not be suspicious if he sees that he has changed his orders so much, but in time I will dispel the matter and I will make him understand that Catherine's service does not allow one to do otherwise.)

Once she arrived in Mantua, Caterina was placed in Monteverdi's house to live in a family setting that should guarantee her safety and virginity. Having lost his own daughter Leonora (born 20 February 1603) earlier that year, Monteverdi most likely welcomed the talented young singer as an enrichment of his household.
Upon arrival, Caterina was an accomplished singer, given the listed repertoire she mastered. Still, she probably had more experience in the florid style of diminutions than the other qualities that were her new master's ideals. His wife Claudia was a court singer, and as an apprentice, Martinelli was surrounded daily by the expertise of her new profession.

[55] Strainchamps, *The Life and Death,* p. 177, Letter of 9 July 1603 from Rasi to Vincenzo Gonzaga.
[56] Barbara Furlotti, *Le Collezioni Gonzaga, Il carteggio tra Roma e Mantova, (1587-1612),* (Milano, Silvana Editoriale, 2003) p. 382. ASMn, AG, b. 976 f. I1, cc. 38-39
[57] Furlotti, *Le Collezioni Gonzaga,* p.402-403 Archive Mantua, ASMn, AG, b. 976

Preparing *Arianna*

When Monteverdi returned to Mantua on 9 October 1607, Martinelli was one of the few people standing very close to him and his children. Even though Caterina had been living for more than a year in her own house, donated by the duke[58], the loss of Claudia must have felt like a family member's passing away. It is conceivable that Claudia's illness reported (see libretto, note 2) two months after Caterina left the Monteverdi house had to do with missing her help in the household and tending to the two boys, then 1 and 5 years old.
Now, a new life started with Caterina being at the centre of a huge project, *Arianna,* and the composer under the pressure of approaching nuptials. Martinelli had become, without any doubt, the favourite female singer at the Mantuan court. The prospect of starring in the most spectacular public event at the Gonzaga court ever must have delighted the young singer.
Ottavio Rinuccini arrived after Monteverdi in Mantua on 23 October 1607 to start working on the opera. His ambitions were rather in the direction of the original Greek tragedy, hence his quote of *Intelletto* from Cavalieri's *Rappresentazione*:

scena terza Intelletto:

Alme ch'in ciel godete,
qual premio in ciel avete
più nobile e più degno? [59]

(Souls, who in heaven enjoy, /What reward in heaven have ye/ Nobler and more worthy?)

The story of a *tragedia* should be about royal protagonists. In my libretto, the prophecy of Arianna's faith is included in Rinuccini's remark.
The interruption of Vanità, showing the head of the Minotaur, is an allusion to Verdi's *Otello*. He opens with the exclamation: "Esultate, l'orgoglio musulmane sepolto è in mar" (Rejoice, the pride of the muslims is buried in the sea). This is to underline some parallels, such as the role of Theseus, arriving by sea after his heroic action and the similarities between the collaboration of Giuseppe Verdi and the librettist Arrigo Boito and their predecessors, Monteverdi and Rinuccini.[60]
The scene where Teseo sings music of his own invention illustrates the high position of singers in court, such as Francesco Rasi. The tenor was in high esteem from the moment he finished his training with Giulio Caccini. (see above) He obtained his position at the Mantuan court music in 1598 and was indeed also a composer with a reputation for improvising his ornamentations with lightness. Apparently, he was good looking and jovial (*'era uomo di bell'aspetto, gioviale'*).[61]

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[58] Edmond Strainchamps, 'The Life and Death of Caterina Martinelli: New Light on Monteverdi's Arianna', *Early Music History,* 5 (1985) p. 164, note 16. The notarial act was signed on 9 September 1606.
[59] Emilio del Cavalliere, *Rappresentatione,* no.70, p. XXX.
[60] The quotation of Verdi also alludes to the link between Monteverdi's revival and Boito's role by innovating Italian opera in a more text-centred direction.
[61]Severo Bonini, *Discorsi e Regole sopra la musica*. See in Solerti, *Le Origini,* p. 138:

With these characteristics in mind, it would not be surprising if Rasi started composing his own music for the verses of Rinuccini. There is evidence that sometimes singers added compositions to the operas they sang.
The letter in which Monteverdi expressed his reluctance to compose music representing winds and sheep (see p. 140 above *La favola di Peleo e Tetide*) also contains a passage about having the singers compose music themselves.

"... cioe signora Andriana (Adriana Basile) et altre le potrebbono cantare altre si comporse le, cosi il signor Rasso [Rasi] la sua parte..."

(i.e. Mrs Adriana and the others could sing and compose hers; likewise, Mr. Rasi his part,)

In that same letter Monteverdi indicates that the best result can only be achieved when written by one hand (‘*ci vorebbe anco una sol mano’*).

However, the ornamentations in the famous aria of *Orfeo,* "Possente spirto", which are printed in the score of 1609, are said to be at least inspired by the performances of Francesco Rasi, if not invented by the singer in this role.

In the letter mentioned above, Monteverdi makes clear that he prefers to have all composing in one hand so he can control the longer line and its emotional climax. For Arianna that was the lamento (‘*L'Arianna mi porta ad un giusto lamento’*) and for Orfeo the prayer (‘*e l'orfeo ad una giusta preghiera’*). Earlier in the letter, he says not to judge the poetry of the libretto because he always honours the most talented artists. Even more so because: ‘*questa professione della poesia non e mia.’* (this art of poetry is not my profession).

While Monteverdi worked at the top of his abilities to complete the *Arianna* on time, behind-the-scenes preparations were being made for the performance of music by Marco da Gagliano. Apparently, he was already in Mantua in October 1607.[62] In the preface of his edition of *La Dafne*, which appeared later in 1608, Gagliano recalls for his readers that he was invited to Mantua to write music for the wedding of Prince Francesco. Indeed, there is correspondence with the prince at the beginning of December, that apart from his work on *Dafne,* he had written a *favoletta per recitar cantando*.

In the preface, he also mentions that the wedding was postponed to May, so all the hurry to finish Arianna in time, which caused such an attack on the health of its composer, was in vain. In January 1608, most of the opera was finished, but suddenly, the upcoming carnival had priorities over it.

“Era uomo di bell'aspetto, gioviale, di voce gradita e suave, faceva apparire con l'allegrezza del volto e maestà il suo canto angelico e divino.” (He was a man of good looks, jovial, of pleasant and gentle voice, he made his angelic and divine song appear with cheerfulness of face and majesty.)

[62] Fabbri, *Monteverdi,* p.126, n. 164

Prefazione

'Per le reale nozze…. Le quali, essendo differite a maggio dal sig. Duca, per non lasciar passar que' giorni senza qualche festa, volle fra l'altre che si rappresentasse la Dafne del signor Ottavio Rinuccini da lui con tale occasione accresciuta e abbellita, fui impiegato a metterla in musica; '[63]

(For the royal wedding.... which was postponed to May by the Duke, so as not to let those days pass without some entertainment, and he wished, among other things, to be performed the *Daphne* from Signor Ottavio Rinuccini, who had enlarged and embellished it for this occasion, and I was engaged in setting it to music...)

The argument that the duke did not want to let pass those days originally intended for the wedding without festivities is what was communicated to the composer. But apart from the upcoming wedding, the fact that Ferdinando Gonzaga recently had been created cardinal (on 24 December 1607) demanded an extra festive subsequent carnival.

Remarks from Duchess Eleonora de Medici about the preliminary version of *Arianna* are dated after the carnival. A meeting with her took place on 26 February, including Rinuccini, Monteverdi, the architect Viani and some other men involved, to discuss the progress of the preparations for *Arianna.* There, according to a report of the next day, she must have asked Rinuccini for more liveliness in the libretto; "*Madama è restata con il sig. Ottavio di arrichirla con qualche azione essendo assai sciutta."* [64]

La Dafne

There is no proof of any deliberation about the choice for a replacement opera that would be performed during Carnival 1608 in Mantua. It is rather likely it was already on the mind of the Gonzaga's to profit from Rinuccini's presence and have a new version of his *Dafne.* Gagliano was invited as early as October, briefly after the arrival of the librettist, to work on it.

Francesco Rasi also composed an opera, though this would be for the wedding of Ferdinando Gonzaga and Caterina de Medici in 1616. It was intended for a triptique in which *La favola di Peleo e Tetide* would be performed with Monteverdi's music. As we have seen above, that did not happen because the composer rejected the libretto.

But also Rasi's opera *La favola di Cibele ed Ati* finally did not make it. Probably, there was too little time left to rehearse it, or it was not even finished.[65] In that sense, it does seem plausible to have Rasi as Vanità in our *Tragedia di Claudio M,* making a promise of a work that he even had not yet started composing. Certainly, after being banned in 1609 from Tuscany because he was responsible for the death of the administrator of his deceased

[63] Prefazione for *Dafne*, Marco da Gagliano, 20 October 1608, in: Solerti, *Le Origini,* p.78, translation by Tim Carter (Fabbri/Carter), *Monteverdi*, 1994, p 80.

[64] Fabbri, *Monteverdi,* p. 129. ('Madame agreed with Mr Ottavio to enrich it with some action because it is very dry.' Report from General Carlo Rossi to the duke.)

[65] Susan Parisi, "Francesco Rasi's *La favola di Cibele ed Ati* and the Cybele legend from Ovid to the early *Seicento*", in *Music observed: studies in memory of William C. Holmes*, ed.C. Reardon and S. Parisi (Warren, MI, Harmonie Park Pr, 2004), p. 361 ff.

father's estate and his attempted murder of his stepmother, he must have been a displaced person. Direct contact with the Medici court or colleagues like Giulio Caccini was no longer possible.

Whether Rasi's opera was performed at all is not certain. He worked on it and made changes to the libretto. According to Susan Parisi, who specialised in the work and life of Rasi, he might have shared Monteverdi's opinion about the leading characters of opera. Parisi's observation that "Rasi moulded the principal characters in his opera as close to human as he could" seems to me entirely plausible.[66] "Like Monteverdi, and probably influenced by him, Rasi surely felt that a story about human frailty would speak to an audience."[67]

The return of the Minotaur mask alludes to the story of James (the admirable) Crighton's death. Sheer jealousy would have driven Vincenzo Gonzaga to attack the young, brilliant Scotsman, who his father Guglielmo had imposed as his tutor. The nightly attack was done by a 'masked group of ruffians', but they all lost the fight to the incredibly skilled fencer Crighton. Vincenzo would have taken off his mask to confront the man with his real identity. On his knees, Crighton handed over his sword to his patron but was subsequently stabbed to death with it by the prince. This anecdote and the Minotaur mask were included in an earlier version of the libretto of *La Tragedia di Claudio M.*

In Act II.1, Rinuccini's (*Ragione's*) shrewd reminder of the Florentine performance of *La Dafne* can be seen here as an appeal to the Duchess' Medici origins. It is conceivable that she indeed witnessed the legendary performance in 1594 of *La Dafne* in the house of Jacopo Corsi, the leader of the Florentine Camerata dei Bardi. The extremely select group of musicians and poets were the masterminds of the 'revival' of drama, based on the antiques. Corsi and Jacopo Peri provided the music for this first mature attempt in the newborn genre of the *stile rappresentativo.* In the preface and dedication of their edition in 1600 of *L'Euridice*, both Rinuccini and Peri used the same phrase "to provide a proof what singing in our time is capable of." (see above p. 140)[68]

Marco da Gagliano mentions in the preface of his 1608 edition of *La Dafne* the pleasure and amazement the new spectacle aroused in the audience. Rinuccini concluded from this evidence "how apt singing was to express all kinds of affects, and that not only (as many would have believed) it did not bring tedium, but incredible delight." [69]

The preface also gives us a better insight into the singers' special merits at the Gonzaga court. He underlines that what is put on paper in the present edition is not all the music.

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[66] *Idem*, p.387.

[67] *Ibidem.* Parisi refers here to the famous passage in Monteverdi's letter where he states that Arianna moves him because she is a woman and Orpheus because he is a man. Letter No.19, 9-XII-1616. (Russo, *Monteverdi, Correspondance,* p.62.)

[68] See also Chapter 1, Episteme p. 16.

[69] "*Per sì fatta prova, venuto in cognizione il sig. Rinuccini quanto fusse atto il canto a esprimere ogni sorta d'affetti, e che non solo (come per avventura per molti si sarebbe creduto) non recava tedio, ma diletto incredibile*." Marco da Gagliano, prefazione della *Dafne* 1608, Solerti, *Origini,* p. 81.

There are, as he states, "many other requirements, without which there would be little value in any music, even the excellent." But those who think it only depends on the amount of ornamentation are deluded because (and here Gagliano is quoting Caccini's *Nuove Musiche*, 1602) "they are making groups, trills, passages and exclamations**,** without regard to what end or purpose." Gagliano now gives us valuable information about Caterina Martinelli.

'Non intendo già privarmi di questi adornamenti, ma voglio che s'adoperino a tempo e luogo come nelle canzoni de' cori, come nell'ottava Chi da' lacci d'amor vive disciolto, la quale si vede ch'è messa in quel luogo a posta per far sentire la grazia e la disposizione del cantore, il che felicemente conseguì la signora Caterina Martinelli, la quale con tanta leggiadria la cantò, ch'empiè di diletto e di meraviglia tutto il teatro.'[70]

"I do not intend to deprive myself of these ornaments, but I do want them to be used in time and place, as in the songs of the choir, as in the aria *Chi da' lacci d'amor vive disciolto* (Who lives dissolved from the bonds of love), which [ornamentation] is seen to have been placed there for the purpose of making the grace and temperament of the singer heard, which was happily achieved by Signora Caterina Martinelli, who sang it with such gracefulness that it filled the whole theatre with delight and wonder."

It is clear that Martinelli, by that time, had mastered the highest art of singing and was equivalent to the experienced tenor Francesco Rasi. Undoubtedly, Claudio Monteverdi played a decisive role in achieving this delicate balance while using ornamentation.
In addition to those lessons, Francesco Rasi's influence as a colleague has been of major importance as well. Gagliano sets him as an example by his many qualities and unique (*singularissimo*) way of singing.

'Richiedesi ancora l'esquisitezza del canto ne' terzetti ultimi: Non curi la mia pianta o fiamma gelo, *dove può il buon cantore spiegar tutte quelle maggiori leggiadrie che richiegga il canto, le quali tutte s'udirono dalla voce del sig. Francesco Rasi, che, oltre a tante qualità, è nel canto singularissimo. Ma dove la favola non lo ricerca, lascisi del tutto ogni ornamento;'*[71]

The exquisiteness of singing is still required in the last tercets: *Non curi la mia pianta o fiamma gelo,* where the good singer can deploy all the greater gracefulness that singing requires, all of which can be heard in the voice of Signor Francesco Rasi, who, in addition to so many qualities, is singular in singing. But where the story does not demand it, he left out all ornamentation entirely;

By naming the aria's, Gagliano gives us information about the casting. As we saw, Rasi sang the role of Apollo. Tirsi, the messenger, was sung by Antonio Brandi (il Brandino), from whom Gagliano says he could not wish for more. By this exquisite contralto, not only was the diction impeccable, but "he sang marvellously while not only the words were understood but by the gestures and movements felt in the soul into an I don't know what wonder."

'...la voce è di contralto esquisitissima, la pronunzia e la grazia del cantare maravigliosa, ne solo vi fa intendere le parole, ma co' gesti e co' movimenti par che v'insinua nell'animo un non so che davantaggio.' [72]

[70] *Idem,* p. 79.
[71] Solerti, *Le Origini,* p.79.
[72] *Idem*, p.87.

More puzzling has been the attribution of Martinelli's role. For a long time, it was taken for granted that she would have sung the role of Amore, eventually doubling with the leading character, Dafne.

Stuart Reiner, in 1974, convincingly argued that the aria connected to Martinelli belonged to the role of Venus and not Amore.[73] Apparently, there is an exit of Amore before the aria, and in the score, there is no new character cue for a change of role after Venus' previous recitative. For the Amore, it was more conventional to have a boy impersonating the role, which most probably was also the case in this production of *Dafne*.
The modern printed libretti, however, and recordings also attribute the aria "*Chi da lacci d'Amor"* to Amore, which shows that this convention was established. By the time the libretto for *La Tragedia di Claudio M* was conceived, I had taken the information about Martinelli's role from Paolo Fabbri (1985) and from its English translation of Tim Carter (1994), which offered the dramaturgically much more imaginative solution of Martinelli instead of vanishing as Venus, ending up as a *Dafne* converted into a laurel tree.

After *La Dafne* had been performed, another composer from the Florentine circle flattered Ferdinando in a letter in which he also tried to undermine Monteverdi's reputation. On 8 April Jacopo Peri wrote that he was very much impressed by the performances in Mantua during carnival, which were applauded by the whole town. About Gagliano's contribution, he wrote that his music was composed with infinitely more taste and advances because "this way of singing was recognised as more proper and closer to speech than that of this other worthy man (*'valent'uomo'*)." With this last remark, Monteverdi was intended.

Remarkably, Monteverdi regularly had to fight for respect and recognition at the court of Mantua. Even when he had already amply proved that he deserved it, for instance, with his *Orfeo* and certainly in 1608, after the *Arianna.* This last did not even make him a candidate as interim chapel master of the Santa Barbara while Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi was severely ill. Gastoldi was appointed to that position in 1592 after Giaches de Wert had died. Gastoldi's dedication of his *Balletti a cinque voci* to Vincenzo Gonzaga in 1591 might have helped him to become part of the court music. In the dedicatory text, Gastoldi characterises the use of this music broadly:

' *...per accompagnare la stagione, et le varie occasioni di nozze, et di spettacoli pubblichi, et di balli che s'apparecchiono.'*[74]
(to accompany the season, and the various occasions of weddings, and public spectacles, and ballets that are prepared.)
In this case, all the named occasions were united in one event because the carnival celebration was under the sign of the upcoming nuptials. Moreover, the status of *innamorato*

[73] Stuart Reiner, 'La vag'Angioletta (and Others)', *Analecta Musicologica*, 14 (1974), pp. 44ff.
[74] G.G. Gastoldi, *Balletti a cinque voci,* (Venezia, Ricciardo Amadino, 1592): "to accompany the season, and the various occasions of weddings, and public spectacles, and ballets that are prepared."

(the Lover, but also *primo uomo* in the theatre group) is a title appropriate to the dedicatee Vincenzo Gonzaga. As shown below, the duke had an extraordinary affection for the young soprano, whom he had seen growing into the star she had become while in his service.

The commedia troupe named I Comici Fedeli was bound to the Mantuan court by Vincenzo Gonzaga from 1604 on. From the fall of 1607, they were also preparing for the wedding festivities and had been contracted to perform Giovanni Battista Guarini's *Idropica.* The postponement of the wedding also for them resulted in a change of schedule. They resided at the palazzo and most likely contributed to the performances and entertainments during carnival.

Less than two weeks after the carnival and her great success, Caterina Martinelli fell seriously ill. Soon, it turned out that she was the victim of a smallpox infection. Quite some correspondence about her situation and the consequences for the *Arianna* production is preserved, giving us a good impression of what happened when. The first message about her illness was sent to Vincenzo in Turin on 28 February 1608 by his secretary. This was accompanied by a brief report on her condition that said:

'La Sig.ra Catherina sta al suo solito con le varole, ma però con un poco di remissione della febre, rossore e colore, ***inghiotisse con manco fastidio,*** *et in somma mostra qualche remissione, la quale se persevera si può sperare.'*

(Mrs. Catherina is still the same with smallpox, but with a little remission of the fever, redness and colour, she swallows with little discomfort, and in sum, she shows some remission, which, if she perseveres, one can hope for.)

The next day, Vincenzo received a letter from the tenor Francesco Campagnolo, who complained that he feared the whole thing was going to last very long and that "he was buried in idleness to such a degree that for two evenings he had a fever out of sheer boredom."
On the second of March (mistakenly dated 2 February 1608)) Ferdinando Gonzaga sent a letter to update his brother Francesco in Milan:

L'Arianna sta male poiché la Romana ***non e sicura di campare,*** *anzi è in non picciol pericolo; del resto il Monteverdi se n'è di già spedito in bene, havendo fornite quasi tutte le musiche.*

(*L'Arianna* is going badly since it is not certain that La Romana will survive; in fact, she is in no little danger. As for the rest, Monteverdi is well underway with it, having finished almost all the music.)[75]

On 5 March, there suddenly was a sign of hope. The secretary Costantini forwarded several letters from the house of Martinelli and added his own comment. In this letter, he announced that she "yet seems to begin to give some hope of sure survival, moving towards feeling some improvement in the disease inside her throat, which caused the most fear."[76]

[75] Strainchamps, *The Life and Death,* p. 167.
[76] *Idem*, p. 168.

Despite this good news, Caterina Martinelli died a few days later. There is confusion about the exact date of death because, on the one hand, documents say she died on the 7th, which was reported to Rome for the archives on the 8th. Later letters and official announcements from the court keep the 9th as the date she had passed away.

On the 10th of March, Duchess Eleonora had a letter sent to her son Francesco to warn him of the disease.[77] She pretended that the cause of death might have been excessive drinking during carnival, but in a small personal postscript, she made clear that it was mostly fear that drove her to such a lie.

'Magnifico nostro carissimo: . . . Farete sapere al Prencipe nostro figliolo ch'e morta qui la settimana passata la Catherina Romana, et questi medici dicono che la cagione della sua morte in parte e stata la mala stagione, nella quale corre un influsso di varole che amazza molti, ma ***che molto pidi le ha cagionato la morte l'haver voluto la meschina bere tutto questo Carnevale vini grandi*** *et particolarmente claretti et malvasie del Monferrato, onde se l'era di maniera infiammato il sangue che non e stato possibile a remediare* ***alla gran furia del male sopravenutole****, per quanti rimedi se le sieno fatti. Et che però egli si guardi di gratia non solo dal bere disordinatamente, ma dal bere vini grandi, sapendo noi che tali sono in cotesto paese, et che li adacqui bene, acciò che fra l'altre occasioni non s'aggiongesse questa di recare qualche grave danno alla sua salute...'*

(Our dearest Magnificent: You will let our Prince know that Catherina Romana died here last week, and these doctors say that the cause of her death was partly the bad season, in which there is an influence of smallpox that afflicts many people, but that the death was caused by the fact that the poor girl wanted to drink strong wines, especially claret and Monferrato malvasia, throughout this Carnival, so that it inflamed her blood in such a way that it was not possible to remedy the great fury that had come over her, no matter how many remedies were done. And that he beware, therefore, not only of drinking disorderly but also of drinking large wines, knowing that such are the case in this country and that he waters them well, so that among other occasions, this may not be added to the occasion of causing Some grave harm to his health...)

postscriptum

'Questa mia lettera non la comunicate con altri che col Principe, poichè quello che scrivo circa alla morte della Caterina non ho a caro che altri lo sapia per bon rispetto. Vi dico bene che ***sto con tanta paura di questo benedetto male, non l'avendo hauto il Principe, che mi trema il core.*** *Sichè pregatelo a guardarsi di tutte le cose che possino di soverc[h]io scaldarlo fin tanto che passi questa mala influenza'.*

(Do not communicate this letter of mine with anyone other than the Prince, because what I write about Catherine's death, I rather have no others to know out of respect. I tell you that I am really so afraid of this miserable disease since the Prince has not had it that my heart trembles. Therefore, beg him to beware of all things that might heat him up until this evil influenza passes.)

Martinelli was buried with some pomp in the Chiesa del Carmine, and Vincenzo Gonzaga ordered to celebrate every ferial day a Mass for the Dead and every month as well an Office for the Dead for that soul, starting on 9 March 1609. In the Carmine church, a marble tomb was constructed, ordered by Vincenzo, with an inscription honouring the singer as well as the dedication of her patron.

[77] A photo of this letter and the postscript are to be found in Strainchamps, *The Life and Death,* p. 185.

‘Inspice, lege, defle!

Catterina Martinella romana, quae vocis modulatione et flexu Sirenum cantus facile orbicumque [sic] caelestium melos praecellebat, insigni ea virtute morum suavitate, forma, lepore, ac venustate Ser. Vinc. Duci Mant. ap[p]rime chara, acerba heu morte sublata hoc tumulo beneficentiss. principis jussu, repentino adhuc casu moerentis aeternum quiescit.

Nomen mundo, deo vivat anima.

Obiit adolescentiae anno xviii

die xx Martij MDCVIII.’

(Look, read and weep!

Caterina Martinelli of Rome, who by the tunefulness and flexibility of her voice easily excelled the songs of the Sirens and the melody of the heavenly spheres, dear above all to Vincenzo, Serene Duke of Mantua, for that famous excellence, the sweetness of her manner, her beauty, her grace and charm, snatched away, alas, by bitter death, rests for eternity in this tomb, commanded by a most generous prince who still grieves at this sudden blow. Let her name live in the world and her soul with God. She died in the eighteenth year of her youth, the ninth of March 1608).

In the summer of 1610, Monteverdi composed a group of six madrigals on a text by Scipione Agnelli, with the title *La Sestina; Lagrime d'amante al sepolcro dell' amata.* (Tears of the lover at the grave of the beloved). It was requested by Vincenzo, who provided the text, to honor the late Caterina. The text refers to the shepherd Glauco, who mourns his beloved nymph, Corinna. The duke obviously borrowed the shepherd's identity for this occasion.

Và ancho preparando una muta di Madrigali a cinque voci, che sarà di tre pianti quello dell’Arianna con il solito canto sempre, il pianto di Leandro e Hero del Marini, Il terzo datoglielo, da Sua Altezza Serenissima di Pastore che sia morta la sua Ninfa. Parole del figlio del Sigr Conte Lepido Agnelli in morte della Signora Romanina…[78]

(He is also preparing a set of Madrigals for five voices, which will consist of three laments, that of Ariadne with the usual song, the lament of Leandro and Hero by Marini, the third given to him by His Serene Highness of Shepherd whose Nymph died. The text is by the son of Mr. Conte Lepido Agnelli on the death of la Romanina…)

La Sestina appeared in print in 1614 in Monteverdi's sixth book of madrigals, together with the madrigal version of the *Lamento d'Arianna.*

Act III

Simultaneously with all the preparations for the Arianna and its rehearsals, another theatre production was being rehearsed. The Commedia dell'arte troupe I Comici Fedeli, the company led by the actor Giovanni Battista Andreini and his wife Virginia Ramponi Andreini, had performed regularly in the palace since 1604. They were asked to prepare Giovanni

[78] Letter by Bassano Cassola to Vincenzo Gonzaga, 20 July 1610 in Emil Vogel, “Claudio Monteverdi. Leben, Wirken im Lichte der zeitgenössischen Kritik und Verzeichniss seiner im Druck erschienenen Werke”, *Vierteljahrschrift für Musikwissenschaft* III, (Berlin, 1887), p.430.

Battista Guarini's *Idropica*,[79] a comedy of considerable length, for the wedding.
The Fedeli were playing mainly the plays written by their leader and had, certainly with his *Florinda,* successes in Florence for the Accademia degli Spensierati and in Milan, where they impressed the governor Enriquez d'Acevado, the count of Fuentes. The latter was particularly fond of Virginia's acting and singing, and he provided the troupe with regular income, which made the Andreini independent from his father, Francesco.

The Commedia dell'arte ensemble of father Francesco (I Gelosi) was famous, and Maria de Medici imported this style of theatre to the French court through engagements. Giovanni Battista had grown up in that world, and his mother, Isabella, was the most important prima donna of her generation.

When participating in the Gelosi*,* Virginia must have learned a lot from her mother-in-law, specifically how to play the *innamorata,* traditionally the troupe's leading lady. While her husband, as an upcoming and later most successful playwright, wrote tailor-made roles for her, she apparently had talents that would outshine his famous mother with the many performances of the Fedeli.

Giovanni Battista Guarini's *Idropica* dated in fact from ca.1585. One year later, he surprised the world with his *Pastor fido,* a 'tragicomedia pastorale' that inspired many composers, including Giaches de Wert and Monteverdi, to write madrigals based on its verses. That relation must have become more intense during the period in the 1590s when Guarini resided at the palace in Mantova. On 22 November 1598, an impressive performance (*rappresentazione*) of the play took place at the Palazzo Ducale on the occasion of the 14-year-old Queen Margaret of Austria's visit.

Vincenzo ignored criticisms Guarini had received on the style and the accusations of immorality from the side of the Counter-Reformation. A spokesman was Giason Denores, a professor of moral philosophy at the University of Padua, who started in 1586 a polemic when the *Pastor fido* was only circulating in manuscript, a controversy that reminds us of the Artusi-Monteverdi conflict.

In 1601, Guarini published a *Compendio della poesia tragicomica* as a 'dichiaratione' of his views on the modern genre of tragicomedy. As a reason to write such works, he gave the example of purging the mind from melancholy.

'Purga la malinconia, affetto tanto nocivo, che bene spesso conduce l'uomo a impazzare e darsi la morte; e purgalo in quella guisa che fa la melodia, secondo che c'insegna Aristotile, quell'affetto che i Greci chiamano ἐνθουσιασμός, e in quella che la Sacra Scrittura ci racconta, che David, coll'armonia del suo suono, cacciava i mali spiriti di Saul, primo re degli Ebrei.' [80]

[79] Giovanni Battista Guarini, *L'Idropica,* (Venice, Ciotti, 1613) dedicated to Cesare D'Este. Atto primo, scena sesta, p.14v ff.
[80] Battista Guarini, *Compendio della poesia tragicomica*, (Venice, Ciotti, 1601) p.15. https://books.google.it/books?id=21VOCUeUhVIC&printsec=frontcover&hl#v=onepage&q&f=false

(Purify melancholy, an affection so noxious that it often drives a man mad and leads him to death, and purge it in the way that melody does, according to what Aristotle teaches us, the affect the Greeks call ἐνθουσιασμός, and in the way that Holy Scripture tells us that David, with the harmony of his sound, drove out the evil spirits of Saul, the first king of the Jews.)

L'Idropica was not a tragicomedy but a regular *commedia* containing many typical Commedia dell'arte scenes and characters. Doctors have a special role here and are ridiculed.
For the scene of the rehearsal by the Fedeli at the beginning of Act III, I chose a fragment where the *innamorato* uses the role of Dottore to get access to the house of his beloved. This scene is the only one from *Idropica,* performed during the nuptials on 2 June 1608, of which we have a description. Ambassador Annibale Roncaglia reports to his patron Cesare d'Este in Ferrara that he has seen "the nice story by 'il cavaliere Guirini' (sic), full of mottos and oneliners, but performed by mostly rude actors and the play often so gross, that it made you turn red."
Roncaglia continues: "I will say this for the least: a woman was searching with her hands in the trousers of a young man for a root to cure her illness and other similar things."

'*…fu bella la commedia del Cav.re Guirini, assai piena di motti et sentenze, ma recitata da persone per lo più parte sgarbate, et era così grassa che faceva arrossire.*

Dirò questa per la minima: una donna cercava con le mani nelle calcie ad un giovane una radice da far guarire la sua malattia, et altre cose simili.' [81]

La Florinda

While the Fedeli were rehearsing, the preparation for the *Arianna* threatened to be kept on hold for too long. Certainly, Duchess Eleonora was worried about the replacement of Caterina Martinelli, as we read in the letter of 15 March by Secretary Antonio Costantini to the duke.[82]

'S[ua] A[ltezza] p[er] la Dio gratia sta beniss[im]o di salute, et và travagliando alla gagliarda in procurare et far procurare con ogni diligenza che si lavori et tiri a fine tutto ciò che si và facendo p[er] la venuta della Ser[enissi]ma Sposa, ma particolarm[en]te S[ua] A[ltezza] si affatica in far mettere all'ordine la com[m]edia cantata, et era disperatiss[im]a dopo la morte della povera sig[no]ra Catherina p[er]che non si trovava chi potesse addossarsi convenientem[en]te la parte di Arianna.'

(Her Highness, by the grace of God, is very well in her health, and she is working eagerly in ensuring and making sure with all diligence that they work and bring to a conclusion everything which is being done for the arrival of the Most Serene Bride. But in particular, Her Highness toils at getting in order the sung comedy, and she was

transcript: https://it.wikisource.org/wiki/Compendio_della_poesia_tragicomica

[81] Lettera di Annibale Roncaglia a Cesare d'Este, 29.5.1608, ASMO, Estense, Ambasciatori, Mantova, b. 8, fasc. 6, c. 4v. See also; Angelo Solerti, *Gli Albori del Melodramma,* (Milano, Remo Sandron, 1904) p.100.
[82] A transcription of the letter and a translation can be found in Paola Besutti, "The 'Sala degli Specchi' Uncovered: Monteverdi, the Gonzagas and the Palazzo Ducale", *Early Music*, Vol. 27, No. 3, Laments (Aug., 1999), p. 460.

totally desperate after the death of the poor Signora Catherina because no one was found who could effectively take on the part of Arianna.)

The meeting of 26 February (see above footnote 64) before Caterina's death was with the most important figures for the opera production, anticipating the worst-case scenario. Nevertheless, finding a new leading lady must have pressed heavily on the duchess, even though the solution came surprisingly soon.
On the 9th of March, the somewhat detached observations of progress in the preparations for the nuptials by Secretary Chieppio sent to the duke in Turin summarise the confusion:

'... Qui ogni cosa passa bene, da questa favola della Arianna in poi, nella quale la morte della Sg.ra Caterina ha posto tanto scompiglio che non so quello che ne riuscirà, e certamente questa giovane acquistò tanto nelle azioni che fece nell'ultimo di Carnevale nell'animo di tutti che, se non pianta, è stata commiserata almeno universalmente la sua morte.'[83]

(Here, everything passes well, with the exception of the story of Arianna, in which the death of Signora Caterina has caused such havoc that I do not know what will become of it, and certainly, this young lady acquired so much in the actions she did in the last of Carnival in the minds of all that, if not deplored, her death was at least universally pitied.)

In the letter by Costantini mentioned above, we see the sequence of events in searching for Martinelli's replacement. The first selection of singers known to the court as a possible solution was not successful.

'Mandò a posta a Bergamo per veder di havere quella giovane, che era stata proposta dal sr Monteverde per una eccellente cantatrice, ma non ha voluto venire.'[84]

(She sent specifically to Bergamo to try to have that young girl who had been proposed by Signor Monteverde as an excellent singer, but she did not want to come.)

Costantini reported that a solution only presented itself when the idea of inviting La Florinda to audition came up. Apart from having the Fedeli around, there were other reasons to consider her a replacement. Virginia Ramponi Andreini had a reputation as a singer and instrumentalist next to her acting. Of course, her skills must have differed from those who studied with masters like Caccini. But she convinced those present instantly to be the best choice for the role in a staged try-out performance on the evening of 14 March.

According to the reporting letters, she learned the role in six days. If so, this would mean she had started one day after Martinelli was buried. There was no reason to stop searching for other singers while Virginia was studying the role, but most probably, Monteverdi was already seriously involved in her training.

And if Duchess Eleonora had indeed a God-given inspiration to ask Florinda, as we read in Costantini's letter, it must have been on the day the corpse of the deceased was buried.

[83] Strainchamps, *The Life and Death*, p. 185. Letter Annibale Chieppio to Annibale Iberti.
[84] See reference of the letter in Besutti, note 82 above.

'Finalm[en]te Iddio ha inspirato in far prova se la Florinda fusse habile a far questa parte, la quale in sei giorni l'ha beniss[im]o a mente, et la canta con tanta gratia, et con tanta maniera et affetto che ha fatto maravigliar Madama, il s[igno]r Rinuccini et tutti questi sig[no]ri che l'hanno udita. Hier sera S[ua] A[ltezza] fece provar la d[ett]a com[m]edia nella Sala de' Specchi, et restò consolatiss[im]a havendo trovato che quasi è all'ordine da potersi recitare quanto si appartiene alli recitanti.' [85]

(Finally, God inspired her to try out whether La Florinda was capable of doing this part, which in six days she has learnt very well by heart, and she sings it with such grace and with such manner and affect that she has amazed Madama, Signor Rinuccini and all those gentlemen who heard her. Yesterday evening, Her Highness had the comedy rehearsed in the Sala de' Specchi, and she remained very satisfied, having found that it is almost in a state to be performed in so far as the performers are concerned.)

The first one to report the good news to Vincenzo was Carlo Rossi, who wrote a letter to the duke on the same evening.

'La Arianna, che per la morte della povera Caterina era morta, è ravvivata, perchè avendo volsuto questa sera Madama sentire la Florinda che ne avea imparate parte la più difficile (sic), la dice di maniera che ne è restata stupita, talché sarà mirabile; et alla gobba alla quale Madama aveva spedito apposta et non ha volsuto venire, vadia et stiasi. Alla Commedia grande questa sera si sono fomite di provare tutte le musiche et questa altra settimana marcieranno per le nuvole et non vi mancherà che viole et tromboni che pochi ne abbiamo, et dui organi che si sanno ove sono...'. [86]

(... Ariadne, who by the passing away of poor Catherine was dead, came to life again because Madame wanted to hear Florinda this evening, who had learned the most difficult part (sic). She speaks it in such a manner that she (Madame) was astounded, so that will be admirable, and to the hunchback to whom Madama had sent post, and who did not wish to come, let her go and stay there. As for the big commedia, this evening they rehearsed all the music, and this other week they will prepare papier-maché for the clouds, and the only things missing are viole (violins?) and trombones, of which we have a few and two organs which they know where they are…)

Virginia Andreini was a very experienced actress, and several authors have stated that learning a part in six days would not have been over asking someone who had to memorise text as a daily habit. Besides, the version she sang at the try-out would likely have been without the lamento. Tim Carter argued convincingly that the lamento was included in the opera only later, precisely because La Florinda was the new protagonist.[87] This being the case, only some 60 lines of text would have to be memorised for the audition. At least, that was most probably the opera's status at the try-out date. If Monteverdi had helped her prepare for the role and introduced her to what was more or less expected from the musical performance, it would not have been a miracle that she knew the role by heart. It must nevertheless have made a spectacular impression, bearing in mind her exceptional acting qualities.

If we stick to the hypothesis that Monteverdi profited during Florinda's preparation for the

[85] *Ibidem.*
[86] Fabbri/Carter, *Monteverdi,* p.83. English translation, mainly by Carter.
[87] Tim Carter "Lamenting Ariadne", *Early Music* vol. 27 no. 3, Laments (Aug. 1999), pp. 395 – 405.

audition from the opportunity to discover the possibilities of the actress, this would explain a lot about the musical creation of her role.[88]

The try-out must have contained performance material that was considered ready for the wedding festivities. Monteverdi's complaints about the workload, which he referred to later that year in his 'resignation letter', did not mention having to do the work twice. So, including a new soloist did not mean reworking what he had written before. Both the text we find in the libretto (apart from the lamento), and the completed music must have been performed in the audition.

The close cooperation between its composer and librettist, Ottavio Rinuccini, speaks for itself and is confirmed later in letters. However, there must also have been a cross-fertilisation with some performers, particularly Virginia Andreini. Until today, there is no proof of this mutual influence other than can be distilled from the notated music in its definite printed version of 1623. Wilbourne's presumption that Monteverdi would have left rhythmic freedom for the performer in the concitato passages (O *nembi, o turbi, o venti*) is at odds with Monteverdi's own report of the effort it took him to find a natural way of representing the essence.[89] Such a solution would have been the easy way out.

The theatrical world's influence on the creation of *L'Arianna* was even wider because of Giovanni Battista Andreini's presence at the palace. During the rehearsal period, he most likely contributed to his wife's performance as Arianna. This capocomico and playwright was very actively involved in establishing his profession as an art. Several theoretical writings by his hand made it into publications. The awareness of Battista Andreini about the essence of theatre, art and its relation to the real world was expressed some years later in his publication *Prologo in Dialogo fra Momo e la Verità.*[90] This prologue served as an introduction to a congregation of priests and scholars in Ferrara about presumed vices of comedy. The publication is dated 15 February 1612, but its content had grown in the mind of Andreini during many years of experience.
In the *Prologo,* Battista Andreini gave himself the role of the devil's advocate in the figure of Momo, the god of the critics and creator of quarrels. La Florinda represented the voice of Truth and defended the divine character of comedy by illuminating its noble purpose.
When both protagonists introduce themselves, it is clear how the roles are divided into the one trying to denigrate comedy as a display of obscenities and the other who points

[88] During a conference in June 2017, Paola Besutti shared this idea with me when visiting the Sala degli Specchi in the Palazzo Ducale of Mantua.
[89] Emily Wilbourne, *Seventeenth Century Opera and the Sound of Commedia dell' Arte,* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2016) pp. 67-71. Her hypothesis, based on an article by Irving Godt, that discusses various manuscript versions of the *Lamento d'Arianna*, ultimately would mean that Monteverdi copied his stile concitato from the actress' performance. She does not include the possibility that the manuscripts in London (GB Lb: Add.30491) and Florence (I Fn: B.R.238) could be inaccurate. Notated music is prone to errors, as demonstrated by herself in music example 2.1, where the two famous opening bars are given half of the notes with a wrong pitch due to a *Terzverschreibung*.
[90] Giovanni Battista Andreini, *Prologo in Dialogo fra Momo e la Verità*, (Ferrara, Vittorio Baldini, 1612).

incessantly at its moral impact, despite or rather as a result of its disguises. (see the libretto at page 118).
The central issue in the discussion is the role of laughter, which, according to Momo, can be seen as the cause of vices. Truth sees it as precisely the opposite, a cure for the diseased, mentally and physically.

Momo: *Non saranno mai azioni virtuose quelle nelle quali entrino il riso, le parole oscene, le fallacie e le menzogne.*

Verità: *Se le comedie avessero per fine queste cianze che vo' dite, gran biasimo sarebbe il loro ed ognuno fuggire le dovrebbe; ma ditemi per vostra fede: avete mai veduto che le medicine che si danno per risanare i corpi infermi, per esser composte 'ingredienti amari, si sogliono sparger d'intorno con zucchero o d'altra cosa dolce, acciò che l'infermo, ingannato da quella poca dolcezza, beve ancora l'amaro, nel quale è posta la sua sanità? Così a punto aviene della comedia, la quale è introdotta per medicare gli animi umani languenti di diversi morbi, ed acciò che sia volontieri udita, per entro vi si mesce il riso, acciò che dilettando giovi e ne nasca la liberazione degli animi infetti; la qual cosa, essendo l'anima ferma conservatrice del corpo, giova moltissime volte per consequenza a risanare ancora assai infirmità e debolezze dell'istesso corpo.*[91]

(Momo: Those actions in which laughter, obscene words, deceits and lies enter will never be virtuous.
Verità: If the comedies had as their end these stories that you want to tell, they would be much to be blamed and everyone would have to flee from them; but tell me for your own good faith: have you ever seen that the medicines that are given to heal sick bodies, because they are made up of bitter ingredients, are usually sprinkled around with sugar or other sweet things, so that the sick person, deceived by that little sweetness, still drinks the bitter, in which his health is placed? The same goes for comedy, which is introduced to medicate human souls languishing from various diseases, and so that it may be willingly heard, laughter is mixed in, so that by delighting it may benefit and the liberation of the infected souls may arise; which, since the soul is a firm preserver of the body, is very often of benefit in consequence of healing many infirmities and weaknesses of the body itself.)

Andreini's efforts to achieve recognition of the artistic value of comedy had some antecedents, for example, at the Ferrarese court. The poet and novelist Giovanni Battista Giraldi Cinzio was in the service of Ercole II d'Este and an influential professor of literature at various universities.

In his *Discorso intorno al comporre delle comedie e delle tragedie*, 1543, Giraldi discusses the value of comedy, which addresses the soul instead of just entertaining the common person. On several points, he mentions its similarities with the tragedia, for instance, that laughter and weeping both depend on a genuine and natural cause and not being forced by the performance,

Ora, passando dal lieto a lagrimevole, questa medesima consideratione si dee havere ne i pianti & ne i lamenti della Tragedia; perche anco questi debbono essere non sforzati, ma nati della natura della cosa;[92]

[91] Andreini, *Dialogo,* second page (no page numbers).
[92] Giovan Battista Giraldi Cinzio, *Discorso intorno al comporre delle comedie e delle tragedie*, (Venice,1543), pp. 282-283. https://books.google.nl/books?id=rVxcAAAAcAAJ&hl=nl&pg=PP11#v=onepage&q&f=true
See also Florinda Nardi, 'Trattati, prologhi, lezioni. Teoria e pratica del comico tra Cinque e Seicento,' in *Le Forme del Comico*, ed. Simone Magherini, Anna Bozzoli and Gino Tellini, Florence, Società Editrice Fiorentina, 2019, p. 128.

(In moving from joy to tears, the same thing must be taken into account for the weeping and lamentations of tragedy, for these must not be forced but born of the nature of the thing;)

The 'nature of the case' was the tragic element, which in the 16th century was mostly modelled after antique Greek tragedies. From early childhood, Giovanni Battista Andreini must have been familiar with the tragic language and its stories. The repertoire of the Gelosi was his cultural environment from the very beginning of his conscious life.

His own substantial achievement in the genre was *La Florinda,* a tragedy which he published first in 1604 and performed much to the appreciation of the Accademia degli Spensierati in Florence. Unfortunately, the printer in Florence did such a bad job, with a useless fourth and fifth act, that Andreini burned 500 copies when he found out.[93]

The play was so successful thanks to the performance of Virginia Andreini, and she most probably made use of her talent as a singer to accentuate the more dramatic parts of her role. Whether these would now be marked as *lamenti* is hard to prove without any notated music. However, the performance or 'reading' of the verses must have been close to what we now consider a lamento, using all rhetorical devices. As Emily Wilbourne pointed out, several passages of the *Florinda* libretto could have served as a model for the lamento the actress would sing in *L'Arianna.*[94] The fact that laments existed as popular songs also supports the idea of a more melodic lamento in *La Florinda* rather than just heightened declamation.
A strong argument for the theory that Virginia used her vocal qualities in the tragedies can be found in the favourite position she had with Governor Fuentes in Milan. A letter to Annibale Chieppio on 23 September 1606 informed this secretary of Vincenzo Gonzaga that the Fedeli would stay with Governor Pietro Enriquez D'Azevedo, count of Fuentes because he wanted to hear la Florinda sing and play for him. That year, the play she owed her nickname to was reprinted in Milan, and Fuentes' financial support is apparent in the dedication.[95]

Despite the fact that - as Wilbourne states - there is no direct evidence that laments in tragedies such as *La Florinda* were fully sung, this can hardly be a reason for ignoring all the mentioned arguments that point in the direction of an actress with a mature vocal delivery. She had to *sing* the role at her audition, coping with the high standards that Monteverdi used for his singers in court.
It is a challenging idea that a close cooperation between the three artists, Rinuccini, Monteverdi and Virginia Andreini, resulted in the *Lamento d'Arianna*, as we know it now.

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[93] Emily Wilbourne, "Isabella ringiovinita": Virginia Ramponi Andreini before Arianna," *Ricercare* IX 1-2, 2007, p.57.
[94] Wilbourne, *Seventeenth Century Opera,* (2016), pp. 59-61. See also Tim Carter, "Lamenting Ariadne?" (*Early Music*, 27/3, (Autumn 1999), p. 401., who chose another passage from *La Florinda* as the probably sung lamento in *La Florinda.*
[95] Emily Wilbourne, *Isabella ringiovinita*, (2007), p. 51, suggests very close ties between the Andreini couple and the count. Even their son was named after the count. His love for the qualities of La Florinda meant a real boost in the career of the Fedeli.

Initially, the lead was on the side of the librettist, composing a text that would fit into the entire structure of the opera. The arguments concerning its 'antique Greek' design, which Tim Carter convincingly displayed in his article above, would endorse the insertion of the lamento as a modern and extra feature.[96] In that sense, Dell'Anguillara's translation of Ovid[97] not only served as an example for Rinuccini's verses, but his inclusion of a lamento for Arianna in direct speech -deviating from Ovid's original- found a successor in our librettist as well.
The direct speech of the commedia actress, who trained herself in theatrical techniques such as *all'improvviso* delivery and inserting word repetitions, could have contributed to shaping the lament in such an expressive way. This, however, must have been, above all, a question of her delivery and not her mastery of structuring poetry on a high level. *La Florinda* is basically a stream of consciousness, with a large portion of lamenting passages as the main characteristic. There is little hierarchy in the emotional curves. In that sense it is rather a sea of consciousness than a stream, with many waves.
In what sense Virginia would have influenced both composer and librettist to write the lamento specifically for her rhetorical possibilities can be surmised based on examples from *La Florinda,* such as those given here. The many exclamations, repetitive questions, hyperbolic phrasing, etc., ask for an inventive and sensitive declamation to avoid caricature.

It is certain that Rinuccini made more than superficial use of the rhetoric in Giovanni Andrea Dell'Anguillara's translation of Ovid.[98] In this well-known edition, the part of Arianna had been extended by the translator with a lament in direct speech. According to Gioseppe Orologgi, who added comments in the edition of Dell'Anguillara, the translating poet was competing with Ariosto, whose scene of the lamenting Olimpia[99] is rhetorically very close to Ariadne. Ariosto, however, modelled the lament after Ovid (Ariadne in the *Heroides*) and probably borrowed also from Catullus' *Carmina*.[100]

[96] Carter, *Lamenting Ariadne?* p.399-400. Carter contextualised in this article the sources for Rinuccini's lamento.
[97] The original text can be found in the Latin library online: http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/ovid.html
[98] Giovanni Andrea dell'Anguillara, *Le Metamorfosi di Ovidio*, (Venice, Giunti, 1561.1584) libro Ottavo, pp. 268-311. https://books.google.nl/books?id=gd-tnQtD5H0C&pg=PP9&hl=nl&source=gbs_selected_pages&cad=1#v=onepage&q&f=false
[99] Ludovico Ariosto, *Orlando* furioso, Canto X, 25.
https://it.wikisource.org/wiki/Orlando_furioso_(sec._la_stampa_1532)/Canto_10
[100] The complete Carmina of Gaius Valerius Catullus are published on www.koxkollum.nl.

Catullus,
Carmen LXIV

Ariadna
Namque fluentisono prospectans litore Diae
Thesea cedentem celeri cum classe tuetur
indomitos in corde gerens Ariadna furores;
necdum etiam sese quae visit visere credit,
ut pote fallaci quae tum primum excita somno
desertam in sola miseram se cernat harena.

Ovidius,
Epistulae Heroidum X

Ariadna
"quo fugis?" exclamo "scelerate revertere Theseu!
flecte ratem! numerum non habet illa suum!"
[.....]
flecte ratem, Theseu, versoque relabere vento;
si prius occidero, tu tamen ossa feres.

Ariosto,
Orlando furioso, canto decimo, 25:

Olimpia
e dove non potea la debil voce,

supliva il pianto e 'l batter palma a palma.
— Dove fuggi, crudel, cosí veloce?
Non ha il tuo legno la debita salma.*
Fa che lievi me ancor: poco gli nuoce
che porti il corpo, poi che porta l'alma. —
E con le braccia e con le vesti segno
fa tuttavia, perché ritorni il legno.

** ship*

Dell'Anguillara,
Le metamorfosi di Ovidio, libro Ottavo, 138:

Arianna
Deh fossi sol da me tanto diviso
(dicea) che della poppa della nave
Potessi il pianto udir, vedere il viso,
Quanta doglia appresenta e quanto pave;
Che muteresli il tuo crudele avviso.
E di tornar non ti parebbe grave,
Ma poichè l'occhio tuo non è presente,
Guardami almen con l'occhio della mente.

Catullus,
Carmen LXIV
Ariadna

On Dia's lonely beach, by the rush of the waves,

Ariadne sees there, how Theseus' ship disappears,

and in the stormy fury of her tortured heart

She believes not to see, what yet her eye beholds.

For barely awakened from her sleepy delusion,

she finds herself alone, abandoned on the sand.

Ovidius,
Epistulae Heroidum X

Where are you going? I shouted turn back, wicked
Theseus! Turn your ship! You are without one of your number!
[.....]
last lines
Turn your ship, Theseus, sail back against the wind:
if I die first, you can still bear my bones.

Ariosto,
Orlando furioso, canto decimo, 25:

Olimpia
and where the weak voice could not,
she made up for crying and wringing her hands,
— Where are you fleeing, cruel one, so quickly?
Your ship does not have the due corpse.
Pick me up: it does him little harm
who carries the body, because he bears the soul.
— And with my arms and with my clothes I sign
act at least, so that the ship returns.

Dell'Anguillara,
Le metamorfosi di Ovidio, libro Ottavo, 138:

Arianna
Were I alone so divided from myself
(she said) that from the back of the ship
You could hear the weeping, see the face,
How much grief it shows, and how much pain;
That it might change thy cruel opinion.
And to return would not seem grievous to thee, But since thine eye is not present,
At least look at me with the eye of your mind.

Rinuccini, *L'Arianna,* from the lamento:

Arianna	
O Teseo, o Teseo mio	O Theseus, o my Theseus,
Si che mio ti vo dir, che mio pur sei	For mine, I say, since you are that,
Benche t'involi, ahi crudo, a gl'occhi miei	Although you flee, ah cruel, from mine eyes.
Volgiti Teseo mio,	Turn back, my Theseus,
Volgiti Teseo, o Dio,	Turn back, oh God!
Volgiti indietro a rimirar colei,	Turn back to look again at her
Che lasciato ha per te la patri, e 'l Regno	Who left for you her native land and reign,
E in queste arene ancora	And on these sands,
Cibo di fere dispietate, e crude	Food for pitiless and cruel wild animals,
Lascierà l'ossa ignude	Will leave her bare bones.

When following the genealogical path through the history of this particular lament, we notice the topoi clearly articulated. The swift departure of the fleeing traitor (*quo fugis?*), the abandonment in the sand/shore (*arena*) of a deserted island, the sight of the ship, the focus on the eyes (*occhie*), the approaching death, or as a result, the corpse/ bones. We find passages where Ariadne laments about the threat of wild animals (*cibo di fere*) in other strophes outside of this comparison. As Carter justly addressed, the tigers and lions in earlier versions remained in Rinuccini's story, as well as the abandoned island, despite the apparently rather populated environment of Naxos.[101]

Dell'Anguillara spread the lament over 24 strophes of 8 lines, and all elements that served as ingredients of Rinuccini's version can be traced in this very long monologue. The concise wording of Rinuccini is a remarkable contrast by its direction and clear closures, all in a straightforward way of speaking and restraint in description. The actress's rhetorical habits could have influenced the directness of speech. However, the strong rhythmical structure and the controlled shaping of the longer lines betray close cooperation between an experienced poet and a mature composer. Performance driven by improvisation will not arrive at a result that is so balanced and precise that moving or changing any note or syllable can only damage the entire work of art.

At the première on 28 May 1608, the astonishment and the shock of the new was overwhelming. Several witnesses reported the exceptional scene of the lament, praising both

[101] Carter, *Lamenting Ariadne?* p. 400.

the composer and the prima donna. For everybody, it must have been a revelation to be exposed, on the one hand, to something so familiar as a lamento and, on the other, to be absorbed in a new medium with a complete merge of theatre and music that, in its momentary magic eclipsed all theatrical pomp.

The impressive staging of the opera was described by Secretary Federico Follino,[102] the same who had summoned Monteverdi to return to Mantua to gain eternal fame. He mentions the appropriate and pompous clothing of the actors and the impressive scenery of a high rock and waves that perpetually move in a beautiful way. He then shifts the attention to - what he interestingly calls- the power of the music from the ducal chapelmaster Claudio Monteverdi:

'Ma essendole poi aggiunta la forza della musica dal sig. Claudio Monteverde maestro di capella del duca, uomo di quell valore ch'il mondo sa, e che in quell'attione fece pruova di superar se stesso.'
('But the power of music was then added by Signor Claudio Monteverde, maestro di capella of the duke, a man of such quality as the world knows, and who, by doing so, delivered a proof of surpassing himself.)

He mentions further the instruments positioned behind the scene and who delivered varied accompaniment that changed the mood with various sounds. Follino praises the singers, men and women, who were excellent in their roles and more than admirable. But above all, Arianna's lament moved the entire audience to such a state that everyone 'melted' and all the ladies shed a little tear.

'nel lamento che fece Arianna sovra lo scoglio abbandonata da Teseo, il quale che fu rappresentato con tanto affetto e con sí pietosi modi, che non si trovò ascoltante alcuno che non s'intenerisse, né pur fu una dama che non versasse qualche lagrimetta al suo bel pianto.'
(Ariadne's lament on the rock abandoned by Theseus, which was portrayed with so much affect and in such a pitiful manner, that no one was listening without becoming softened; there was not a lady who did not shed a few tears at her beautiful plaint.)

In the literature, there is most of the time attention to the little tears of all the ladies, but the impact of the lamento on the whole audience is stated much more by the choice of words before. Literally everybody (*alcuno)* in the audience was brought into a state of tender sorrow (*ascoltante alcuno che non s'intenerisse*) where the meaning of the word *intenerirsi* (becoming soft) is not really covered by the English translation of being 'moved'.
This description was published later in the year after the 'sontuose feste' of the wedding were over, and a hard copy proof of the magnificent festivities needed to be distributed to preserve its impact.

[102] Federico Follino, *Compendio delle sontuose feste fatte l'anno MDCVIII nella città di Mantova per le reali nozze del serenissimo prencipe D. Francesco Gonzaga con la serenissima infante Margherita di Savoia.* (Mantua, Aurelio and Lodovico Osanna, 1608), p. 30. Facsimile edited by Claudio Gallico, *Federico Follino, Cronache Mantovane* (1587-1608), (Florence, Olschki, 2004), p. 138. The quotations on this page are from the same page in Follino's book.

But the letter of an ambassador from Ferrara confirms the impact and even stresses the outshining performance of the leading lady, here referred to as a 'comediante', an actress.

We learn that the opera lasted three and a half hours and started late in the evening, because it finished at three in the night. The ambassador also mentioned that the lamento was accompanied by violins and viols.

This remark caused some confusion among musicologists because the lamento is monody with simple basso continuo accompaniment. The most plausible explanation would be that the interrupting choirs in the lamento (which music, unfortunately, did not survive) had these string accompaniments.

'Si fece poi la Commedia in musica che sì cominciò prima dell' avemaria et durò sino alle tre ore di notte, et tutti i recitanti ben vestiti fecero la loro parte molto bene, ma meglio di tutti Arianna comediante: et fu la favola d'Arianna et Theseo, che nel suo lamento in musica accompagnato da viole et violini fece piangere molti la sua disgrazia;'[103]
(Then there was a commedia set to music, which started before midday and lasted until three in the night, and all the well-dressed actors played their part very well, but the best of all was the actress Arianna: and it was the tale of Ariadne and Theseus, whose lament set to music was accompanied by viols and violins that made many weep for her misfortune;)

Francesco Rasi gets a good review for divine singing, but the role of Arianna left everyone behind, and the other soloists (castrati and others) seemed like nothing.

'Vera un Raso, musico, che cantò divinamente; ma passò la parte Arianna, et gl'eunuchi et altri parvero niente.'

In the preface of his 1608 edition of *La Dafne*, Marco da Gagliano underlines Claudio Monteverdi's exceptional position after composing a work that, for the first time, succeeded in reviving the value of music from the antique past in such a way that it visibly moved the whole theatre to tears.

il signor Claudio Monteverdi, musico celebratissimo, capo della musica di S. A., compose l'arie in modo sì esquisito, che si può con verità affermare che si rinnovasse il pregio dell' antica musica, perciò che visibilmente mosse tutto il teatro a lagrime.

All the praise and acclamation right after the performance of *Arianna*, did not include the name of the actress ('commediante'). La Florinda was only named much later when there was reference to her achievement in poetry or correspondence. In Giovanni Battista Marini's *Adone,* published in 1623, La Florinda's Arianna is compared to the emotional impact of the best (female) singer there was, Adriana Basile. The latter was also Monteverdi's favourite.[104]

[103] Fabbri, *Monteverdi,* p.138.
[104] Alessandro Ademollo, *La Bell'Adriana ed altre virtuose del suo tempo alla corte di Mantova*, (Città di Castello, Lapi, 1888), p.155; In his letter of 28 December 1610 to Cardinal Ferdinando Gonzaga he speaks highly of her qualities in singing, playing and speaking, but even tuning her instrument (harp). Stevens, *The Letters,* p.77.

Tal forse intenerir col dolce canto *Suol la bella Adriana i duri affetti,* *E con la voce e con la vista intanto* *Gir per due strade a saettare i petti;*	Thus, perhaps, can soften with sweet song the beautiful Adriana, the hard affects, And with her voice and with her eyes Turn via two ways to pierce the breasts;
E in tal guisa Florinda udisti, O Manto, *Là ne' teatri de' tuoi regi tetti* *D'Arianna spiegar gli aspri martiri* *E trar da mille cor mille sospiri.*	And in such garment did you hear Florinda, O Manto, There in the theatres of thy royal palaces Of Ariadne explain the bitter martyrs And draw from a thousand hearts a thousand sighs.

(*Adone* VII, 88)

It is remarkable that in the comparison, the word *'intenerir'* is used again to describe the effect of the performance. But also, in this compact description, the attention goes to both the voice and the face, so the singing and acting.
The compass of the audience at *Arianna* is again underlined, though some exaggerations go as far as 5000 spectators, which is difficult to imagine at any location in Mantua's Palazzo Ducale.

La Morte d'Orfeo

Instead of the little tears that were shed at the end of Arianna's lament in 1608, here, as *semi-deo ex machina,*[105] Vanità/Orfeo takes over and revenges the *lieto fine* (happy end) that was imposed on the opera in the edition of 1609. The first performed version of 1607 ended with Striggio's verses of liquidation by Bacchanti (furies), shaped as Bacchanale choirs alternating soli. The music of that ending is lost, just like the rest of *Arianna,* and leaves us curious about its character.
Several scholars agree that the later (printed) version would not have been possible in the narrow space of the *Orfeo* première. The reference to a 'narrow stage' (*angusta scena*) in Monteverdi's dedication to Prince Francesco of the 1609 print, made Nino Pirrotta finally exclude the possibility of elaborate machine work for descending and ascending gods.[106]

'Serenissimo signore mio signore et patrone colendissimo, La favola d'Orfeo che già nell'Accademia de gl'Invaghiti sotto gl'auspitij di V. A. fù sopra angusta Scena musicalmente rappresentata, dovendo hora comparire nel gran Teatro dell'universo à far mostra di se à tutti gl'huomini, …'

(Most Serene Lord, my lord and most esteemed patron, The fable of Orpheus which was already performed in a narrow stage musically in the Accademia de gl'Invaghiti under the auspition of Your Excellency, having now to appear in the great Theater of the universe to show itself to all men, ...)

[105] In contrast to the *Deus ex machina* like Apollo in the revised version of *l'Orfeo* or Bacco in the original libretto of *Arianna.*
[106] Quoted by Barbara Russano Hanning, "The Ending of *L'Orfeo*: Father, Son, and Rinuccini" in *Journal of the Seventeenth Century Music*, 9, 2003, no.1, note 9. <https://sscm-jscm.org/v9/no1/hanning.html#n9>

In *La Tragedia di Claudio M,* the initial finale of *Orfeo* is crossfaded with the original ending of Arianna, where Bacchus arrives as the saving god, and the original ending of *Orfeo,* the death of Orpheus, lynched by the furies (Baccanti).
Orpheus' lamenting monologue at the beginning of *Orfeo,* Act V, which is only answered by an echo (*Eco*), demonstrates his narcissistic and projected love for an idealised Eurydice. It ends with his rage and rejection of all other women ("*Or l'altre donne son superbe e perfide…*").
This expression of deep frustration in my libretto might have been triggered by Arianna's overwhelming testimony of faith, (too much) love and loyalty in a woman. But simultaneously, Orpheus identifies with this overload of love and condemns himself for it. So, the final motto that concludes the *Lamento d'Arianna,* "*così va chi tropp'ama, e troppo crede"* (Thus goes, who loves and trusts too much), now points in two directions. For Arianna, it was her submission to the love for the one who betrayed her. For Orpheus, it meant that fate deprived him of his muse and faith.

There is a third element mixed into this apotheosis, which is also described in detail by Federico Follino in his report of the sumptuous feasts.[107] One week after the performance of *Arianna*, on 4 June 1608, the other spectacular piece of music theatre written by the golden team of the Mantuan nuptials, Rinuccini/Monteverdi, *Il Ballo dell'Ingrate,* was presented. For the third time during the festivities, Virginia Andreini was given a prima donna role, and again, she sang a—this time short—lamento as one of the spirits (*Ahi, troppo è duro*). When Pluto, with a frightening voice ("*con voce d'horrore e di spavento"),* has ordered the 'sinful' women to descend to their dark cells, one of them (Andreini) stays behind on the stage (*una delle Ingrate ch'era rimasta sù 'l palco*) to sing, while the other dance their sorrowful dance. In the refrain of this aria, these ghosts of ungrateful women are ordered to learn to have mercy on their rejected lovers. (*Apprendete pietà, Donne, e Donzelle*).
Again, Follino reports the emotions of the ladies, almost as copy-pasting his report of the effect of Arianna's lament.

'[…] una delle Ingrate (Andreini) *proruppe in così lagrimosi accenti accompagnati da sospiri , e da singulti, che non fue cuor di Donna così fiero in quel Teatro, che non versasse per gli occhi qualche lagrima pietosa.'*

([…] one of the ungrateful women burst out in such tearful accents accompanied by sighs and sobs that there was not a woman's heart so proud in that theatre that she did not shed a few piteous tears from her eyes.)[108]

Because Orpheus has hijacked the final words of Arianna's lament and uttered his frustration about women, *Ragione*, alias Rinuccini, grasps the moment to whisper the advice he created for the *Ballo delle Ingrate,* in Orpheus's ear. With this move, Orpheus evokes male suppression, which is not entirely his goal, and he tries to escape. *Truth* interferes with a warning to the women, she has taken over from a fury in *Orfeo's* Act V. (*Fuggito è pur*). Monteverdi does the same (*Non fuggirà*) and uses the well-known ending of the Orpheus

[107] Follino, *Le Sontuose Feste,* p.133, facsimile p.243.
[108] *Idem.*

myth to speak a verdict (*Sovra nocente capo ira celeste*) over his own creation.
The response is female fury, turning all women in the Bacchanti of the original finale of *Orfeo*, as Alessandro Striggio had conceived it, with the help of Dell'Aguillara's translation of Ovid.[109]

Le donne incrudelite, e furibonde, *Mandaro il corpo del Poeta in quarti,* *Sparser le varie membra in varie parti.* *Gittar nel'Hebro il capo con la Lira,* *Che tanto esser solean d'accordo insieme.* *Or, mentre il mesto fiume al mar gli tira,* *Ogni corda pian pian mormora, e geme.* *La lingua ancor senz'anima rispira,* *Ed accoppia col suon le voci estreme;* *Col flebil della lingua e della corda* *Il pianger delle ripe ancor s'accorda.*	The women are incensed and furious, They split the body of the Poet into quarters, They scattered the various limbs in several parts. Threw into the Hebrus the head with the Lyre, That so much they were in accordance together. Now, as the sad river to the sea draws him, Each string slowly murmurs and groans. The tongue, still without a soul, breathes again, And couples with the sound, the extreme voices; With the feebleness of tongue and string The weeping of the banks is still in harmony.

With Monteverdi's command to silence the voice of Orpheus, he initiated the disappearance of the half-god and his own evocation of the mythological perfection in music.
The phrase is an allusion to the ending of Richard Strauss's *Salomé*: "Man töte dieses Weib."
There are two reasons for this ending. The first is Monteverdi's symbolic act of leaving his *Orfeo* behind; now, he has found his new *via naturale all imitatione* (see above). A print of the score by the Venetian publisher Ricciardo Amadino in 1609 (see above) and a reprint in 1615 did not change the fact that no new performance of the opera followed its appearance in 1607. In contrast with *Arianna*, which had an attempted reprise in 1620, but succeeded in being performed again in 1640 in Venice.
The other reason for connecting the death of Orpheus with *Salomé*, is the rebirth of Monteverdi's *Orfeo* in the first decade of the 20th century, with Romain Rolland as a *trait-d'union* between both works. The French writer and musicologist was a very important and active force behind the scene that stimulated the Paris premières of these operas, more or less simultaneously.[110] What connects them is the re-appreciation of an opera style that had the text as a central and generating element in the shaping of music theatre.

The textless finale of *La Tragedia di Claudio M* is based on the information we have about the insertion of divine appearances at the end of *Arianna.* According to Pirrotta,[111] who mentions

[109] Giovanni Andrea Dell'Aguillara, *Le Metamorfosi di Ovidio,* (Venice, Giunti, 1561/1584) Libro Undecimo pp. 392-393.
[110] For more information, see Johannes Boer, "Ignition-year 1900, Claudio Monteverdi between revival and decadentismo." in: (Fabris, Dinko and Anna Tedesco, eds), *La riscoperta di Monteverdi nel XX secolo. Musica antica, recezione e pratica della messinscena,* proceedings of the Seminar at Fondazione Levi, Venice, 22-24 settembre 2022, special issue of *Musica e storia*, n.s., I, 2024 (in preparation).
[111] Nino Pirrottta, *Le Due Orfei*, *da Poliziano a Monteverdi,* (Turin, Einaudi, 1975) pp. 330-331, n. 103.

this intervention of the gods, the actions were added to align the end with classical drama. This would also have been the wish of Duchess Eleonora, who mentioned a more animated representation of the story.
Venus had to rise up from the sea (*Vener uscendo dal mare*), a description that calls Botticelli to mind. Giove was blessing the connection of Bacchus and Ariadne from heaven, the Palazzo Ducale has a good example of a theatrical depiction on a vault. And finally, the only words sung by Bacchus are in the role of the groom, promising Ariadne to shine among the brightest stars.

In this finale, the allegories take the place of the gods and submit their power to the union of Monteverdi and Verità while he offers his head to the womb of Truth like a new matrimonial vow.

Conclusion

In the light of the present study Claudio Monteverdi's statement in his letter to the studious readers of 1605 that he did not compose his work haphazardly is most revealing. The fact that he thought he needed to make this statement implies that there was more than just a suggestion of the contrary. The knowledge and craftsmanship of the master were doubted, but he could not explain his truth. Monteverdi's belief is best formulated by this quote from the American philosopher Caputo: 'Knowledge is never more itself than when it stands exposed to the unknown.'[1] The complexity and the ineffability of what Monteverdi tacitly knew was never to be published in a book, as he had unknowingly promised in vain.
The ambition of this research project was to illuminate that this was actually the truth he was looking for, the proof that could only be told through his music.

Staging Monteverdi's defence against Artusi's attacks worked out in our opera as the vocalisation of words that, when only read on paper, remain just a part of reasoning and argumentation. Now embedded in the emulated environment of their own times, the absurdity and exaggeration of the chosen words are presented as embodied emotions, all with their own sonic conviction and, through its rhetoric, on the verge of being music in itself. The drama that has been studied by a long chain of musicological readers and writers remained limited to a primarily intellectual rendering of the conflict. At the instigation of the composer himself (hinting to '*litigare*'), the passionate element in the labyrinth as a symbol of quarrel allowed us to experience a surreal amplification of the commitment of both parties.
By searching for quotes that would fit in the dynamic of the heated debate, I made contact with this persistence, thus reinforcing the virtual probe of my research project, the Polanyian interpretative framework. Unlike Monteverdi's monologue in the first scene, next to the bier where his wife was laid out, the dialogue in the labyrinth with *Ragione* finally led to creation. But what drew him really out of his anger and frustration? The distant call from Martinelli with her *Lamento della Ninfa* in an adaptation by our composers, suddenly reminds us that music is for Monteverdi the only way out. The girl knows to hush the enraged composer with his own creation in a rejuvenated shape, for him, as well as for us who know this famous lament so well. Here, the probe starts doing its work because we dwell in the connection between the time of origin and the present, not knowing where this will lead.

Ultimately, this led to the young singer's death at the end of Act II. The historical layer is prominent here because it touches on the factual truth. The dialogue with Duchess Eleonora enhances the drama through her denial of the situation and builds up to a highly emotional farewell of the young star. Almost all the text of this scene consists of quotes from letters about Caterina Martinelli's dramatic situation. Those letters make the realism of this story

[1] John D. Caputo, *Truth, Philosophy in Transit,* (London, Penguin Books, 2013), p. 93.

palpable because they had the function, which nowadays is performed by the new media. A direct line with things happening in court.
In contrast with this realism is the mythological layer represented by the words of Caterina. On her deathbed, she quotes a text from *Arianna*, which is the future she will not live in. And 'I am going in peace', the final words of *Clorinda*,[2] allude to the drama Monteverdi would write much later. Despite these anachronisms, the quotes are an organic part of the whole. For most of the opera narrative, I pursued historical fidelity to guarantee a backbone, a rigorous structure of this research component in the entire project. This historical rigour is, so to speak, the firmness of the probe stick, while other layers are needed for creative flexibility. Timeless aspects of mythology, however, such as those represented in all the musical works generated by the stories of *Orfeo, Dafne* and *Arianna*, tolerate more versatile complexities. In the theatrical meta-realities of the myths, a parallel story can be told in more depth. Martinelli's shining appearance in her performance of *Dafne* ended in a metamorphosis into a laurel tree. This symbolic death was followed by her actual death[3], and she left an impression of folly, underlined by the superficiality of Gagliano's music. Her last words are her most touching contribution to the opera, subtlely set to new music by allowing the utmost piano level of parlar cantando. Monteverdi's madrigal that follows her passing away, *Darà la notte il sol lume alla terra*, was written as in memoriam Caterina Martinelli. In this setting, it has an unprecedented impact. The tacit voice of the madrigal's compositorial beauty is almost indifferent to the vehicle of the words, though they are fully integrated. Even the deconstructing interruptions by the newly composed formel are not affecting the essence of Monteverdi's music.
On the contrary, just like the *Lamento della Ninfa*, the madrigal reveals in this way something of that essence, which usually remains hidden in the subconscious domain. A theatrical layer provided by the actors accentuates its dramatic power in a most natural connection. Though we touched the essence of Monteverdi's music with our probe, we can and should not lay it bare by analysis. The original expression should remain embedded in its totality, and explication would only cause impoverishment by narrowing the magic down to the analysable. Artistic truth will only reveal itself in the heat of the theatrical momentum.

The question arises: is this revelation not always happening when we perform Monteverdi's music in the most dedicated and committed way, without an articulated research goal? What is the difference between being touched by the madrigal in this way or a regular but excellent concert performance?
My answer would be that, although every artistic research project is different, they nevertheless all have in common that there is a fundamental resemblance by indwelling in the studied subject, which demands a special kind of commitment. This commitment demands a frank attitude towards the unknown, which is not welcome in the regular

[2] From the *Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda,* performed during carnival in Venice, 1624.
[3] The death of Caterina echoes Monteverdi's wife Claudia at the beginning of the opera. Both mirror a mythological precursor, the first death Eurydice and the second Dafne.

performance practice. In research, we submit to unexpected manifestations, which are intangible. This is how I understand Giulio Cesare's words in the *Dichiaratione*, which, to my feeling, must have been an input of his brother: 'True virtue requires the whole human being.'[4]
In artistic research, the unknown is as welcome as the known because it includes the potential of new knowledge. The advantage of my project is that I could give space to this potential knowledge and was sometimes rewarded by discoveries.
For instance, in all the relevant literature I consulted, Giovanni Battista Andreini's Prologue in a dialogue between Momo and Verità was not mentioned. However, after attributing allegorical names to all five characters for the consistency of the libretto, this play confirmed my choice for La Florinda as Truth.

One of the several subquestions that accompanied my research was the importance of Commedia dell'arte in the development of opera. I could not have found out what this role contained without making their practice part of the opera. Even more than singers and instrumentalists, these actors embodied the know-how of their tradition. By using their own traditionally fabricated masks, an extra component of theatrical presence elevated their supporting energy and meaning. This is very convincingly demonstrated in the scene of the dying Martinelli, as well as in the preceding burlesque act of Zanni and Arlecchino.
All participants experienced the intensity of these scenes and their complete merging into the whole discourse of the opera as heuristic moments of recognition.

Finally, the question is whether new knowledge about Monteverdi himself emerged from this large experiment to represent him on the stage. The answer to this question is only complete in the performance of his *Tragedia* and vanishes as soon as the masks go off.
The comparison of the portrait and its copy may function as a lead. I see the copy as a mask that urgently must be removed to reveal the face it has been hiding for too long.
During the whole research, my conviction increased that Monteverdi's many statements about being a practitioner and his references to understanding things mainly by their practical evidence point to him as an active musician, in addition to his status as a composer. Particularly, his command of the viola bastarda deserves investigation, preferably in a practical way and in connection with an improvised counterpoint. The prominent position of a viola bastarda on the cover of Monteverdi's obituary *Fiori Poetici*, is for some reason overlooked by musicologists. The reference to him as the Orpheus of his time by his unequalled playing on the viol is reduced to an ornamental anecdote. If we want to reconnect to his vanished knowledge, this might be the next adventurous challenge.

[4] 'la verità della virtù vol tutto l'homo', See Chapter 2, *Dichiaratione* p. 76.

Summary

The presented dissertation is a report on a multilayered project that zooms in on a significant year in the history of Western music, the birth of opera as a modern genre, with Claudio Monteverdi in its centre.

We could categorise it as an inquiry into the narrative of Monteverdi, but I suggest labelling it as dramatised artistic research. It is based on Michael Polanyi's epistemological theory of tacit (implicit) knowing and simultaneously addresses that kind of knowledge. The latter, for instance, manifests itself in compiling the libretto, composing new music for the production and the creative work of the Commedia dell'arte actors, as can be seen in rehearsal videos.

La Tragedia di Claudio M is an experiment to embody historical highlights in the first development of opera as a genre. In Polanyian terms the project is an interpretative framework, functioning as an artistic probe to reach over four centuries in time. It stages Monteverdi, his patron, librettist, and his singers using the verbatim theatre technique based on letters, treatises, and other documents.

The story spans approximately one year, from the aftermath of the premiere of *Orfeo* in the summer of 1607 to the performance of *Arianna* in the spring of 1608. The libretto has four layers: historical, mythological, allegorical, and dramatic. All these are interwoven during the action, which is mainly dictated by the sequence of events during the year at stake. The depth of the four layers and their interconnection are commented on and documented in several subsidiary chapters of the dissertation.

A special position is selected in the opera for the controversy between the rational defence of traditional composition models by theorist Giovanni Maria Artusi and the intuition-based innovations of theatrical music which marked the style of the practitioner Monteverdi. In the chapter 'The Narrative' it is made clear what role Monteverdi played in the narrative that was created about him and which lasted for centuries to come, even after his music had surfaced and started a new life from 1900 onwards. It is no coincidence that the core of the conflict is situated in the labyrinth of the Minotaur. It was the 'year of truth', a year of transformation for Monteverdi, which he confirmed later by stating that it almost took his life, but also that he found '*la via naturale alla imitatione*' by composing the *Lamento d'Arianna*. Though he promised to explain himself and his style in a treatise about the *Seconda Prattica*, revealing what had been a tacit process of creation, the book was never written, and the ineffable kept its proper position.

The making of *La Tragedia di Claudio M* was a collective process. In this process, the role of text (oratione in Monteverdi's terms) mirrored, where possible, the original ideology. This meant a challenge for the team of five composers and just as much for the five singers to allow the text its generating potential. The influence of seven Italian actors and their embodied knowledge enabled the project to function as an indwelling experience from the first rehearsal to the last performance. Polanyi's conditions, such as passion, commitment, belief and truth to reach new knowledge by immersion, have been found on all levels, resulting in a comprehensive coherence of details. The deliberate choice of small-scale chamber opera staging enhanced the immediacy and intimacy that were sought to accentuate embodiment literarily. Consequently, the audience's proximity did not require extra communicative projection, but on the contrary, invited participation on a tacit level.

Samenvatting

Het gepresenteerde proefschrift is een verslag van een meerlagig project dat inzoomt op een belangrijk jaar in de geschiedenis van de westerse muziek, de geboorte van de opera als modern genre, met Claudio Monteverdi in het middelpunt.
We zouden het kunnen bestempelen als een narratief onderzoek naar Monteverdi's rol hierin, maar ik stel voor om het te karakteriseren als gedramatiseerd artistiek onderzoek. Dit onderzoek is gebaseerd op Michael Polanyi's epistemologische theorie van '*tacit knowledge*' en richt zich tegelijkertijd op diverse manifestaties daarvan. Dit laatste bijvoorbeeld in samenhang met het schrijven van het libretto, het componeren van nieuwe muziek voor de productie en het creatieve werk van de Commedia dell'arte acteurs, zoals te zien is op repetitievideo's.
La Tragedia di Claudio M is een experiment om historische hoogtepunten in de eerste ontwikkeling van het genre opera te belichamen. In Polanyiaanse termen is het project een 'interpretatief kader' dat functioneert als een artistieke peilstok die vier eeuwen in de tijd reikt. Het presenteert Monteverdi, zijn mecenas, librettist en zijn zangers op met behulp van een variant op de verbatim theatertechniek op basis van brieven, verhandelingen en andere documenten. Het verhaal beslaat ongeveer een jaar, van de nasleep van de première van Orfeo in de zomer van 1607 tot de opvoering van Arianna in de lente van 1608. Het libretto heeft vier lagen: historisch, mythologisch, allegorisch en dramatisch. Al deze lagen zijn met elkaar verweven tijdens de handeling, die voornamelijk wordt gedicteerd door de opeenvolging van historische gebeurtenissen in het betreffende jaar. De diepte van de vier lagen en hun onderlinge verbinding worden becommentarieerd en gedocumenteerd in verschillende hoofdstukken van het proefschrift.In de opera wordt een speciale positie gekozen voor de controverse tussen de rationele verdediging van traditionele compositiemodellen door de theoreticus Giovanni Maria Artusi en de op intuïtie gebaseerde innovaties van theatrale muziek die de stijl van de practicus Monteverdi kenmerkten. In het hoofdstuk *The Narrative* wordt duidelijk gemaakt welke rol Monteverdi speelde in het verhaal dat over hem werd gecreëerd en dat nog eeuwenlang standhield, zelfs nadat zijn muziek was opgedoken en vanaf 1900 een nieuw leven was begonnen. Het is geen toeval dat de kern van het conflict gesitueerd is in het labyrint van de Minotaurus. Het was het 'jaar van de waarheid', een jaar van transformatie voor Monteverdi, wat hij later bevestigde door te verklaren dat het bijna zijn leven kostte, maar ook dat hij '*de natuurlijke weg der imitatie*' had gevonden door het componeren van het *Lamento d'Arianna*. Hoewel hij beloofde zichzelf en zijn stijl uit te leggen in een verhandeling over de *Seconda Prattica,* om zo te onthullen wat een stilzwijgend scheppingsproces was geweest, werd het boek nooit geschreven en behield het onuitsprekelijke zijn eigen plaats.
Het maken van *La Tragedia di Claudio M* was een collectief proces. In dit proces weerspiegelde de rol van de tekst (*oratione* in Monteverdi's termen) waar mogelijk de oorspronkelijke ideologie. Dit betekende een uitdaging voor het team van vijf componisten en evenzeer voor de vijf zangers om de tekst zijn genererende potentieel te gunnen. Dankzij de invloed van zeven Italiaanse acteurs en hun fysieke acteerkunst kon het project vanaf de eerste repetitie tot de laatste uitvoering functioneren als een gezamenlijke ervaring van onderdompeling. Polanyi's voorwaarden zoals passie, toewijding, geloof en waarheid om door 'verwijlend leren' tot nieuwe kennis te komen, werden op alle niveaus gevonden, wat resulteerde in een alomvattende samenhang van details. De bewuste keuze voor een kleinschalige kameropera-enscenering versterkte de nagestreefde directheid en intimiteit om de belichaming literair te accentueren. De nabijheid van het publiek vereiste dus geen extra communicatieve projectie, maar nodigde juist uit tot deelname op een stilzwijgend niveau.

APPENDIX I

Production

Cast

Monteverdi **- Davide Dolores**

Francesca Biliotti
Verità (Truth) / Euridice / Virginia Andreini, la Florinda

Raffaele Giordani
Vanità (Vanity) / Orpheus/Theseus/ Apollo/ Francesco Rasi

Rosalyn Stürzer
Piacere (Pleasure) / Amor/ Dafne/ Caterina Martinelli

João Paixão
Ragione (Reason) / Daedalus/Artusi/Rinuccini

Franciska Dukel
Potere (Power) / hertogin Eleonora de Medici

I Comici Fedeli

Agata Garbuio	Davide Falbo
Arianna Addonizio	Marlon Zighi Orbi
Meredith Airò Farulla	Claudio Colombo

Musicians

Rebecca Huber	violino
Pietro Battistoni	violino
Emma Williams	violino
Johannes Boer	viola da gamba
Israel Castillo	viola da gamba
Yussif Barakat	violone
Andrea Gavagnin	cornetto
Matthijs van der Moolen	trombone
Mattia Petrogalli	bastrombone
Regina Albanez	teorbo/ guitarra
Edoardo Vaolorz	cembalo/ organo

Concept & libretto
Johannes Boer

Stage director
Nynke van den Bergh

Composers
Nikos Kokolakis
Cornelis de Bondt
Ivan Renqvist Babinchak
Cristiano Melli
Renan Zelada

Stage and costume design
Manuel Wittaszcheck

Stage paintings
Saskia de Korte
Sarah Boer

Light
Arjen Bijtelaar

Costumes
Geertje Geurtsen
Heleen de Bruine
Nicole Piccino

subtitles
Wim Goris

Production leader
Anja van den Bos

Production assistence
Sarah Boer

Stage manager
Pomme van Vught

Performances

Theater de Nieuwe Regentes, The Hague – 15,17,19,20, June 2018

AINSI (Theater aan 't Vrijthof), Maastricht – 21,22 June 2018

CPH Opera Festival, Copenhagen, KoncertKirken Blågårds Plads – 2 august 2018

APPENDIX II

Instructions to the score by the composers collective of Cornelis De Bondt.

The score is available in the Research Catalogue version of the dissertation:

https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/1688046/1905478#tool-2965220

INSTRUCTIONS

The early music quotations, the two terzetti in Act II Scene 1, all the characters under the archetype of Vanità and the M-Layer (Monteverdi-Layer) and F-Layer (Fate-Layer) apparitions should be considered inside the common use of music writing. Therefore, the following rules apply only to the non-standard notation sections.

Rehearsal marks: the numbers inside squares relate to subdivisions of the libretto.

An important remark is that, in the composition/performance of this Opera, a new practice must be created in which the musicians take a much more active position to the written code (score). The musicians and singers aren't servants of the composer as traditionally trained in music schools, following classical and romantic practice. Instead, as probably was the case in Monteverdi's time, every artist involved contributes on stage, during rehearsals, bringing their own ideas and adapting their own talents to the final work.

FOR THE ORCHESTRA:

- Durations

Three durations are given: white notes (without stem), black notes (without stem) and 16th notes. They relate to each other as long duration, short duration and "fast(er)" notes, respectively. In a similar fashion, rests are written as whole note rests, half note and quarter note rests, and 8th note rests, which correspond to long, half-long, short and even shorter silences (primarly coordinated with the vocal parts).

- Bar-lines

Bar-lines work only as visual adds, delimitating shorter divisions of the music. Double bar-lines show the changes between standard notation and the one developed for this Opera. For accentuation and vertical coordination, check the following topics.

- Text

The written texts under the instrumental parts ARE NOT meant to be spoken or sung. They indicate strong "beats" (according to the accented syllable of the word) and inspire a general mood for the realization of the score.

- Tempo and relation to the voices

The instrumentalists must always follow the tempo given by the singers, coordinate their entrances, and play simultaneously with them.

- Agogics

The use of staccato, marcato, ties and slurs follow common practice.

- Dynamics

The use of dynamics is only a general instruction, as found in the notation of the period in which this Opera takes place. Where no dynamics are given, it must be adjusted to the general mood of the scene and the voice projection of the singers.

- Vertical coordination

Vertically aligned notes are meant to be played simultaneously, as in common practice. It must always be taken in consideration the vertical relation to the singers (and the sung words).

- Unusual sounds

In Act I, scene 2 and Act II, scene 1, the orchestra is requested to play a “weird”, unusual sound with a somewhat funny flavour. It is noted as a “clumsy” cluster.

- Transposition

Guitar and double bass are written and transposed as in common practice.

FOR THE SINGERS

- Durations

Three durations are given: white notes (without stem), black notes (without stem) and 16th notes. They relate to each other as long duration, short duration and “fast(er)” notes, respectively. In a similar fashion, rests are written as whole note rests, half note and quarter note rests, and 8th note rests, which correspond to long, half-long, short and even shorter silences. However, the shape of the note-heads change the sound production, as explained in the next topics.

- Staves

Three kinds of staves are used: common 5 lines, 3 lines and 1 line. Where 5 lines are given, common practice is used. The use of 3 lines denotes a somewhat melodic direction with flexible pitches; the use of 1 line is even closer to spoken language. It must always be directed by the text and the emotions that the singer wants to express.

Whenever a sequence is given in the same line, it shouldn’t be monotonous unless that is what the artist wants to convey. When the pitches in the part change, either up or down, they must be guided by which emotion is appropriate in the moment and fitting in accordance with the instrumental accompaniment. The written part is a starting point; therefore, notes on the same line can fluctuate slightly, and notes on different vertical positions have more difference in pitch. All is relative, related to what is expressed and what fits the language.

- Note-heads and “parlar cantando”

When reading the parts, it must be taken in account the idea of “parlar cantando”. This means that normal note-heads are supposed to be produced closer to common practice “singing”, and X-shaped note-heads are closer to spoken language, even more than in *Sprechgesang*.

“Parlar cantando” is grounded in declamation, but by the use of speech-like vocal inflections, it has an extra micro-melodic expressive dimension. The role of consonances is also more prominent and varied than in regular singing. One of the main characteristics is that pitches in parlar cantando are rather approximate, whereas in singing, they are precise.

Technically, it is possible to alternate with full singing vocality but not simultaneously doing both.

- Bar-lines

Bar-lines work only as visual adds, delimitating shorter divisions of the music. Accentuations follow the Italian language. Double bar-lines shows the changes between standard notation and the one developed for this Opera. For vertical coordination, check the following topics.

- Tempo

Tempo should be understood according to the character of the text and the action happening in the moment. It must, however, always have a “recitativo” quality, which means that it follows the parameters of spoken language. The characters under the archetype of Piacere have more freedom in this aspect.

- Agogics

The singers’ parts have slurs, staccati and mordent signs. The slurs and staccato follow common practice; mordent should be understood as small ornamentations of the given note, at the artist's discretion. Diagonal lines are also used to indicate glissandi between notes, with the duration of the note where it started. Portamenti should be used whenever it would naturally happen in spoken language.

- Grace notes

Grace notes runs appear in Piacere part as indications of small cadenzas.

- Dynamics

Dynamics should be used as a result of the general mood of a given scene and in relation to the voice production and orchestration of the given part.

- Vertical coordination

The instruments will always coordinate with the singers, and never the other way around. This coordination is made especially by the vertical alignment, as in common practice, and by the words of the characters at every given moment.

FOR THE COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE

- Body percussion

In several places throughout the Opera, the artists of the Commedia dell'Arte are asked to use body percussion effects. These interventions are notated roughly as common music practice, with rhythms and durations. Sounds can be high, medium or low, depending on their relation to the given line on the score.

It is important to consider that their playfulness should be brought into the performance by creating sound games, improvisation, hoquetus-like structures, and any other ideas that fit the composer's and stage director's vision.

TIME AND PLACE: 1607-08, Cremona and Mantua, Italy.

DRAMATIC PERSONAE

CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI – actor
PIACERE (Caterina Martinelli, Amor, Dafne) - soprano
POTERE (Eleonora de Medici) – mezzo soprano
VERITÀ (Eurydice, Virginia Ramponi Andreini, Arianna) – mezzo soprano
VANITÀ (Francesco Rasi, Orfeo, Apollo and Teseo) - tenor
RAGIONE (Daedalus, Giovanni Maria Artusi, Ottavio Rinuccini) - bariton

COMICI FEDELI – a group of actors/ choir

ORCHESTRA

2 Violins
2 Viola da Gamba
1 Violone
1 Theorbo / Guitar
1 Cornetto
2 Trombones
1 Harpsichord/ Organ

The Research Catalogue

The Research Catalogue version of the dissertation can be reached via:
https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/1688046/2953358

Due to the quantity of data, the audiovisual documentation and hyperlinks to relevant information available on the Internet could only be presented online.
This includes the video illustrations of the scenes of the opera connected to the libretto and its English translation.

A video registration of the complete opera made by Daniël Brüggen [MusicFrame films] is available on VIMEO:
https://vimeo.com/411418830

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Curriculum Vitae

Johannes Boer

Johannes Boer, musicologist (Utrecht University) and viola da gamba player (Royal Conservatoire The Hague with Wieland Kuijken), dedicated much of his career to combining both disciplines.
He performed solos in Bach's Passions with the Rotterdam Philharmonic and the Concertgebouw Chamber Orchestra. As an ensemble player, he co-created The Royal Consort (Globe Records) for viol consort repertoire and founded 't Uitnement Kabinet (NMClassics) to perform Schenck and other Dutch music from the Golden Age. He regularly performed Renaissance viol with the Huelgas Ensemble (Sony Classical). He participated in CD projects of Camerata Trajectina and Cantus Cölln (Harmonia Mundi, *Altbachisches Archiv, Schütz Symphoniae Sacrae*).
In 2002, he became the executive leader of the Dutch Foundation for Historical Performance Practice (STIMU) and organised symposia at the Utrecht Early Music Festival.
These meetings brought estimated musicologists and musicians together.
For a decade, Johannes Boer was connected to the Utrecht Festival organisation as a member of the editorial board of *Tijdschrift Oude Muziek.* He contributed with articles, interviews, CD- and book reviews.
Several STIMU symposium proceedings saw the light of day with him as a (co-) editor. (*Musique de Joye, A viola da gamba Miscellany, Festschrift Alfred Lessing, Passaggio in Italia). Passaggio in Italia* (by Dinko Fabris and Margaret Murata) was a successful Stimu symposium and festival in August 2006. Many Monteverdi scholars presented lectures on topics that would later form the foundation of Johannes's doctoral studies.

In the same year, Johannes was asked to be head of the Early Music department of the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague. He contributed to a fundamental development in the curriculum (expansion of research in the master studies), which resulted in a substantial change in the school's profile on an international level. In his time as Head of the Department, many high-profile projects took place, such as the Handel Year celebration in 2009 in The Hague, the Monteverdi Vespers tour in 2010, and a pathbreaking cooperation with the Orchestra of the 18th Century in 2014, including Frans Brüggen's last concert.
Johannes Boer's doctoral trajectory in the docARTES program started in 2014, and as a member of the ACPA of Leiden University, he participated in many events organised by this institution.
In 2018, his doctoral research project production of *La Tragedia di Claudio M.* was performed in Theater de Regentes Den Haag, followed by AINSI in Maastricht and finally in the Opera Festival of Copenhagen. Johannes Boer participated in many conferences of artistic research and higher education in the arts (The Hague, Amsterdam, Ghent, Wroclaw, Oporto, Malmø, Cremona) to share his research findings.
Since 2020, Johannes has been active as a senior teacher-researcher at the Royal Conservatoire, mainly working as part of the school's lectorate on master and undergraduate research training and supervising students in group and individual sessions.