How to Impress the Public:

*Farinelli's Venetian Debut
in 1728-1729*

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ABSTRACT

Farinelli came to Venice only when his career was already well advanced. In 1728/29 he performed there in two operas, *Catone in Utica* by Leonardo Leo and *Semiramide riconosciuta* by Nicola Porpora. These operas needed to become a financial success because of the high remuneration the star singer earned. The composition and adaptation of the operas to the stage uncover the strategies by the impresarios of the Teatro San Giovanni Grisostomo, the Grimani brothers, and by Farinelli himself to secure income and renown. *Catone in Utica* underwent a highly unusual procedure at its very premiere because the opera was “impasticciata”, i.e. merged with pre-existing or newly-composed music by other composers. The substitutions reveal Farinelli's aim to stun the audience in his very first aria on stage. His brother's (Riccardo Broschi's) “Mi lusinga il cor d'affetto” Farinelli had sang earlier in 1728 presents his entire vocal profile in a single aria. In subsequent arias, Farinelli adds some features not present in this aria or concretizes several aspects of it. In the second opera, Porpora's *Semiramide riconosciuta*, Farinelli concentrates on another feature of his vocal style: small, fast, quasi-improvisational motives. Although they are also found in operas by other composers and were also sung by other singers, *Semiramide riconosciuta* is a special case because of their high frequency in Farinelli's role. All in all, the two operas of his first appearance in Venice seem to follow the intention to present his entire vocal spectrum to the audience.

Key words: Carlo Broschi Farinelli, vocal profile, 18th-century opera, substitution practice, Venice

Is it well-known that after his first appearance in 1720, Farinelli made a brilliant career¹ and became the emblem of a castrato singer for centuries to come. First in Italy and then in other countries, he conquered the public with displays of his spectacular vocal skills. He made his debut in Naples in the sacred (Cappella musicale del Tesoro di San Gennaro) and secular spheres (serenatas, operas) and was engaged in the not very distant Rome for female roles in operas from 1722. In Venice, he appeared relatively late, at the very end of 1728 (on 26 December), in the most prestigious theatre of the city, the Teatro San Giovanni Grisostomo. He appeared in the city on the lagoon only after having performed in minor operatic centres such as Parma (1726, spring 1728), Milan (1726), Bologna (1727), Florence (summer 1728), and Munich (October 1728)².

In Venice, expectations of the audience and owners of the San Giovanni Grisostomo theatre, the Grimani brothers, ran very high. As Abbate Antonio Conti informs, Farinelli's contract earned him a huge sum of money. It is logical to assume that pressure on the Grimani was enormous, and the operas featuring Farinelli had to bring financial success. This was by no means a simple task since the competition in the opera market was fierce in the 1728/29 season. The main competitor was the Teatro San Cassiano, where stars such as Faustina Bordoni and Senesino performed in Geminiano Giacomelli's *Gianguir* and Giuseppe Maria Orlandini's *Adelaide*³. Farinelli's arrival in Venice aroused

Napoli, Turchini Edizioni, 2008, pp. 285–289; Sartori, index of singers. The mention of an appearance in Handel's *Ottone*, staged in Paris in 1724 and recorded by Sartori is incorrect. At the premiere of *Ottone* in London in 1723, the part of Emireno (Prince Basilio) was performed by Giuseppe Maria Boschi and it is he who is most certainly referred to in the Paris libretto as the “monsieur Broschi” who (according to Sartori) sang the role of “Basile”. On Boschi's presence in Paris, cf. also L. Lindgren, ‘Parisian Patronage of Performers from the Royal Academy of Musick (1719-28)’, *Music & Letters*, vol. 58, 1977, pp. 4–28; H.J. Marx, ‘Händels lateinische Motette Silete venti (HWV 242) – Ein Auftragswerk für Paris?’, *Göttinger Händel-Beiträge*, vol. 14, 2012, pp. 153–165.

3 29 Nov. 1727: “Nous aurons l'année prochaine Farinello qui ne demande pas moins de mille sequins pour un Carnaval”; 4 Aug. 1728: “On ne s'est pas accordé avec Farinelli, qui passe pour le plus grand chanteur de l'Italie, mais il demande pour un carnaval 1500 sequins”; 24 Nov. 1728: “Nos operas ne valent rien jusqu'à present. Je doute que Farinello qu'on attend avec impatience puisse rétablir un opéra où les musiciens sont très mauvais, la musique mediocre, les decorations communes, si vous en exceptez la première, et la composition du poète remplie de personnages très plats et d'accidens très romanesques” [Metastasio, Porpora, Ezio]; 19 Nov.-4 Dec. 1728: “Le théâtre de San Gian Grisostomo pretend de l'emporter [Teatro San Cassian] par le seul Farinello, qui coûte aux Grimani des sommes immenses”; 18 Dec. 1728: “On dit des merveilles de l'opéra di San Cassano, mais le parti contraire pretend, d'emporter le prix avec le seul Farinello. Il est vray qu'on convient qu'il n'est pas acteur et que tout son fort consiste à chanter des airs d'une manière qu'on a jamais entendue. Il faut bien qu'il en soit quelque chose, car il n'a que 22 ans et il a gagné des sommes immenses.” A. Conti, *Lettere da Venezia a Madame la Comtesse de Caylus 1727–1729. Con l'aggiunta di un Discorso sullo Stato della Francia*, in S. Mamy (ed.), Firenze, Olschki, 2003 (Linea veneta 17), pp. 169, 213, 222, 223, 227. On Farinelli's Venetian engagement, cf. also A. Desler: ‘Il novello Orfeo’. *Farinelli: Vocal Profile, Aesthetics, Rhetoric*, PhD University of Glasgow 2014, pp. 44–47, 196–216, available online at: <http://theses.gla.ac.uk/5743/> (accessed 3 Dec. 2020). On operas at the San Cassiano theatre, directed in that season by the painter Sebastiano Ricci and Faustina Bordoni,

1 Cf. the overview in S. Cappelletto, *La voce perduta. Vita di Farinelli e virato cantore*, Torino, EDT/Musica, 1995, pp. 193–196, and C. Sartori, *I libretti italiani a stampa dalle origini al 1800. Catalogo analitico con 16 indici*, 7 vols., Cuneo, Bertola & Locatelli, 1990–1994, index of singers.

2 M. Columbro and P. Maione, *La cappella musicale del Tesoro di San Gennaro di Napoli tra Sei e Settecento* (I Turchini saggi),

such intense curiosity in the Venetians that a kind of mass stalking took place after his arrival when, reportedly, 300 persons followed him in St Mark's square. Naturally, the public had heard wonderful tales of Farinelli's singing, so it was keen to see and hear him in person; for the first time, in church during the traditional mass at Christmas Eve (where the most prestigious theatre singers sang before the opera performances of the carnival season began)⁴, as Conti wrote:

La plus grande nouvelle de ce pays qui ne connoît que l'oisiveté est l'arrivée de Farinelli. 300 personnes le suivoient l'autre jour dans la place de S^t Marc. Imaginez-vous quel sera le concours la nuit de Noël dans cette Eglise, où il doit chanter avec Senesino. Les connoisseurs prétendent qu'on n'a jamais entendu une voix pareille depuis qu'on chante sur le théâtre. Il touche toutes les cordes quelquefois dans le même air avec une agilité surprenante, et la voix qu'on appelle di petto est aussi forte en lui et aussi variée que celle di testa est sçavante et harmonieuse⁵.

Later they looked forward to his stage performances.

In the end, the operas seem to have proved financially successful. Paolo Rolli comments in a letter to Senesino (London, 4 February 1729):

Il Farinello è di primo Predicamento; e tanto più quanto da poco fa, sono venute Lett[er]e di Venezia, e particolarmente a questo Residente Vignola: che il teatro dove il Farinello recita à tutto il Concorso, e quello dove voi [Senesino] e la Faust[in]a siete è quasi vuoto⁶.

This success is confirmed also by the fact that a second libretto edition of both operas featuring Farinelli was issued: *Catone in Utica* by Pietro Metastasio (with music by Leonardo Leo) as well as *Semiramide riconosciuta* by the same poet (mus. Nicola Porpora) have been preserved

in two text versions published subsequently and marked as new editions⁷. Moreover, a pasticcio, *L'abbandono di Armida*, presented at the end of the carnival, incorporated the best arias of the season.

Below I will analyse the musical strategies adopted in these two operas, reflecting the Grimani brothers' pressure for financial success as well as Farinelli's self-fashioning in the context of the high expectations of an audience of connoisseurs, which Venice, with its long operatic tradition and the high number of simultaneous opera performances in several concurrent opera houses, must have possessed (this concerns the city's residents, but also partly the 'tourists' flocking to the city more or less regularly in the operatic seasons). I hope my analysis will reveal the principles of balancing commercial, personal and musical requirements in the process of creating an opera.

LEONARDO LEO'S CATONE IN UTICA

Leo's *Catone in Utica* underwent a very unusual procedure at its premiere. At a premiere, it was uncommon to alter an opera; *Catone in Utica* was not staged in its original form, but some arias were substituted. The reason was not merely time pressure. In fact, Farinelli had come to Venice at the beginning of December at the latest and had more than three weeks for rehearsals⁸. I believe that this procedure was adopted because the opera had to be a commercial success, at any cost. Thus, Leo's original music was cut (or moved) in favour of music by other composers.

What strategies can be detected? First of all, most aria substitutions concern the part sung by Farinelli, so we can assume that he did not feel comfortable with Leo's music, which did not allow him to present his vocal abilities as he wished. Although Leo knew Farinelli's voice well since he had composed specially for him the roles of Decio in *Zenobia in Palmira* (Naples 1725)⁹ and of Rodrigo in *Il Cid* (Rome 1727), the selection of music was altered by the singer himself. Other singers may have followed his example and substituted

cf. G. Stefani, *Sebastiano Ricci impresario d'opera a Venezia nel primo Settecento* (Premio di ricerca 'Città di Firenze' 46), Firenze, Firenze University Press, 2015, pp. 193–213.

⁴ Cf. B. Over, 'Notizie settecentesche sulla musica a San Marco: i *Notatori* di Pietro Gradenigo', in F. Passadore and F. Rossi (eds), *La cappella musicale di San Marco nell'età moderna. Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi Venezia – Palazzo Giustinian Lolin 5-7 settembre 1994* (Serie III: Studi musicologici, B: Atti di convegni 2), Venezia, Edizioni Fondazione Levi, 1998, pp. 26–31; O. Termini, 'Singers at San Marco in Venice: The Competition Between Church and Theatre (ca. 1675–1725)', *The Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle*, vol. 17, 1981, pp. 65–96.

⁵ 4 Dec 1728. Conti, *Lettere*, p. 226.

⁶ G.F. Handel, *George Frideric Handel. Collected Documents 1609–1763*, Burrows D. et al. (eds), vol. 2, 1725–1734, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2015, pp. 271–272. Cf. also the testimony cited by R. Candiani, *Pietro Metastasio da poeta di teatro a 'virtuoso di poesia'*, Roma, Aracne, 1998, p. 213.

⁷ Cf. Appendix: Sources.

⁸ Note that rehearsal periods were very short at that time in general. Cf. E. Surian, 'L'operista', in *Storia dell'opera italiana*, part 2, vol. 4: *Il Sistema produttivo e le sue competenze*, Torino, EDT/Musica, 1987, pp. 337–342; R. Strohm, 'Introduction: the drama per musica in the Eighteenth Century', in R. Strohm (ed.), *Drama per musica. Italian Opera Seria of the Eighteenth Century*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1997, p. 10.

⁹ Score preserved in I-Nc, see Appendix: Sources.

arias as well. In comparison with Metastasio's original libretto written for Rome 1728, the following arias were exchanged (they are marked in the libretto with an asterisk indicating that they are not by the same text/music author¹⁰ or they are printed as an appendix):

Act, Scene	Role	Singer	Rome 1728	Venice 1728	Taken from
I,3	Arbace	Farinelli	Che legge spietata	* Mi lusinga il dolce affetto	R. Broschi, <i>L'isola d'Alcina</i> , Rome 1728
I,5	Catone	Nicola Grimaldi	Si sgomenti alle sue pene	* Pensa di chi sei figlia	?
I,13	Arbace	Farinelli	È in ogni core	Che legge spietata	Moved from I,3
II,2	Catone	Grimaldi	Va', ritorna al tuo tiranno	* Mi conosci? Sai chi sono?	?
II,6	Marzia	Lucia Facchinelli	In che ti offende	* Di tenero affetto	G.M. Orlandini? (beginning identical with his trio sonata No. 5 in B-Bc, 14077)
II,7	Fulvio	Giuseppe Maria Boschi	Per te spero e per te solo (Emilia)	* Il tuo affanno ed il tuo sdegno	G.F. Handel, <i>Radamisto</i> , London 1721
II,8	Emilia	Antonia Negri	Nascesti alle pene (Fulvio)	* Ombra cara, ombra adorata	?
II,16	Arbace	Farinelli	Che sia la gelosia	Che sia la gelosia	
				Cerva in bosco se l'impiega (printed as appendix)	L. Vinci, <i>Medo</i> , Parma 1728
				Scherzo dell'onda instabile (printed as appendix in 2 nd ed.) ¹¹	L. Vinci, <i>Medo</i> , Parma 1728

¹⁰ "Tutte le arie, che non sono dell'Autore saranno contrassegnate con una stella [...]."

¹¹ In a transcription for mandolin the aria is found with a much altered text: "Nave nell'onda instabile" (I-Vnm, Mss.It.Cl.IV.472 (=

Act, Scene	Role	Singer	Rome 1728	Venice 1728	Taken from
III,3	Arbace	Farinelli	Combattuta da tante vicende	* Sarebbe un bel diletto	?
III,4	Cesare	Domenico Gizzi	Quell'amor che poco accende	* Al vento che la scuote	?
III,10	Emilia	Negri	Nacqui agli affanni in seno	* Chi mai saper desia	?
				Nacqui agli affanni in seno ¹²	

The table shows that nine out of 26, that is, one third of Metastasio's original aria texts were removed. Moreover, although Metastasio was involved in the production himself (he rewrote the end of the opera¹³) also the recitative texts were cut and altered, and the scene structure was changed. Since Domenico Lalli signed the dedication of the libretto, these alterations may have been his work. With respect to the arias, the substitution achieved specific aims. The procedure ensured in some cases a different profiling of the *dramatis personae*. Catone (Nicola Grimaldi), for example, was shown in the new aria texts as a more powerful and obstinate character, a trait also reflected in the new music and possibly in the singer's personality. Emilia's (Antonia Negri) role as a mourning widow, an element brought out by Metastasio in her first aria "O nel sen di qualche stella" (I,8), but not further developed, was underscored by a newly written scene (II,8, including the aria "Ombra cara, ombra adorata"). Only in one instance is a suitcase aria (*aria di baule*) found in the new score, certainly reflecting a previous success: Giuseppe Maria Boschi (Fulvio) inserted an aria he had sung earlier in London in George Frideric Handel's *Radamisto* (1721). For the Venetian performance it was rewritten, though¹⁴.

10350) "Arie per Mandolino / dell'Opera 2.^a / In S. Gio: Grisost:^o 1729. / Venet.^a", cf. "Appendix: Sources").

¹² "Nacqui agli affanni in seno" was replaced by "Chi mai saper desia" in the first edition and then in turn re-replaced by the original aria in the second edition of the libretto.

¹³ Metastasio included the different ending of *Catone in Utica* in his works, so it is commonly assumed that it is by him (or authorised by him, at least).

¹⁴ B. Over, 'From Opera to Pasticcio: Handel's Revisions of Leo's *Catone in Utica* (1732)', *Studi musicali*, vol. n.s. 11, 2020, pp. 69–99; B. Over, 'Paradigmen musikalischer Mobilität: Handels Pasticci', *Händel-Jahrbuch*, vol. 65, 2019, pp. 85–103. On *Catone in Utica*, the model for Handel's pasticcio *Catone*

It is, however, not clear at which stage these substitutions and changes were made. If they were carried out before the text was set by Leo, then the music of the non-identified pieces may also have been composed by Leo. He may even have composed them later, during rehearsals, to meet the requirements of the singers or of other agents involved in the production¹⁵. That Leo seems to have played a role in staging the opera, in one way or another, is suggested by the following fact: In several sources, a second setting of “Confusa, smarrita”, Marzia’s (Lucia Facchinelli) aria from Act III, Scene 2, has been preserved, which may either have been replaced in the final version in the score or may have replaced the earlier one during performances¹⁶ (Music Examples 1 and 2).

This could imply that Leo was present when the opera was rehearsed and performed or at least involved in the adaptation of the music for the singers. Still, given the relatively high amount of music by other composers – three out of the nine substituted pieces are definitely by other composers, plus two pieces inserted during the performance – Leo’s presence and authorship, already questioned by Rosy Candiani in her Metastasio biography¹⁷, seems improbable. It seems more likely that the majority, if not all of the music of the substitute arias was written by other composers.

If we have a look at Farinelli’s arias, we will be able

to reconstruct his strategy of presenting himself to the Venetian public, which was meant to excite and, at the same time, to satisfy expectations. We are lucky to have both the Leo version and the version actually sung by Farinelli of his very first aria in Act I, Scene 3, which was, so to speak, his business card by which he introduced himself to the curious audience. The aria actually performed, “Mi lusinga il il cor d’affetto”, was taken from *L’isola d’Alcina* by his brother Riccardo Broschi, staged in Rome for the carnival of 1728 at the Capranica theatre with Farinelli as Ruggiero. Although it is marked “di Vinci” in the *Catone* score at the Royal Academy of Music in London, there is a concordant source bearing Broschi’s name kept at the Casanatense library in Rome¹⁸. While the original aria, Leo’s “Che legge spietata” (moved to I,13), poses no major vocal challenge, Farinelli’s choice of his brother’s aria reveals his wish to lay his entire vocal mastery at the feet of the Venetian audience.

Leo’s aria (Music Example 3) is a fast one marked *Allegro* that contains syncopated rhythms as well as some chromaticisms, but none of the special characteristics for which Farinelli was renowned, such as *mesa di voce*, fast coloraturas, and quick register changes¹⁹.

In contrast, Broschi’s aria in a slow tempo (score in GB-Lam: no tempo markings, the single aria in I-Rc: *Largo*, Music Example 4) is packed full of various vocal complexities: sophisticated short motifs (“Lombard” rhythms et al.), note repetitions, fast coloraturas, chromaticisms, *mesa di voce*, instrumental motifs (the fast motifs at the end of the example, played immediately before by the violins), leaps (“canto di sbalzo”), the enormous tessitura of two octaves (Bb to Bb). These complexities are embedded in a sonorous, unobtrusive four-part scoring, which makes the free flow of the vocal line possible. Leo’s aria, on the contrary, in many passages only has three actual parts, which in many instances are independent from the vocal line. Thus, the soloist cannot sing freely at all, but is forced to observe the metre and, with regards to ornamentation, harmonies and the melodic structures of the accompanying instrumental parts. At the same time, Farinelli shifts the focus to another character type. “Che legge spietata” is an *aria di sdegno* condemning love’s laws, whereas “Mi lusinga il dolce affetto” speaks of the pleasures and fears of love.

(London 1732) cf. also R. Strohm, ‘Catone (HWV A7)’, in A. Jacobshagen and P. Mücke, *Händels Opern*, Laaber, Laaber Verlag, 2009 (Das Händel-Handbuch 2), vol. 1, pp. 391–396. J. Roberts (‘Catone’, in A. Landgraf and D. Vickers, *The Cambridge Handel Encyclopaedia*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009, pp. 129–130) points to the fact that the aria “Il tuo affanno ed il tuo sdegno” may have been arranged from a short score of its model “Con la strage de’ nemici”. This would explain the different instrumental parts accompanying the (abbreviated) vocal and bass parts.

15 On the different agents involved in an opera production, cf. R. Strohm, ‘Wer entscheidet? Möglichkeiten der Zusammenarbeit an Pasticcio-Opern’, in D. Brandenburg and Th. Seedorf (eds), *“Per ben vestir la virtuosa”. Die Oper des 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhunderts im Spannungsfeld zwischen Komponisten und Sängern* (Forum Musikwissenschaft 6), Schliengen, Argus, 2011, pp. 62–79; R. Strohm, ‘Zenobia: Voices and Authorship in Opera Seria’, in S. Paczkowski and A. Zórawska-Witkowska (eds), *Johann Adolf Hasse in seiner Epoche und in der Gegenwart. Studien zur Stil- und Quellenproblematik*, Warsaw, Uniwersytet Warszawski, 2002, pp. 53–81.

16 Copies in I-Nc, B-Bc and GB-Lbm, cf. Appendix: Sources.

17 Candiani points to Metastasio’s indication in a letter that Jommelli should send his compositions as it had been done with Leo, speculating that this passage refers to *Catone in Utica*. Candiani, *Pietro Metastasio*, p. 211.

18 I-Rc (Ms.2771, pp. 97–108: “Capranica 1728 / Del Sig: Riccardo / Broschi”). Libretto online in *Corago*; the aria is found in II,3 (“Mi lusinga il dolce affetto”). Cf. also Candiani, *Pietro Metastasio*, p. 212.

19 Cf. the fundamental study by Desler, ‘*Il novello Orfeo*’.

Allegro assai

Violino I

Violino II

Viola

Marzia

Basso continuo

Con - fu - sa, smar - ri - ta spie - gar - ti vor - re - i, spie -

VI. I

VI. II

Vla.

S

B.c.

gar - ti vor - re - i che

Music Example 1. “Confusa, smarrita”, version of the score, GB-Lam, MS 75, fol. 166r (own transcription)

Andantino

Violino I

Violino II

Viola

Soprano

Basso continuo

VI. I

VI. II

Vla.

S

B.c.

Music Example 2. “Confusa, smarrita”, single aria, I-Nc, Cantate 175, fol. 106r (own transcription)

Allegro

Arbace

Che leg-ge spie - ta - ta, che sor - te crud - de - le, che sor - te cru -

de - le d'un al - ma pia - ga - ta, d'un al - ma pia - ga - ta, d'un co-re fe -

de - le, d'un co-re fe - de - le ser - vi - re, sof - fri - re, ta - ce - re e pe - nar, _____

ta - ce - re e ser -

vi - re, ta - ce - re e sof - fri - re, ta - ce - re e pe - nar.

Music Example 3. Leonardo Leo, “Che legge spietata”, A1 section, GB-Lam, MS 75, fols. 67r-67v (own transcription)

In choosing to sing his brother's aria Farinelli opted for an initial self-fashioning as a sensitive hero, a character type he impersonated rather frequently²⁰, combined with a much freer style of singing and the display of his entire vocal capabilities, which very likely astonished the audience.

Having laid down all his vocal art, and thus, metaphorically, having shot his bow, it is interesting to see how Farinelli proceeded in *Catone in Utica*. His next aria is the already mentioned “Che legge spietata” in Act I, Scene 13 (transferred from Scene 3), which, as has been said, is a not vocally a very demanding act, but a very effective one from the musical-dramatic point of view. It fits well into the situation. Its powerful melody and sometimes surprising harmonic progressions may have been the reason why this aria was postponed rather than deleted.

The first aria in Act II is Leo's “So che pietà non hai” (Scene 3). It is marked *Larghetto, e Cantabile* and shifts to a tender musical idiom with plenty of appoggiaturas, chromaticisms, and tiny motifs (Music Example 5). It also features ascending trills. In its melodic shape and restrained accompaniment, it is very similar to “Mi lusinga il dolce affetto”.

At the end of the act (II,16) the original aria “Che sia la gelosia” (now lost) was replaced by two virtuosic arias that Farinelli had sung earlier in Parma in May of the same year²¹. Both are taken from Leonardo Vinci's *Medo* and both are simile arias. Farinelli first sang “Cerva in bosco se l'impiega”, followed by “Scherzo dell'onda instabile”. Both feature coloraturas, arpeggios, trill chains, leaps, top

²⁰ Desler, *‘Il novello Orfeo’*, p. 176 and *passim*.

²¹ In the libretto it is “primavera”, but the Münster sources (cf. footn. 22) say “maggio”.

Largo

Arbace

Mi lu - sin - ga il cor d'af - fet - to col - l'a -

6 spet - to del mi - o be - ne pur chi sa, chi sa

11 te - mer con - vie - ne che m'in - gan - ni

16 a - man

21 do an - cor. Mi lu - sin - ga il cor d'af -

27 fet - to col - l'a - spet - to del mio be - ne pur chi

32 sa, chi sa, chi sa te - mer con - vie - ne che m'in -

37 gan - ni a - man

41 do an - cor, che m'in -

Music Example 4. Riccardo Broschi, "Mi lusinga il cor d'affetto", A section, GB-Lam, fols. 27r-29v (own transcription)

Larghetto e cantabile

Arbace

So che pie-ta non ha - i e pur ti deg - gio a - mar do -
- ve ap-pren-de - sti ma - i l'ar - te - d'in-na - mo - rar
— quan - do m'of - fen - di, do - ve ap-pren-de - sti ma - i l'ar -
- te d'in-na - mo - rar
— quan - do m'of - fen - di, quan - do m'of - fen - di.

Music Example 5. Leonardo Leo, “So che pietà non hai”, A2 section, GB-Lam, MS 75, fols. 95v-96v (own transcription)

Andante e staccato

Arbace

Sa-reb-be un bel di - let - to il
so-spi - rar d'a - mor, il so-spi - rar d'a - mor ma sem - pre a - ver in
pet - to la ge - lo - si - a nel cor

Music Example 6. Leonardo Leo, “Sarebbe un bel diletto”, beginning of A1 section, GB-Lam, MS 75, fols. 173v-174r (own transcription)

notes, and register changes in a fast tempo²². From the textual point of view “Che sia la gelosia” does not strictly fit into the simile aria category, because it speaks of the pains of jealousy, which is compared to ice in a fire only in a brief phrase. Its substitution with ‘real’ simile arias shows that Farinelli wanted to end Act II with highly effective musical pieces which, furthermore, represented a more popular aria type²³.

The next aria and his last one in the opera is found in Act III, Scene 3. “Sarebbe un bel diletto” is by an unknown composer and in a fast tempo (*Allegro, e staccato*, Music Example 6). It oscillates at some instances between the major and minor modes, enabling the singer to adapt his voice to the meaning of the text and the mood of the music, an art in which, according to Giovenale Sacchi, Farinelli's first biographer, he excelled²⁴. Moreover, it again features wide leaps and chromaticism.

Summing up, in *Catone in Utica* Farinelli demonstrated all his vocal powers in his very first aria and then emphasises several elements in the following arias, in particular – wide leaps and chromaticisms. In these arias, Farinelli embraces a variety of moods: “Mi lusinga il dolce affetto” shows Farinelli as a sensitive hero; “Che legge spietata” is an *aria di sdegno*; “So che pietà non hai” adopts a tender musical idiom, pointing to the sensitive hero again, “Sarebbe un bel diletto” is a lively aria with some “shades” in the minor mode. The only virtuosic bravura aria is found at the end of Act II,

the substitute aria “Cerva in bosco se l'impiega”, which during the performances was replaced by, or alternated with, “Scherzo dell'onda instabile”.

NICOLA PORPORA'S SEMIRAMIDE RICONOSCIUTA

A different strategy, however, is adopted in Porpora's *Semiramide riconosciuta*, where Farinelli concentrated on other musical features. Here the focus is on brief, very fast and sometimes rhythmically complex motifs, which in some instances make the impression of being notated improvisations. The first aria, “Bel piacer saria d'un core” (I,7) presents Farinelli (Mirteo) once again as a sensitive hero, and depends on these highly complicated motifs (Music Example 7).

“Rondinella a cui rapita” (I,15), ending the first act, is a simile aria representing the lament of the dove after the death of her beloved as an emblem of Mirteo's state of mind. Its tempo is not very fast (*Con spirito*), and enables the singer to present some brief motifs (Music Example 8).

“Sì pietoso il tuo labro ragiona” (II,5) is another aria in an unhurried tempo (*A tempo giusto*, Music Example 9). The short, very fast motifs are found at the end of the stanzas in the A section (triplets and demisemiquavers), but also in the B section. The aria shows Mirteo once again as a sad lover who fears that Semiramide's offer to help him win Tamiri's love is insincere.

The next aria, “Siete barbare, amate stelle” (II,9, Music Example 10), is another text that presents Mirteo as a languishing lover whose attitude is criticised severely by Tamiri in the preceding recitative (“Mirteo cangia favella o cangia affetto./ Io tolerar non posso/un languido amator che mi tormenti/con assidui lamenti./ che mai lieto non sia, che sempre innanzi/ mesto mi venga e che tacendo ancora/ con la fronte turbata/ mi rimproveri ognor ch'io sono ingrata.”). The aria bears no tempo marking, but is certainly meant to be sung in a slow *Andante* tempo.

Mirteo's first aria in Act III, “In braccio a mille furie”, is a virtuosic coloratura piece marked *Presto*. It does not contain brief sophisticated motifs, which feature again in the following aria “Quel vapor che in valle impura” (III,11, Music Example 11). It is apparently again in a slow *Andante* tempo (no tempo indicated in the score), and compares Mirteo's ever depressed mental state and dimmed reason to impure vapours dispersed by the sun. (In the preceding aria Tamiri accuses Mirteo: “Vuoi dirmi, lo so:/ ‘Languisco per te,/ riposo non ho,/ domando mercé,/ ingrata, spietata,/ tiranna crudele’/ noiose

²² “Scherzo dell'onda instabile” is not included in the scores, but see the score of Vinci's *Medo* in I-MC (1-A-18, 1-A-19, 1-A-20), as well as single arias (D-MÜs, Sant.Hs.4241, Sant.Hs.4262).

²³ On the popularity of this kind of arias see B. Marcello's satire *Il teatro alla moda* (Venice 1720/Udine, Pizzicato, 1992): “L'*Ariette* non dovranno aver *relazione* veruna al *Recitativo*, ma convien fare il possibile d'introdurre nelle medesime per lo più *farfalletta*, *mossolino*, *rossignuolo*, *quagliotto*, *navicella copanetto*, *gelsomino*, *violazotta*, *cavo rame*, *pignatella*, *tigre*, *leone*, *balena*, *gambaretto*, *dindiotto*, *capon freddo*, etc. etc. etc., imperciocché in tal maniera il Poeta si fa conoscere buon *Filosofo* distinguendo co' *paragoni* le proprietà degli *Animali*, delle *Piante*, de' *Fiori*, etc.” (p. 11); “Se i *metri* dell' *Arie* non piacessero al Maestro di Musica, gli cambierà subito, introducendo ancora nell' *Arie* a capriccio del medesimo: *Venti*, *Tempeste*, *Nebbie*, *Sirocchi*, *Greco levante*, *Tramontana*, etc.” (p. 13) and *passim*.

²⁴ “A queste doti straordinarie del canto, che appagano il senso, univa il Broschi ancor quelle, che risguardano la intelligenza, perchè egli rendeva le parole chiarissimamente, e con grand efficacia, e verità esprimeva qualunque affetto, o passione, così quelle, che impartano tardità, o languore, come quelle, che vogliono vivacità, rapidità, leggierezza.” G. Sacchi, *Vita del Cavaliere Don Carlo Broschi*, Venezia, Coletti, 1784, p. 13.

Mirteo

Bel pia - cer sa - ria d'un co - re, bel pia - cer quel po -

3 - te - re a suo ta - len - to quan - do a - mor gli da tor - men - to ri - tor -

5 na -

7 re in li - ber - ta, ri - tor - na -

10

12 re in li - ber - ta.

Music Example 7. Nicola Porpora, “Bel piacer saria d’un core”, A2 section, GB-Lam, MS 81, no foliation (own transcription)

querele/ usate in amor”, and he himself recognises that: “Ah la nube importuna/ che m’adombrò della ragione i rai/ si sciolga alfine. Ho vaneggiato assai.”)

In addition to the short motifs present in almost all of Farinelli’s arias, they also contain such typical elements of his style as leaps, trill chains, and chromatic melodic writing. In addition to the virtuosic coloratura aria “In braccio a mille furie” (III,4), two other arias of the same type, “Spira il vento nel foco nascente” (unattributed), and the famous virtuosic aria “Nobil onda” from Porpora’s *Adelaide* (Rome 1723, I,17), were inserted at a point not specified in the libretto. They are printed at the end of the second edition and lack an indication as to the point at which they should be sung. *Messa di voce* and note repetitions are, significantly, almost absent from Porpora’s

arias sung by Farinelli in *Semiramide* (but not from the substitute aria “Nobil onda”)²⁵. However, Porpora knew his pupil’s voice very well and perhaps explicitly wanted to demonstrate its flexibility and velocity with regard to other special musical qualities.

Why the composer did so may be explained by a passage found in Sacchi’s biography. According to Sacchi, Farinelli studied with Antonio Bernacchi at that time. After a kind of vocal competition held in 1727 in Bologna, which was won by Bernacchi (who appeared in Giuseppe

²⁵ “Rondinella a cui rapita” contains only four repeated quavers, whereas “Quel vapor che in valle impura” has in the B section three groups of four repeated semiquavers, plus a crotchet in a slow tempo.

Con spirito

Mirteo

vo - - - la in cer - ta, va - - -

4
smar - ri - ta dal - - la sel - va al - - la cam - pa - gna

7
e si - - la - - - - - gna in - - -

11
tor - - no al - - ni - do del - l'in

Music Example 8. Nicola Porpora, “Rondinella a cui rapita”, part of A1 section, GB-Lam, MS 81, no foliation (own transcription)

A tempo giusto

Mirteo

s'ab - ban - do - na al - la - - dol - ce - lu - sin - ga e con - - -

5
ten - - - ti so - gnan - - - - -

9
do mi va.

13

Music Example 9. Nicola Porpora, “Sì pietoso il tuo labro ragiona”, part of A1 section, GB-Lam, MS 81, no foliation (own transcription)

Mirteo

Sie - te bar - ba-re, a - ma - te

4
stel - le, se vi tur - ba - no, vi tur - ba - no i miei so - spi - ri, o pla -

7
ca - te - vi, lu - ci bel - le, o pla - ca - te - vi, lu - ci bel - le, o la - scia -

10
- te mi so - spi - rar, o la - scia -

13
- te - mi so - spi - rar, so - spi - rar.

Music Example 10. Nicola Porpora, “Siete barbare, amate stelle”, part of A2 section, GB-Lam, MS 81, no foliation (own transcription)

Maria Orlandini's *La fedeltà coronata*), Farinelli studied more intensively with that singer in Rome. However, following the 1727 Bologna performance, the two stars did not sing together in Rome at all, and thus the story could only refer to Vinci's *Medo*, staged in Parma in the spring of 1728, where the two singers were both engaged. However problematic such sources may be²⁶, they may contain some truth. It is possible that the small, quasi-improvised motifs appearing in *Semiramide riconosciuta* are the “grazie sopraffine” mentioned by Sacchi, which Farinelli is supposed to have learned from Bernacchi

earlier that year²⁷. In fact, the arias in *Medo* are definitely more virtuosic and do not depend on such brief motifs

²⁶ The intentions of Sacchi's biography were recently elucidated in a paper by Valentina Anzani ('The Teacher Bernacchi, the Pupil Farinelli and the Myth of the So-called "Bolognese Singing School"', presented at the conference *Carlo Broschi Farinelli (1705-1782): The Career, Skills and Networks of a Castrato Singer*, Vienna 9–12 May 2019).

²⁷ “Fu chiamato nell'anno 1727. a cantare in Bologna insieme con Antonio Bernacchi chiarissimo cantore, e maestro di cantori chiarissimi. Il giovine Broschi cantando la prima volta insieme con lui privatamente giudicò, che il suo valore non fosse uguale alla sua fama; onde con certa animosità giovanile cominciò a fare ostentazione della propria abilità, il che il più vecchio non faceva. Si accorse Bernacchi di essere provocato, ed accesosì alquanto feceli sentire, che egli non era ancora a tempo di uguagliarlo, non che di superarlo. Questo accidente, che avrebbe disgiunto due altri, che fossero amici, congiunse questi due in amicizia, che fu poi indissolubile, perchè erano amendue di ottimo animo, e oltre a ciò fu questa una occasione a Farinello di farsi migliore che non era; perchè compresa la superiorità del Bernacchi nell'arte, il pregò, che volesse riceverlo alla sua scuola. Subito poi trasferitisi amendue a cantare a Roma, quivi ogni mattina il Broschi frequentava la casa del Bernacchi, ed apprendea da lui quelle grazie sopraffine, delle quali non era ancora abbastanza fornito.” Sacchi, *Vita*, pp. 13-14.

Mirteo

Quel va - por che in val - le im - pu - ra s'in - nal - zo da i - gno - bil
fon - te gl'a - stri o - scu - ra ad - om - bra il
mon - te si co - lo - ra in fac - cia al sol, in fac -
cia al sol.

Music Example 11. Nicola Porpora, “Quel vapor che in valle impura“, A1 section, GB-Lam, MS 81, no foliation (own transcription)

as we find in *Semiramide riconosciuta*. Such motifs, however, can be found in Pietro Torri's *Nicomede*, staged in October 1728 in Munich, after *Medo* but immediately before Farinelli's Venetian engagement. Farinelli sang the title part. These small motifs are all there, apart from virtuosic coloraturas. Brief motifs are present in the very first aria “Amorosa rondinella” (I,1), as well as in the arias “L'ubbidir se mi mostra tuo figlio” (I,9) and “Se traditor mi credi” (II,14)²⁸.

²⁸ The coloratura arias are “Contro me s'armi terribile” (I,4), “Fremano l'onde” (II,9), and “Vo che in mezzo del dolore” (III,9); “Vado a morir, sì, sì” (III,4) is a rather plain piece. See the score in D-Mbs, Mus.ms.214 (available online), cf. Appendix: Sources.

However, we can see such motifs in earlier operas as well, including those written for other singers (cf., for example: L. Leo, *Zenobia in Palmira*, D. Sarro, *Tito Sempronio*, L. Vinci, *Astianatte*, all staged in Naples, 1725; L. Vinci, *Farnace*, Rome 1724; N. Porpora, *Imeneo*, Naples 1723) and in later ones (G. Giacomelli, *Lucio Papirio*, Parma 1729; P. Torri, *Edippo*, Munich 1729; R. Broschi, *Idaspe*, J.A. Hasse, *Artaserse*, both Venice 1730). In this context, the idea of Farinelli's “grazie sopraffine” goes up in smoke. What is nonetheless striking in *Semiramide riconosciuta* is the high frequency of the occurrence of these motifs in Farinelli's part. They are present in almost every aria sung by him (I,7: “Bel piacer

Con spirito

Sibari

co - si sa - nar con - vie - ne, con - vie - ne sa - na -

re a - mo - re con a - mor.

Music Example 12. Nicola Porpora, “Come all’amiche arene”, part of A1 section, GB-Lam, MS 81, no foliation (own transcription)

Tamiri

mai tur - bar non sa l'a - re - na e al - le nin - fe ed ai pas - to - ri bel - l'og -

get - to e di pia -

cer e di pia - cer.

Music Example 13. Nicola Porpora, “Fiumicel che s’ode appena”, part of A1 section, GB-Lam, MS 81, no foliation (own transcription)

saria d’un core”, I,15: “Rondinella a cui rapita”, II,5: “Si pietoso il tuo labro ragiona”, II,9: “Siete barbare, amate stelle”, III,11: “Quel vapore che in valle impura”). Only one virtuosic aria, “In braccio a mille furie” (III,4), does not depend on these short motifs. In contrast, in the arias of his partner singers they are hardly ever found; only in one aria performed respectively by Gizzi (I,8: “Come all’amiche arene” (Music Example 12), cf. the not-so-easy syncopations at the end of the section) and Negri (I,12: “Fiumicel che s’ode appena”, Music Example 13). Note that the complex elements in these arias are far less demanding.

However, in *Catone in Utica* the proportions are quite the opposite: Farinelli only sings a very small number of these motifs (such as the “instrumental” motif in “Mi lusinga il cor d’affetto”) and the other singers get many more. Gizzi performs them in “Soffre talor del vento” (II,5, Music Example 14), while the syncopations present in “Come all’amiche arene” are also found in Facchinelli’s “Non ti minaccio sdegno” (I,2) and in Gizzi’s “Chi un dolce amor condanna” (I,10). Through their overwhelming presence in *Semiramide riconosciuta*, Farinelli (and Porpora) thus created a kind of counterpoint to the earlier opera with these short, quasi-improvisational motifs, and

Andante ma non presto

Cesare

Sof - fre ta - lor del ven - to, sof - fre ta - lor del ven - to i pri - mi in - sul - ti il

ma - re, ne cen - to³le - gni e cen - to che van - per l'on - de -

chia - re in -

tor - bi - da il sen - tier, in - tor - bi - da il sen - tier.

Music Example 14. Leonardo Leo, “Soffre talor del vento”, A1 section, GB-Lam, MS 75, fols. 102r-103r (own transcription)

here Farinelli obviously intends to surpass his partners on the stage.

Some objections could be made to such an interpretation of the aria contents. Firstly, it must be examined whether these motifs were not a stylistic feature generally characteristic of Porpora²⁹. However, as we can see from the above-listed examples, they are

not only restricted to Porpora, but used by a variety of composers. Moreover, although these small motifs are definitely found in Porpora's operas, they do not appear as frequently in them as in Farinelli's part in *Semiramide riconosciuta*. Another objection might be whether these quasi-improvisational motifs can be distinguished from 'actual' improvisations, which constituted part of the operatic performance practice in the 18th century. But where these motifs could not be heard, in every case they could still be seen in the written score of the entire opera or in single arias. That the written material seems to have

²⁹ On his florid melodic writing cf., for example, B. Over, 'Ein Neapolitaner in Venedig: Nicola Porpora und die venezianischen Ospedali', *Händel-Jahrbuch*, vol. 46, 2000, pp. 217-222.

been as important as the orally transmitted practice in Farinelli's art can be gleaned from the fact that an aria he sang, "Qual guerriero in campo armato" from his brother's *Idaspe* (Venice 1730), is written in several different clefs (violin, soprano, mezzo-soprano, alto, tenor, and bass clefs). This specific notation cannot be heard, but only seen, and probably, like the short motifs, it may have enhanced Farinelli's image as a fabulous singer.

SUMMARY

To sum up, the reason for the highly unusual aria substitutions in Leo's *Catone in Utica* in its Venetian production seems to have been the fact that the opera needed to prove a financial success in order to cover Farinelli's high remuneration for the 1728/29 Venetian opera season. All the cast had their arias substituted to a more or less substantial degree. Most substitutions concern Farinelli's part. In his case we can observe his strategy to impress the public by demonstrating a wide range of exceptional vocal skills first, and later concentrating on selected qualities in the arias that followed. In this respect, *Catone in Utica* can be interpreted as a showpiece for Farinelli's entire vocal artistry. Porpora's *Semiramide riconosciuta*, on the other hand, seems to have been a vehicle to bring out another element absent from his part in Leo's opera, that is, short, complex, quasi-improvisational motifs. These are found in a type of aria that is characterised by a rather slow tempo and free flow of the melodic line, associated with the character type of the unhappy lover-hero whom Farinelli's frequently impersonated. In fact, in *Semiramide riconosciuta* this character type is represented by almost every aria sung by the famous singer, and was intended by Metastasio in his concept for this role. The original aria texts in II,5 ("Io veggo in lontananza", substituted by "Sì pietoso il tuo labbro ragiona") and III,11 ("Sentirsi dire", substituted by "Quel vapor che in valle impura") do not depart from this type. At the same time, the focus on these small complex motifs seems to reflect his evident intention to enter into competition with his stage partners (who sang such motifs in *Catone in Utica*), and to surpass them. Thus, Farinelli's well-conceived sequence of musical element presentation, linked to the idea of presenting his multifaceted vocal art and of direct comparison with the other singers, most likely made a lasting impression on the public in the Lagoon City, where he performed for three more seasons of his operatic career.

APPENDIX: SOURCES (IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER)

Selected operas from the period 1723–1730 featuring Carlo Broschi (Farinelli) or composed by Nicola Porpora

Porpora, N., *Imeneo*, Naples 1723 (Jan); score: [D-Dl, Mus.2417-F-1] Dresden, Sächsische Landesbibliothek – Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, online: <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:bsz:14-db-id4345333511> (accessed 4 November 2020).

Vinci, L., *Farnace*, Rome 1724 (Jan); score: [D-Bsa, SA1211] Berlin, Sing-Akademie zu Berlin, online: <http://resolver.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/SBB0002658C00000000> (accessed 4 November 2020); [D-MÜs, Sant.Hs.4243] Münster, Bischöfliche Diözesanbibliothek, Santini-Sammlung.

Sarro, D., *Tito Sempronio Gracco*, Naples 1725 (carnival); score: [I-Nc, Rari 7.3.12] Napoli, Conservatorio di Musica "S. Pietro a Majella", online: <http://www.internetculturale.it> (accessed 4 November 2020).

Leo, L., *Zenobia in Palmira*, Naples 1725 (May); score: [I-Nc, Rari 7.3.9] Napoli, Conservatorio di Musica "S. Pietro a Majella", online: <http://www.internetculturale.it> (accessed 4 November 2020).

Vinci, L., *Astianatte*, Naples 1725 (2 Dec); score: [I-Nc, Rari 7.3.13] Napoli, Conservatorio di Musica "S. Pietro a Majella", online: <http://www.internetculturale.it> (accessed 4 November 2020).

Porpora, N., *Siface*, Venice 1725 (26 Dec); score: [B-Br, Ms II 3972 MusFétis 2530] Bruxelles, KBR – Koninklijke Bibliotheek/Bibliothèque royale, online: <https://uurl.kbr.be/1420930> (accessed 4 November 2020).

Porpora, N., *Meride e Selinunte*, Venice 1726 (Dec); score: [B-Br, Ms II 3973 MusFétis 2531] Bruxelles, KBR – Koninklijke Bibliotheek/Bibliothèque royale, online: <https://uurl.kbr.be/1577495> (accessed 4 November 2020).

Broschi, R., *L'isola d'Alcina. Drama da rappresentarsi in Roma nella Sala de' Signori Capranica il carnevale dell'anno 1728. Dedicato all'Altezza Reale di Violante Beatrice di Baviera Gran Principessa Vedova di Toscana, e Governatrice di Siena*, Florence, M. Nestenus, [1728 (carnival)]; libretto, several copies available online, cf. <http://corago.unibo.it/libretto/DRT0025041>, (accessed 4 November 2020).

Broschi, R., *Mi lusinga il dolce affetto; a single aria from L'isola d'Alcina* in the aria collection [I-Rc, Ms.2771] Roma, Biblioteca Casanatense, pp. 97–108.

- Vinci, L., *Medo*, Parma 1728 (May); score: [I-MC, 1-A-18, 1-A-19, 1-A-20] Montecassino, Biblioteca dell'Abbazia, online: <http://www.internetculturale.it> (accessed 4 November 2020).
- Vinci, L., Scherzo dell'onda instabile; a single aria from *Medo* in aria collections [D-MÜs, Sant. Hs.4241 and Sant.Hs.4262], Münster, Bischöfliche Diözesanbibliothek, Santini-Sammlung.
- Torri, P., *Nicomede*, Munich 1728 (Oct); score: [D-Mbs, Mus.ms.214] München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, online: <http://mdz-nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb00110140-1> (accessed 4 November 2020).
- Leo, L./Metastasio, P., *Catone in Utica. Tragedia per musica di Artino Corasio Past. Arcade da rappresentarsi nel famosissimo Teatro Grimani di S. Gio. Grisostomo nel Carnevale del 1729*, Venezia, Buonarigo, [1728]; printed libretto, several copies online: <http://corago.unibo.it/libretto/DPC0001584> (accessed 4 November 2020).
- Leo, L./Metastasio, P., *Catone in Utica. Tragedia per musica di Artino Corasio Past. Arcade da rappresentarsi nel famosissimo Teatro Grimani di S. Gio. Grisostomo nel Carnevale del 1729. Seconda edizione*, Venezia, Buonarigo, [1729]; printed libretto, copy online: <http://corago.unibo.it/libretto/DPC0001585> (accessed 4 November 2020).
- Leo, L./Metastasio, P., *Catone in Utica*, Venice 1728 (Dec); score, [GB-Lam, MS 75] London, Royal Academy of Music, online: https://archive.org/details/GB-Lam_MS75/page/n3/mode/2up (accessed 4 November 2020); [B-Bc, 2194] Bruxelles, Conservatoire royal de musique.
- Leo, L./Metastasio, P., *Catone in Utica*; transcription for voice and mandolin, [I-Vnm, Mss.It.Cl.IV.472 (= 10350) ("Arie per Mandolino/dell'Opera 2.^aIn S. Gio: Grisost:º 1729./Venet.^a")] Venezia, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana.
- Leo, L./Metastasio, P., *Confusa, smarrita* (2nd version); a single aria from *Catone in Utica*, [I-Nc, Cantate 175 ("Sig.^r Leo")] Napoli, Conservatorio di Musica 'San Pietro a Majella'; [B-Bc, 4342 ("Catone in Uttico Aria del Sig.^r Leonardo Leo.")] Bruxelles, Conservatoire royal de musique; [GB-Lbm, R.M.23.f.1 (late 18th century: "Confusa smarrita spiegarti vorrei/Del Sig.^r/D: Leonardo Leo.")] London, British Library.
- Porpora, N./Metastasio, P., *Semiramide riconosciuta. Drame per musica di Artino Corasio Pastore Arcade da rappresentarsi nel famosissimo Teatro Grimani di S. Gio: Grisostomo nel Carnevale del 1729*, Venezia, Buonarigo, [1729]; printed libretto, copies available online: <http://corago.unibo.it/libretto/DPC0001590> (accessed 4 November 2020).
- Porpora, N./Metastasio, P., *Semiramide riconosciuta. Drame per musica di Artino Corasio Pastore Arcade da rappresentarsi nel famosissimo Teatro Grimani di S. Gio: Grisostomo nel Carnevale del 1729. Seconda edizione*, Venezia, Buonarigo, [1729]; printed libretto, for copies cf. <http://corago.unibo.it/libretto/DPC0001591> (accessed 4 November 2020), copy consulted: [I-Vnm, Dramm.3555.008] Venezia, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana.
- Porpora, N./Metastasio, P., *Semiramide riconosciuta*, Venice 1729 (Feb); score, [GB-Lam, MS 81] London, Royal Academy of Music, online: https://archive.org/details/GB-Lam_MS81/mode/2up (accessed 4 November 2020).
- Giacomelli, G., *Lucio Papirio dittatore*, Parma 1729 (spring); score: [GB-Lam, MS 71] London, Royal Academy of Music, online: https://archive.org/details/ms71_20190722 (accessed 4 November 2020).
- Torri, P., *Edippo*, Munich 1729 (Oct); score: [D-Mbs, Mus. ms.156] München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, online: <http://mdz-nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb00109967-6> (accessed 4 November 2020).
- Broschi, R., *Idaspe*, Venice 1730 (Jan); score: [A-Wn, Mus. Hs.18281] Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, online: <http://data.onb.ac.at/rep/1001FA27> (accessed 4 November 2020).
- Hasse, J.A., *Artaserse*, Venice 1730 (Feb); [GB-Lam, MS72] London, Royal Academy of Music, online: https://archive.org/details/ms72_hasse (accessed 4 November 2020).

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