

Pietro Domenico Paradies

# Le muse in gara

Edited by Vanessa Tonelli

Performance parts are available from the publisher.

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# Contents

Acknowledgments vii

Introduction ix

Music in the Venetian Charitable Institutions ix

*Le muse in gara* x

Notes on Performance xiii

Text and Translation xvi

Notes xxvi

Plates xxviii

*Le muse in gara*

Sinfonia 3

Prima parte 15

1. Recitativo (Clio): "Tra le Meonie Ancelle" 15
2. Aria (Clio): "Questi mari, e questi lidi" 16
3. Recitativo (Clio, Tersicore): "Ma qui Calliope, Euterpe" 26
4. Aria (Tersicore): "Fin nell'ombrese tane" 27
5. Recitativo (Calliope): "Dillo a Calliope almen" 36
6. Aria a violino solo (Calliope): "Canto i fasti" 36
7. Recitativo (Erato): "Anco Erato ti porge i voti suoi" 46
8. Aria (Erato): "Questa pura verginella" 47
9. Recitativo (Euterpe): "Non ti cale di Euterpe" 57
10. Aria (Euterpe): "Se non parli" 58
11. Recitativo (Clio, Apollo, Calliope): "Tersicore, Calliope, Euterpe, Erato" 66
12. Aria (Apollo): "La luce più amena" 70
13. Recitativo (Clio): "Intanto a parte a parte" 78
14. Coro: "Viva Apollo il biondo Nume" 78

Seconda parte 81

15. Recitativo (Calliope, Erato): "Siam nel Parnaso, Erato" 81
16. Duetto (Calliope, Erato): "Quando vede il mio cor" 85
17. Recitativo (Apollo): "Questo, alme Suore, è il giorno" 96
18. Aria (Apollo): "Canti lo stuol" 97
19. Recitativo (Clio): "Ecco, Signor, che sugli annali antichi" 108
20. Aria (Clio): "Ti raccolsi il dì primiero" 110
21. Recitativo accompagnato (Tersicore): "Orfeo, mio figlio" 117
22. Aria (Tersicore): "Sei tu quel, che in duro agone" 121
23. Recitativo (Calliope): "Signor, se mai d'Achille" 130
24. Aria (Calliope): "Sulle soglie sacrate" 131
25. Recitativo (Erato, Calliope): "Anch'io, Signor" 141
26. Aria (Erato): "Vaga ninfa" 145
27. Recitativo (Euterpe): "Qual vaga vista" 153
28. Aria (Euterpe): "Dea de boschi, e Dea del mare" 155
29. Recitativo (Apollo): "Giacché da te s'apprese" 166
30. Coro: "Vanne al Padre, e vanne al soglio" 167

Critical Report 171

Sources 171

Editorial Methods 171

Critical Notes 172

Appendix: Alternate Arias

4a. Alternate Aria (Tersicore): "Fin nell'ombrose tane" 177

18a. Alternate Aria (Apollo): "Canti lo stuol" 185

Critical Notes 193

# Introduction

On the evening of 4 April 1740, over six hundred noble Venetians and foreigners made their way by foot and boat to the Ospedale di San Lazzaro dei Mendicanti.<sup>1</sup> These patrician guests anticipated an extravagant spectacle within the charitable institution's oratory.<sup>2</sup> Numerous candles magnificently illuminated the room, and expensive crimson velvet with gold lace draped the furnishings. In the center of the oratory, a baldachin-adorned throne awaited the special guest: the future Prince-Elector of Saxony Frederick Christian, who visited Venice for several months on a coming-of-age tour.<sup>3</sup> The evening's entertainment was the premier of *Le muse in gara*, a serenata by Pietro Domenico Paradies composed to honor the eighteen-year-old Frederick Christian.

*Le muse in gara* belongs to a genre referred to most often today as the "serenata." Developed from the baroque chamber cantata, the serenata was most often cultivated as an occasional piece for entertainment during evenings for elite individuals or royal courts.<sup>4</sup> Serenatas were characteristically composed for more than one vocalist with orchestra (strings, basso continuo, and occasionally winds), and they shared many musical and stylistic features with chamber cantatas, oratorios, and operas of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, such as containing two parts or acts, which alternated between recitatives and arias. Although often considered to be dramatic in

nature, serenatas rarely had a discernible plot, and the performers almost never acted on a stage. Instead, the work was traditionally associated with a special event, festival, or guest for which it was being performed, and stationary performers often read directly from the music, allowing for more showy or complex musical techniques that aligned with the genre's celebratory or eulogistic nature. Serenatas were a common feature within the Venetian musical environment, and in fact, *Le muse in gara* was not the first such performance that Frederick Christian attended during his visit to Venice. Two of the other Ospedali had offered serenatas in the month prior: *Il coro delle muse* (text by Carlo Goldoni and music by Gennaro d'Alessandro) at the Ospedale della Pietà, and *La concordia del tempo con la fama* (text by abbot Francesco Maria Giovanardi and music by Giuseppe Carcani) at the Ospedale degl'Incurabili. Although only the music of *Le muse in gara* survives today, these three performances were highlights of the Venetian music scene during their time, with hundreds or even thousands attending their premieres.<sup>5</sup>

## Music in the Venetian Charitable Institutions

The Ospedale di San Lazzaro dei Mendicanti was one of the four Venetian charitable Ospedali, known collectively as the Ospedali Maggiori, that were established primarily as welfare homes to serve specific needs within the city of Venice: the Ospedale degl'Incurabili took in those who had contracted incurable diseases such as syphilis or the bubonic plague, the Ospedale dei Derelitti provided a place of refuge for the derelict and homeless, the Ospedale della Pietà exclusively accepted infant foundlings, and

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1. Massimo Gemin, "L'Adria Festosa per Federico Cristiano: La lunga visita," in *L'invenzione del gusto: Corelli e Vivaldi: Mutazioni culturali, a Roma e Venezia, nel periodo post-barocco*, ed. Giovanni Morelli (Milan: Ricordi, 1982), 197.

2. The church of the Ospedale di San Lazzaro dei Mendicanti is still located between Campo SS. Giovanni e Paolo and the Fondamente Nove, on the northwestern corner of the Castello neighborhood in Venice, Italy.

3. This description is drawn from the published chronicle of Frederick Christian's sojourn, *L'Adria Festosa: Notizie Storiche . . . del Soggiorno di sua Altezza Reale ed Elettorale Federico Cristiano . . . Ove si spiegano tutte le Funzioni Pubbliche, e Private fatte a divertimento di S.A.R. l'Anno 1740, come pure li tre Componenti in Musica delle Figlie dei tre Pii Luoghi Pietà, Mendicanti e Incurabili* (Zuanne Occhi: Venice, 1740), 62: "Le Figlie del Pio Luogo de' Mendicanti, quali nel loro Oratorio tutto ornato di Veluto cremese con trine d'oro, e Baldachino simile per il Principe Reale con nobilissima illuminazione di cere, e concorso di moltissimi Nobiltà Veneta, e Forastiera rappresentarono in Musica."

4. For an in-depth study of serenatas, see Michael Talbot, "The Serenata in Eighteenth-Century Venice," *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle* 18 (1982): 1–50, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14723808.1982.10540904>.

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5. Six hundred visitors appeared at the Ospedale dei Mendicanti for *Le muse in gara*, and Frederick Christian reported more than two thousand noble attendees at the performance at the Ospedale degl'Incurabili; see Dresden, Sächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, 10026 Geheimes Kabinett, Loc. 00362/05, "Journaux en forme de Relation au Roi concernant le voyage de Prince Royale et Electoral en 1738–1740," entry for 4 April 1740, 87v–88r; *ibid.*, Loc. 00355/04, "Journal du voyage de son Altesse Royale Monseigneur le Prince Royal de Pologne etc. Electoral de Saxe etc. écrit de sa propre main, Tome II. depuis son depart de Rome, jusqu'à son arrive à Vienne," entry for 28 March 1740, 219v–220r. The libretti of these other two serenatas can also be found in *L'Adria Festosa*, and all three performances are referenced on the title page as *li tre Componenti in Musica delle Figlie dei tre Pii Luoghi Pietà, Mendicanti e Incurabili* (see note 3).

# Text and Translation

Typical of many serenatas, the text follows conventions of eighteenth-century opera and oratorio. *Versi sciolti* (unrhymed lines of seven or eleven syllables, except for the final couplet before each aria) appear for almost all the simple recitative, while two rhymed stanzas performed in da capo style are used for each aria. The following text presents the wording as found in the original manuscript score (source A), with discrepancies between the text in the score and the primary printed libretto (source L1) listed in the notes below. Spelling has been tacitly modernized, with accents added as needed, although absent final vowels and conjunctions are maintained to keep the poetic meter described above. Punctuation generally follows that found in source L1. The capitalization of L1 is retained for proper nouns, important group nouns (such as “Sorelle,” “Eroi”), heavenly or sacred places (“Etra,” “Parnaso”), and significant titles (“Signor,” “Regio Figlio”). The translation to English attempts to preserve the original meaning as best as possible.

## *Le muse in gara*

### PRIMA PARTE

### PART 1

#### 1. RECITATIVO

CLIO

Tra le Meonie<sup>1</sup> Ancelle  
Io scelta Clio<sup>2</sup> a gir vagando intorno  
Dell’orbe tutto, e con coturno piede  
Tutte calcar le vie, le reggie, e i templi;  
Quindi l’opere grandi,  
I fatti egregi, e illustri  
Tutti segnar sugl’immortal volumi,  
Perché all’età venture aprino i lumi.  
Eccomi oggi sull’Adria, dove m’assido  
Più lunghi giorni, e sempre  
Più, ch’in<sup>3</sup> ogn’altra parte  
Questi Veneti fasti empion le carte.

CLIO

Among the Meonian maids  
I, Clio, am chosen to wander about  
the whole world, and to tread all the streets, the palaces,  
and the temples with sandaled foot;  
hence to write down the great works,  
the grand and illustrious events,  
upon the immortal volumes,  
so that they may enlighten future ages.  
Here I am today on the Adriatic, where I stay for  
more long days, and, always  
more than in every other place,  
these Venetian splendors fill the volumes.

#### 2. ARIA

CLIO

Questi mari, e questi lidi  
Sono sempre alberghi fidi  
Della gloria, e del valor.  
Quivi Marte, e quivi Astrea,<sup>4</sup>  
Quivi Palla, e Galatea,<sup>5</sup>  
Quivi aggiorna, e pace, e amor.  
Questi mari, ecc.

CLIO

These seas and these shores  
are always faithful dwellings  
of glory and of valor.  
There Mars, and there Astrea,  
there Pallas, and Galatea,  
there they, with peace and love, adjourn.  
These seas, etc.

## 5. Recitativo

CALLIOPE

Dil-lo\_a Cal-lio-pe\_al-men, dim-mi\_o So-rel-la, s'è fra to-ghe\_o fra l'ar-mi quel, cui de-vo can-

Basso continuo

4

-tar gl'e-roi-ci car-mi. A che tar-di, ed a che si ta-ci-tur-na di-leg-gi\_il ge-nio

B.c.

6 # 6 [#]6 #4

7

no-stro? O-di, o-di\_il su-bli-me suon-de miei car-mi, e del-l'e-roi-che ri-me.

B.c.

6 6 #

## 6. Aria a violino solo

Adagio

Solo Violin

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

CALLIOPE

Basso continuo

*p* sempre

*p* sempre

*p* sempre

*p* [sempre]

# 10. Aria

**A tempo giusto**

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

EUTERPE

Basso continuo

*smorzato*

*tr*

3

7

Vn. 1

Vn. 2

Va.

B.c.

3

3

3

3

3

3

3

3

Vn. 1

Vn. 2

Va.

B.c.

5

3

3

3

3

3

3

3

3

*p*

*f*

*p*

*f*

*p*

*f*



# 16. Duetto

Adagietto

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

CALLIOPE

ERATO

Basso continuo

Vn. 1

Vn. 2

Va.

B.c.

Vn. 1

Vn. 2

Va.

B.c.

## 30. Coro

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

CLIO  
TERSICORE  
CALLIOPE

ERATO  
EUTERPE

APOLLO

Basso  
continuo

5

Vn. 1

Vn. 2

Va.

Clio  
Ter.  
Cal.

Van- ne\_ al Pa- dre, e van- ne\_ al so- glio, te- co por- ta i tuoi tro- fe- i,

Era.  
Eut.

Van- ne\_ al Pa- dre, e van- ne\_ al so- glio, te- co por- ta i tuoi tro- fe- i,

Apo.

Van- ne\_ al Pa- dre, e van- ne\_ al so- glio, te- co por- ta i tuoi tro- fe- i,

B.c.

6 [5]  
4 3

# Critical Report

## Sources

### Music

*Source A.* Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge (GB-Cfm), MU.MS.30. Manuscript autograph score written in ink, foliated leaves 1–86, bound between two boards and covered with a thick toned paper, and later conserved and rebaked by the Cockerell Bindery in 1979. The pages inside the binding contain a watermark of three crescent moons and a countermark of a bow and arrow. Each page contains ten music staves, some of which are left empty by the composer. The title “Le muse in gara: Cantata” appears on fol. 7r. This manuscript is the only known surviving copy of a full score of *Le muse in gara*. It is found among an assortment of Pietro Domenico Paradies’s music compositions sold to Richard Fitzwilliam, who signed and dated the score “R. Fitzwilliam 1769” on fol. 1r; upon his death in 1816, Fitzwilliam bequeathed his collections to the Fitzwilliam Museum of the University of Cambridge.

*Source B.* Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, MU.MS.111. Manuscript autograph score, foliated leaves 175–78, aria for solo soprano voice, “Fin nell’ombrose tane,” bound within a book of various arias. This work is a separate setting of no. 4 in *Le muse in gara*, found among the assortment of Pietro Domenico Paradies’s music purchased by Richard Fitzwilliam around 1769. See the appendix for a transcription.

*Source C.* Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, MU.MS.110.Q. Manuscript autograph score, foliated leaves 85–88, aria for solo contralto voice, “Canti lo stuol,” bound within a book of various arias. This work is a separate setting of no. 18 in *Le muse in gara*, found among the assortment of Pietro Domenico Paradies’s music purchased by Richard Fitzwilliam around 1769. See the appendix for a transcription.

### Libretto

*Source L1.* Biblioteca di studi teatrali di Casa Goldoni, Venice (I-Vcg), LIB 3759, CORRER VENEZIA 58 A 83. Published print; the title page reads:

LE MUSE IN GARA | Divertimento Musicale | per Sua Altezza Reale, | di Polonia | Principe Elettorale di Sassonia | Il Serenissimo | FEDERICO | CHRISTIANO | Da rappresentarsi dalle Figlie del pio Ospitale | de Mendicanti. | Poesia

del Signor | Abbate D. Giacomo De Belli | Giustinopolitano  
| Modulata dal Signor | Domenico Paradies | Napolitano.  
| In Venezia, MDCCXL [1740]. | Con Licenza de’ Superiori.

This copy was printed to distribute and sell to audience members for the evening of the performance on 4 April 1740. Other identical copies of this publication exist, including Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice (I-Vnm), SIN 21885, MISC 2669.021; and Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense, Milan (I-Mb), Corniani Algarotti Racc. Dramm 5859.

*Source L2.* Biblioteca di studi teatrali di Casa Goldoni, Venice, LIB 5213, Drammi 4 C 1-21. Published print within which the libretto appears; the title page reads:

L’ADRIA FESTOSA | NOTIZIE STORICHE | Dell’Arrivo, e Passaggio della Regina delle due Sicilie | Per lo Stato della Sereniss. Repubblica di Venezia nel suo Viaggio al Real Sposo in Napoli l’Anno 1738. | E DEL SOGGIORNO | Di Sua Altezza Reale ed Elettorale | FEDERICO CRISTIANO | FIGLIO DELLA REAL MAESTA | FEDERICO AUGUSTO III. | Re di Polonia, ed Elettor di Sassonia, | E FRATELLO DELLA REGINA. | Ove si spiegano tutte le Funzioni Pubbliche, e Private fatte a divertimento di S.A.R. l’Anno 1740, come pure li tre Componimenti in Musica delle Figlie dei tre Pii Luoghi Pietà, Mendicanti e Incurabili. | IN VENEZIA, MDCCXL [1740]. | Presso Zuanne Occhi, giù del Ponte de’ Feralli a S. Giuliano. | Con Licenza de’ Superiori, e Privileggio.

The libretto is found on pages 62–74 of the print. This copy forms part of the published report of Frederick Christian’s travels in Italy (see the introduction for further references to this publication). Another identical copy of this print is found at Sächsische Landesbibliothek—Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Dresden (D-Dl), 31.8.3679.

## Editorial Methods

This edition is based primarily on the manuscript source of the serenata (source A). In this source, the *sinfonia* is unlabeled other than with the tempo *Allegro*, while the *parte* titles are indicated by “Fine della prima parte” (fol. 38v) and “Seconda Parte” (fol. 39r). The headings for the pieces (Recitativo, Aria, Coro) are editorial, though many are derived from the source, e.g., from the many “Siegue L’Aria” indications—including “Siegue L’Aria à Violino solo” before no. 6—as well as “Siegue il Coro.” All of the numberings for the pieces are editorial.