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Anna Morichelli, Vicente Martín y Soler's Champion Singer

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Save for Martín scholars, who know her as the *prima donna* in his *L'arbore di Diana*, *La scuola dei maritati*, and *L'isola del piacere*, Anna Morichelli is largely unknown today. She was, in fact, one of the greatest singers of her generation, maintaining a stellar career for 27 years in the leading opera houses of Europe. Composers such as Giovanni Paisiello, Domenico Cimarosa, Luigi Cherubini, Antonio Salieri, Pietro Alessandro Guglielmi, and Ferdinando Paer—though not Wolfgang Amadé Mozart—wrote some of their best music for her. Her musical talents were widely recognized. The editor of the *Indice de' Spettacoli Teatrali* paid tribute to the “Celebre Virtuosa di Musica” by dedicating the 1784-85 issue to her, the only honour of this sort given to a performer during the almanac's 59 years of existence.¹ In what must surely be a mark of distinction for a singer, Gaetano Pugnani dedicated a Quintetto for two violins or oboes, violoncello, and two horns to her.² The singer Pierre Garat (1762-1823), who had witnessed her performances in Paris, was quoted by François-Joseph Fétis as declaring that “her's was the most complete and most perfect female talent that he had heard.”³ In his *Nuova Teoria di Musica* (Parma, 1812), Carlo Gervasoni remembered “a voice of an enchanting sweetness, perfect intonation, expressive singing, full of feeling.”⁴ Benedetto Frizzi, a keen judge of singers, heard her three times, once in *opera buffa* (*Le due gemelle*, Milan, lent 1789) and twice in *opera seria* (*Enea e Lavinian*, Novara, spring 1789, and *Gli Orazi e i Curiazi*, Trieste, just before she died). “Her beautiful voice, her gracefulness, the sincerity that adorned her as a buffa [singer] pleased more than the leaps, trills, cadenzas, and coloratura that she performed to perfection in serious and sublime music. She had profound knowledge of musical principles, and knew

¹ *Un almanacco drammatico: L'indice de' teatrali spettacoli, 1764-1823*, introduction by Roberto Verti (Pesaro: Fondazione Rossini, 1996; facsimile reprint of *Indice de' spettacoli teatrali* (Milan: Pietro Agnelli, 1764-1785/86); *Indice de' teatrali spettacoli* (Milan: [s.n.], 1786/87-1799/1800, 1803/04, 1808/09); *Indice, o sia Catalogo dei teatrali spettacoli italiani di tutta L'Europa* (Milan: [s.n.], 1819/20-1822/1823)), 1649 pages numbered continuously over 2 vols., 497.

² “Dedie a madame Anne Morichelli-Bosello, vertueuse de musique tres celebre,” Gaetano Pugnani, Quintetto (Florence: Ranieri del Vivo, 18, n.d.), RISM A/I P5586.

³ “C'était le talent de femme le plus complet et le plus parfait qu'il avait entendu.” Robert-Aloys Mooser, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens en Russie au XVIII^e siècle*, 3 vols. (Geneva: Mont-Blanc, 1948-51), 2:272. All translations are my own unless otherwise indicated.

⁴ “une voix d'une douceur enchanteresse, une intonation parfaite, un chant expressif et plein de sentiment; telles étaient les qualités précieuses que j'ai constatées bien des fois en cette cantatrice.” Ibid.

everything about the comic arts with respect to the stage and true theatrical taste.”⁵ Elsewhere, when writing about *buffa* singers, he again praises her talents in the comic genre. “No less, however, was Morichelli singing *buffa*; together with a round voice, she had true knowledge of music, but, even more, a soul truly musical, not only through abstract knowledge of that science but through the inimitable gracefulness that accompanied every theatrical gesture. She was the delight of Milan at the Teatro della Canobiana as the *prima donna buffa* in *Le due gemmelle* and no less the object of admiration of the French in Paris and audiences elsewhere to her eternal honour.”⁶

Morichelli was born in about 1755⁷ most probably in Bologna.⁸ The first documented performance for her, and not Anna Boselli, with whom she is sometimes confused, is in Bologna in 1773. Her name on all librettos until spring 1774 is Anna Morichelli. In 1775-76 she was in Madrid, singing under the name Anna Bosello,⁹ and the following season, Anna Menichelli [sic] Bosello.¹⁰ Among the operas performed that season, 1776-77, was Martin y Soler's *Li due avari*, an opera about which next to nothing is known, to words by Gerolamo Bosello, apparently the man she married.¹¹ Bosello was one of four directors, along with Francesco Benucci and Carlo and Luigi Zanini, of the

⁵ “La bella voce, la grazia, e la franchezza che la adornavano quale Buffa, piacquero di più che i salti, i trilli, le cadenze, e i gorgheggi che a perfezione tentava nel canto serio e sublime. Aveva profonda cognizione degli amonici principj, e conosceva assai bene quale comica l'arte tutta delle scene, e del vero gusto Teatrale.” Benedetto Frizzi, *Dissertazione di biografia musicale di Benedetto Frizzi ingegnere e medico* (after 1802), transcribed and discussed by John Rice, “Benedetto Frizzi on Singers, Composers and Opera in Late Eighteenth-Century Italy,” *Studi Musicali* 23 (1994), 378.

⁶ “Non meno però era la Morichelli, cantando da Buffa, oltre la rotonda voce, aveva vera cognizione della musica, ma più un anima veramente armonica, non solo per le astratte cognizioni de quella scienza ma per la grazia inimitabile che accompagnava ogni scenico suo movimento. Fù la delizia di Milano, nel Teatro della Canobiana, facendo da prima donna Buffa nelle due Gemmelle, e non meno fù l'ammirazione de' francesi a Parigi, e basta così a suo eterno onore.” *Ibid.*, 384.

⁷ A large discrepancy exists among the sources concerning her birth date. François-Joseph Fétis, *Biographie universelle des musiciens et bibliographie générale de la musique* (Brussels, 1835-44), gives 1760. Mooser, *Annales de la musique*, 2:272, who unwittingly merged the careers of Morichelli and Anna Boselli, gives ca.1745. Dennis Libby, “Morichelli, Anna,” in Stanley Sadie, ed., *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, 4 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1992), 3:469, gives ca.1750-55. Philip H. Highfill, Jr., Kalman A. Burnim, and Edward A. Langhans, *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers, and Other Stage Personnel in London, 1660-1800*, 16 vols. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1973-93), 10:313, give 1759, citing as their source the *Katalog der Porträt-Sammlung der k. u. k. General Intendanz der k. k. Hoftheater* (Vienna, 1892-94). In the absence of secure knowledge, it may be possible to reckon her age from her earliest known performance in a major role, which occurred in 1773. If this was indeed her debut, then a birthdate of ca.1755 would make her about 18 at the time.

⁸ Most sources give her birthplace as either Bologna or Reggio Emilia. A libretto for the production of Anfossi's *L'incognita perseguita* in Gubbio, spring 1774, however, names her “Anna Morichelli Bolognese.”

⁹ *Indice*, carnival 1776, p. 62 (Verti, 155).

¹⁰ *Indice*, carnival 1777, pp. 77-8 (Verti, 211).

¹¹ *Ibid.*

opera buffa company that performed in Madrid that season.¹² His libretto for Martin y Soler may have been a one-time venture, for his name does not appear in Sartori's librettists index.¹³ The company disbanded at the end of the year, and Morichelli, along with Benucci, returned to Bologna, where both sang during autumn 1777 and carnival 1778.¹⁴ In 1778 Morichelli took up the gruelling lifestyle of the peripatetic opera singer in earnest, singing in Reggio, Modena, Turin, and Venice. In spring 1779 she travelled to St. Petersburg, where she obtained an engagement for carnival 1780,¹⁵ after which she returned to the Italian circuit.

Until 1783, Morichelli sang in *opera buffa*, but from then on single-mindedly pursued a career in *opera seria*, eventually singing at the S. Carlo in Naples in 1785-86. Perhaps to extend her stay in that city, she sang *opera buffa* at the T. Nuovo in fall 1786, but she then left to sing *opera seria* in Torino in carnival 1787. In accepting a one-year contract in Vienna (1787-88), she was committing herself to *opera buffa*, but perhaps she was attracted by the possibility of a longer engagement.¹⁶ When her contract was not

¹² Emilio Cotarelo y Mori, *Orígenes y establecimiento de la ópera en España hasta 1800* (Madrid: Tipografía de la Revista de Archivos, Bibliotecas y Museos, 1917; facs. reprint with introduction by J. J. Carreras, Madrid: Instituto Complutense de Ciencias Musicales, 2004), 206.

¹³ Claudio Sartori, ed. *I libretti italiani a stampa dalle origini al 1800: Catalogo analitico con 16 indici*, 7 vols. (Cuneo: Bertolla & Locatelli, 1990-94).

¹⁴ *Indice*, autumn 1777, p. 69 (Verti, 248); carnival 1778, p. 7 (Verti, 274).

¹⁵ The sequence of events is not totally clear. According to Sartori and the *Indice*, Morichelli spent carnival 1779 in Venice. Mooser reports Zinzendorf having heard her in Trieste on 24 February 1779. Mooser then presents a document from the state archives in Parma stating that she had been expected to sing in Parma in carnival 1779, but that she had cancelled her engagement from St. Petersburg. But he thinks it strange that he could find no trace of her presence in that city in either the archives or the librettos. He then cites evidence of her having given a concert in Leipzig on 22 August 1780 and another concert a few weeks later in Hamburg, where she designates herself as “l.re actrice de l'Opéra comique italien de S.M. Impériale russe” (2:272). The *Indice* confirms that she sang *drammi giocosi* in St. Petersburg during carnival 1780 (p. 88; Verti, 358). The only problem with this chronology is the statement that she cancelled her engagement with Parma for carnival 1779 from St. Petersburg. If, however, “carnival 1779” is a mistaken reference to carnival 1780, which of course begins in December 1779, then the problem is solved. The Italian opera composer in St. Petersburg was Paisiello, with whom she worked again later.

¹⁶ Feelers on the part of the Viennese court theatre had been put out as early as 8 June 1785, when it appeared that Nancy Storace might not regain her voice and would have to be replaced. On that date Joseph wrote to his theatre director Count Rosenberg, “You should, as of now, try to get Morichelli, who is at the moment in Naples. I have had someone write Hadrawa [the court's agent in Naples] to find out whether she is available and whether she would sing in opera buffa.” (Vous devriés dès à présent tacher d'avoir la Moricelli [sic] qui se trouve actuellement a Naples. Je fais écrire d'ici à Hadrawa pour savoir si elle est à avoit et si elle veut chanter dans le Buffo.) Rudolf Payer von Thurn, *Joseph II. als Theaterdirektor: Ungedruckte Briefe und Aktenstücke aus den Kinderjahren des Burgtheaters* (Vienna: Verlag Leopold Heidrich, 1920), 62. Storace did regain her voice, but the following year the problem of replacing her came up again. Joseph wrote to Prince Dietrichstein, 11 October 1786, “it is good if Morichelli is successful in Vienna, since, according to what Rosenberg sends me, Storace wants absolutely to leave next year” (il est heureux si la Morichelli reussit à Vienne, puisque selon ce, que Rosenberg me mande, la Storace

renewed, she returned to *opera seria*, with engagements in Milan for carnival 1789 and at the S. Carlo for 1789-90. She was again lured into *opera buffa* by long-term appointments in Paris (1790-92), Madrid (1793-94) and London (1794-95). After returning to Italy she remained in *opera buffa*, promoting the two Martin operas she brought with her from London, until her retirement in 1798. The loss of property during the invasion of the Napoleonic army two years later forced her to return to the stage. She died during the production of Cimarosa's *opera seria Gli Orazi e i Curiazi* on 30 October 1800. Frizzi witnessed her on stage just before she died and was moved by the pitiful condition in which he saw her.¹⁷

Notwithstanding her determination to shine in *opera seria*, Morichelli's greatest success was, as Frizzi asserts, in comic opera. She had three favourite roles that almost always guaranteed her an enthusiastic reception. The first was in Guglielmi's *Le due gemelle*, written for her in Naples in summer 1786. She played the twin sisters, Giuletta and Lauretta, one ignorant and stupid, the other educated and sensitive. They so resemble each other physically that they are continually mistaken for one another by their father, sister, and lovers. "But all that is so coldly and clumsily linked together that the work does not produce any effect."¹⁸ So wrote a Parisian reviewer about the opera, expressing a widely shared view.¹⁹ Nonetheless, while the opera was not much liked, Morichelli's performance was greatly admired. "It is with a perfect intelligence that she took hold of and distinguished between these two characters. One knew better by the appearance of her face than by the change in costume which of the two characters she wanted to portray."²⁰ She used the opera to make her debuts in Vienna 1787, Paris 1790, and Madrid 1793, and performed in it in Monza 1788 and Milan 1789. Morichelli may have had a liking for portraying twins, for, judging purely from the titles and the *personaggi*, she seems to have created twin sisters in two previous operas, *Le due gemelle* composed for her by Antonio Tozzi in Madrid in 1776, and *L'equivoco*, with the double role of Lauretta and Livietta, composed by Gaetano Andreozzi for her in Florence in 1781. If

veut absolument s'en aller l'année prochaine). Vienna, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Kabinettskanzlei: Protocollum separatum aller Hand-Billets, 1786, no. 755.

¹⁷ "When I saw her the last time in Trieste, on death's doorstep, she did not present more than the wretched remainders of a beautiful ancient time, of which no more is recognizable than the miserable residues and vestiges of all the magnificence already lost and consumed" (Quando la sentij l'ultima volta in Trieste, ridotta vicina alla Tomba, non presentava più che i miserabili avanzi di un bel Tempo antico di cui più non si conoscon che i miseri suoi residui, e i vestigi di tutto il magnifico già perduto e consumato). Rice, "Benedetto Frizzi," 378.

¹⁸ "Tout cela est si froidement et si maladroitement enchaîné, que la piece ne produit acun effet." *Le Spectateur national*, 3 June 1790, p. 9, cited in Alessandro Di Profio, *La révolution des bouffons: L'opéra italien au Théâtre de Monsieur 1789-1792* (Paris: CNRS Editions, 2003), 365.

¹⁹ "This work did not appear to please" (Cet Ouvrage n'a pas paru plaire). *Journal de Paris*, 26 Avril 1791, 467-8, *ibid.*, 402.

²⁰ "C'est avec une intelligence parfaite qu'elle a saisi et fait distinguer ces deux caractères. On connaissait mieux à l'air de son visage qu'à son changement d'habit, celui des deux personnages qu'elle voulait représenter." *Gazette nationale, Moniteur universel*, 1 June 1790, 618, *ibid.*, 364.

indeed playing twins in all three operas was her idea, it points to a singer who already early on asserted a fair amount of control over her career.²¹

Morichelli's engagement with the role of Nina is somewhat more complex. Nicolas-Marie Dalayrac's *Nina ou la folle per amour*, a *comédie mêlée d'ariettes*, was first performed on 15 May 1786 in Paris. On presumably Morichelli's initiative, this French play with musical numbers was translated into Italian by Giuseppe Carpani for a production at Monza in 1788 with Morichelli in the title role. One can only imagine what a challenge the spoken dialogue must have presented to the other singers. Morichelli repeated the work in Milan in lent of the following year. How utterly disappointed she must have been a few months later when Paisiello wrote the title role of his *Nina* not for her but for Celeste Coltellini. What must have made it especially frustrating was the fact that she was right there in Naples at the time, engaged at the T. Nuovo. Had she, instead of Coltellini, been the *prima buffa* at the T. Fiorentini, the role would probably have been written for her. Paisiello had an outstanding actress in Coltellini, even if her singing did not come up to the level of Morichelli's.²² The opera was an occasional work, commissioned by the King for a special event near his summer palace at Caserta. Whether it was the rural setting that inspired Paisiello to make his own setting of the musical numbers in the play, as Michael Robinson suggests, or whether the success of Dalayrac's work in Monza and Milan goaded him into trying to match or improve on it, he used Carpani's Italian translation and had the court poet Giambattista Lorenzi write verses for an additional three numbers.²³ The resulting one-act *commedia in prosa ed in verso per musica* was given its premiere on 25 June 1789 to extraordinary acclaim. When Morichelli left Naples for Paris the following spring, she took the one-act Paisiello opera with her. Meanwhile, since the public was clamouring to see the work in a Neapolitan opera house, Paisiello expanded his one-act opera into two acts by adding three new numbers but still retaining the spoken dialogue. The new version was performed at the T. Fiorentini in autumn 1790, still with Coltellini as Nina. This version of the opera circulated throughout Europe, with most opera houses supplying recitatives to replace the dialogue. In Paris, Cherubini composed the recitatives for the original one-act version that Morichelli had brought with her, and the opera was produced at the Théâtre de Monsieur on 3 September 1791. Morichelli's success in the role there was probably one of the high points of her career, as will be seen below. She took the opera to Madrid in

²¹ In this essay I repeatedly speak of Morichelli as choosing this or that opera. In fact, I am not so certain that first-rank singers always had control over the repertory they sang. It probably varied from place to place. In Vienna, for instance, with its system of repertory opera, except for debuts, singers were expected to sing the roles assigned to them.

²² In Vienna, the *Wiener Früh- und Abend-blatt*, 29 April 1788, greeted Coltellini's arrival as *prima donna* with the comment that she had no superior in acting, but that Morichelli and Storace were her betters in singing. "Mlle Coltellini ist dieser Tage angelangt und als Primadonna mit 1000 Dukaten [4500 fl.] engagiert worden. An Aktion wird sie von keiner Sängerin übertroffen, aber an Gesang sind Mme Morichelli and Storace ihre Meisterinnen." Otto Michtner, *Das alte Burgtheater als Opernbühne von der Einführung des deutschen Singspiels (1778) bis zum Tod Kaiser Leopolds II. (1792)* (Vienna: Böhlau for the Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1970), 252-3.

²³ Michael Robinson, *Giovanni Paisiello: A Thematic Catalogue of his Works*, 2 vols. (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1991), 1:463.

1793, and later, in 1796, to Venice and Florence. In Venice the press misinformed the public, whether by design or error, that the opera had been composed for her by Paisiello in Paris.²⁴ It is unfathomable that she would not have wanted to sing the role in London. The King's Theatre even owned a copy of Cherubini's score that it had purchased in November 1791.²⁵ I can think of only one explanation: Brigida Giorgi Banti. Banti was the *prima donna seria* in London, engaged at the same time as Morichelli was engaged as *prima donna buffa*. Banti had enormous power, as shall be seen. Banti was either preventing Morichelli from singing the role or reserving it for herself, even though it wasn't written for a *prima donna seria*. But sing it she did in 1797, with enormous success.

Morichelli's third favourite role was that of Ciprigna in *La scuola dei maritati ossia La capricciosa corretta*. After the opera's initial success in London in 1795, Morichelli took the opera with her to the continent and immediately had it performed in Venice. In 1796 she sang in it in Florence, Udine, and Pisa, the following year again in Florence, and in 1798 in Naples, after which she retired.

Against this overview of her career, I would like to examine more closely Morichelli's career in Vienna and London, where she collaborated with Martín, and in Paris, where her success offers a different perspective on her experiences in the other two cities.

VIENNA

Morichelli was engaged in Vienna as the successor to the Viennese's beloved Nancy Storace. She stayed for the 1787-88 season, which lasted from 9 April 1787 to 5 February 1788. Her salary of 4000 gulden compares to Storace's former salary of 4500 gulden, the salaries of her current colleagues, the tenor Domenico Mombelli who was paid 4500 gulden and Benucci who was paid 4185 gulden, and that of her immediate successor Coltellini, who was engaged at 4500 gulden.²⁶ She did not make a good impression at her debut on 9 April 1787 in *L'inganno amoroso (Le due gemelle)*. Count Karl Zinzendorf, the spokesman for his class, sums up her performance with, "Morichelli who played the two roles of Giuletta and Lauretta, made up for a sliver of a voice with her acting; she has absolutely no high notes, often she speaks instead of singing. She was warmly welcomed, but she does not replace Storace."²⁷ Two days after the premiere, the *Wiener Zeitung* carried an advertizement by Artaria offering for sale an engraved vocal score of Morichelli's recitative—rondò "Oh Dio! Se in quest'istante—Infelice in tal

²⁴ *Gazzetta urbana veneta*, 2 January 1796, cited in Di Profio, 126.

²⁵ Judith Milhous, Gabriella Dideriksen, and Robert D Hume, *Italian Opera in Late Eighteenth-Century London*, vol. 2, *The Pantheon Opera and its Aftermath, 1789-1795* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001), 443.

²⁶ Dorothea Link, *The National Court Theatre in Mozart's Vienna: Sources and Documents, 1783-1792* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 421, 426.

²⁷ "La Morichelli qui fit les deux rôles de Giuletta et de Lauretta, [supléa?] par son action un tres petit filet de voix, les cordes hautes lui manquent absolument, souvent elle parle au lieu de chanter. Elle fut tres accueillie, mais elle ne remplace pas la Storace." Zinzendorf, 9 April 1787, cited *ibid.*, 291.

momento.”²⁸ The appearance of an engraved aria by Artaria immediately after the premiere of an opera was highly unusual.²⁹ The engraving had to have been prepared in advance of Morichelli's debut. What persuaded Artaria to take the financial risk of publishing an aria before it had established itself as a hit?³⁰ Some of the nobility may have been predisposed to like Morichelli, since she had been recruited from *opera seria*, which they, on principle, preferred to *opera buffa* as being more suitable for an aristocratic audience. Perhaps one of them underwrote the Artaria publication? The nobility did occasionally bestow their patronage on certain performers. The Venetian ambassador Count Daniele Andrea Delfini, for example, hosted a concert at his palace on 28 April to help launch Morichelli's career in Vienna. The English ambassador had done the same for Storace in 1783, and Delfini was to do it again for Adriana Ferrarese del Bene in 1788. Zinzendorf gives some idea of what the concert was like on the 28th. “I finished the evening at the Venetian ambassador's, where there were pretty ladies and music. M.elle Scheidel played harp. Morichelli sang alone, then M.elle Victoire de Fries. Then they sang together the pretty duet from la Scuola de gelosi.”³¹ It was not unusual for the nobility to engage professional musicians to perform with them.³² On 14 February 1788, for example, Countess Fries was one of several noble ladies who performed with a number of opera singers at Prince Galizin's.³³ The choice of Salieri's *La scuola de' gelosi* at the Venetian ambassador's concert was not haphazard. Morichelli had created the role

²⁸ *Wiener Zeitung*, 11 April, p. 938, “In der Kunsthandlung Artaria Comp. am Michaelerplatz ist folgende Hauptaria, und das Duett aus der neuen Oper: L'inganno amoroso, fürs Klavier gut übersetzt, und deutlich gestochen zu haben, als: Rondo, Infelice in tal momento, con Recitativo, Oh Dio! Se in quest'istante, Cantato della Signora Morichelli, 30 Kr.” This recitative—aria was written for her by Paisiello in Naples in the cantata “Amor vendicato,” performed 30 June 1786 and originally texted as “Crudele—Ho perduto il bel sembiante.” Morichelli retained this aria in the opera when she performed it in Paris. Cf. Di Profio, 451.

²⁹ The music copyists, chief among them Lorenz Lausch, scooped up the initial business from sales of operatic hits, because they were able to offer them to the public almost immediately after the premiere. Filling an order for an aria copied by hand took two or three days, while the engraving process took considerably longer and required an outlay of money upfront from the publisher. Hence, Artaria usually brought out his engraved scores of operatic excerpts many weeks after the premiere, when the hits had become clearly identified. Once, in an attempt to beat the copyists to the sales, Artaria engraved fourteen numbers from *La scuola dei maritati* in advance of its production in Vienna, where it was entitled *Gli sposi in contrasto*. The premiere took place on 11 October 1796 and Artaria's first advertisement in the *Wiener Zeitung* came out on 15 October. Unfortunately for Artaria, many of the opera's numbers were changed at the last minute and he was stuck with engraved music that had not been performed in Vienna.

³⁰ It seems to have become a hit. Among other indicators, Zinzendorf mentions it by name when he heard the opera again on 1 June with Madame d'Auersperg, “Morichelli's aria, Infelice in tal momento, Scene 13 of the second act, made a great impression on her” (L'air de la Morichelli. Infelice in tal momento Scene 13 du second acte lui fit beaucoup d'impression). Link, *National Court Theatre*, 296.

³¹ “fini la soirée chez l'amb. de Venise, ou il y avoit de jolies dames et de la musique. M.elle Scheidel pinça la harpe. La Morichelli chanta seule, puis M.elle Victoire de fries. Ensuite elles chanterent ensemble le joli duo de la Scuola de gelosi.” Zinzendorf, 28 April 1787, *ibid.*, 293.

³² *Ibid.*, 201-3, and D. Link, “Vienna's private theatrical and musical life, 1783-92, as reported by Count Karl Zinzendorf,” *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 122 (1997), 205-57.

³³ See Zinzendorf, 14 February 1788, in Link, *National Court Theatre*, 312.

of the Contessa in Salieri's opera in Venice in 1778. The Viennese knew the opera well, as it had inaugurated the newly created *opera buffa* company in 1783 and had played continuously since then with Storace in the role of the Contessa. What the Viennese didn't know were the arias Salieri had originally composed for Morichelli, for Storace sang different arias better suited to her abilities. Perhaps the aria Morichelli sang at the concert was one of the Contessa's original arias.

The management unusually seems to have granted Morichelli the choice of a second opera, for on 7 May she performed in *Le trame deluse*, an opera that had been written for her five months earlier in Naples by Cimarosa. Zinzendorf comments on her taxing role with "La Morichelli sang to the point of developing consumption."³⁴ He reports that Cimarosa's music pleased his companion enormously; the libretto he declares horrible.³⁵ The opera was performed sixteen times to the end of December, a healthy run. The first production of *Le nozze di Figaro*, by comparison, had nine performances. Morichelli liked *Le trame deluse* well enough to sing in it again in Paris in 1792.

The third opera in which Morichelli appeared, on 28 July, was Paisiello's *Le due contesse*. Given its premiere in Rome 3 January 1776, it had been heard in Vienna a number of times between 18 November 1776 and 3 February 1777.³⁶ It's hard to imagine why the management would have revived such an old opera, unless the impetus had come from Morichelli. Preferring to be heard in operas that were new to Vienna or, at least, that had not been performed by Storace, she may have convinced the management that the opera still had some life in it. She herself had sung it in 1778 in Turin. For the Vienna production she replaced all three original Paisiello arias for her role with a duet by an unidentified composer and two arias by "Sig.re Rauzini."³⁷ Zinzendorf merely writes that the opera did not interest him.³⁸ Archduchess Elisabeth, the young wife of Archduke Franz, wrote to her husband on 4 August, "A new opera is currently being performed: *Le due contesse*, but it is not immensely liked, especially as Benucci is not performing in it."³⁹ She mentions the absence of Benucci but not the presence of Morichelli! Nor was she apparently consoled by the performances of the excellent Stefano Mandini and

³⁴ "La Morichelli chanta a devenir pulmonique." Zinzendorf, 9 May 1787, cited *ibid.*, 294.

³⁵ "La musique de l'opera de Cimarosa plut infiniment a M.e de la Lippe qui etoit dans notre loge, le livret est horrible." Zinzendorf, 7 May 1787, *ibid.*

³⁶ Franz Hadamowsky, *Die Wiener Hoftheater (Staatstheater) 1776-1966: Verzeichnis der aufgeführten Stücke mit Beständsnachweis und täglichen Spielplan*, vol. 1, 1776-1810 (Vienna: Georg Prachner, 1966), 31. The opera was performed by one of the temporary Italian opera companies that existed sporadically in Vienna between 1776 and 1783 when the court did not have its own Italian opera company.

³⁷ The two arias can be found in the performing score, A-Wn, KT 92, as noted by Robinson, *Paisello Thematic Catalogue*, 1:227, who proposes Venanzio Rauzzini as the composer. However, in this case, his brother Matteo may be the more likely composer, since Morichelli had sung in an opera of his in Venice in carnival 1781.

³⁸ "Le soir a l'opera *Le due Contesse*. Il ne m'interessa pas." Zinzendorf, 30 July 1787, in Link, *National Court Theatre*, 298.

³⁹ "On donne à présent un nouvel opéra: *Le due Contesse*, mais il ne plaît pas infiniment, surtout comme Benucci n'y joue pas." H. Weyda, "Briefe an Erzherzog Franz von seiner ersten Gemahlin Elisabeth 1785-1789," *Archiv für Österreichische Geschichte* 44 (1871), 111-262.

Vincenzo Calvesi, who also were in the cast.⁴⁰ The opera was discontinued after ten performances. It is perhaps indicative of the aesthetic gap between the Viennese and Morichelli that none of the three operas Morichelli chose for herself stayed in the repertory after she left.⁴¹

In June Banti passed through Vienna and gave two well-received concerts on the 2nd and the 9th. Many in the audience had probably attended her concert on 15 June the previous year. The idea now came up that she could join the *opera buffa* company. The medical student Amand Wilhelm Smith reports in a letter of 5 June: “There is a new singer by the name of Banthi who surpasses all the singers who have existed here until now. Madame Morichelli, who has taken the place of Madame Storace, is much obscured once one has heard the aforementioned, she even surpasses Madame Storace by far. The aristocracy will be suggesting to the Emperor, and to the Director Count Rosenberg in particular, that she be engaged for the theatre. It is everyone's wish. She has the general applause. Moreover she is still very young, and has, what is very rare, a very fine person about her. Righini is in ecstasy whenever the conversation turns to her.”⁴² In a letter of 25 June 1787, Joseph writes to Count Rosenberg: “I received yesterday your letter in which you speak to me about Georgi Bandi. I think that for the moment we must be content with maintaining the good will that she evinces for our *opera buffa*, and not engage her formally, until we are sure that Storace would not want to renew her engagement, having heard that there might be means to recover her, and our theatre being in other respects provided with female singers for two years.”⁴³ If Storace's position was being held for her until spring 1788, and if Banti was considered a potential substitute for Storace should she not return, where does that leave Morichelli? When she was engaged, she may have been offered a one-year contract with the option of renewal, contingent on Storace's not returning, but she may have preferred a terminal one-year contract to risking unemployment. The terms of her contract seem to have been common knowledge, which would explain why she is not mentioned in the following report in the *Wiener Blättchen*, whose editor also seems to be fully informed about the negotiations with Banti. The

⁴⁰ A-Wn, KT 92, performing score, with cast written on inside cover: La Contessa = Sigr Morichelli, Livietta = Sigr Mandini, Cavaliere = Sigr Calvesi, Leandro = Sigr Mandini, Prospero = Sig Trentanove.

⁴¹ *Le trame deluse* was revived in July 1791 for five performances.

⁴² “adest modo nova Cantatrix nomine Banthi, que omnibus adhuc hic existentibus anteit, Madama Morichelli, quae in Locum Dominae Storacae venit, valde priori audita obscuratur, etsi in opera seria longe antecellat Storacianam. Magnates imperatori proponunt, praesertim Director Comes Rosenberg, ut conducatur pro Theatro. omnes id ipsum in votis habent. habet applausum universalem. praeter ea adhuc est valde juvenis, et quod valde rarum est, pulcherrima persona. Righini in extasi est, si de illa sermo est.” Used by kind permission of Ingrid Fuchs from her essay, “Nuevas fuentes para la recepción de las óperas de Martín y Soler en Viena, y en particular, de *Una cosa rara*,” in *Los siete mundos de Vicente Martín y Soler*, 255-64, here 262 n. 42.

⁴³ “J'ai reçu hier votre lettre dans laquelle vous me parlés de la Georgi Bandi, je crois que pour le moment il faudroit se borner à entretenir la bonne volonté qu'elle temoigne de s'attacher à notre opera buffa, et ne l'engager formellement, que lorsqu'on sera sur que la Storace ne voudra plus renouer d'engagement, ayant appris qu'il y auroit peut être moïen de la ravoïr, et notre theatre étant d'ailleurs pourvu de chanteuses pour deux ans.” Payer von Thurn, 73.

report, on 30 June, reads, “On her trip through Vienna Mad. Georgi Bandi presented herself in two musical academies, which received extraordinary applause. It is hoped that within the year she will be engaged for the Italian opera here, and then we could do without Madame Storage.”⁴⁴

On 20 August Morichelli finally had to submit to performing in the popular repertory operas, headed by Martin y Soler's *Una cosa rara*, of which there had been only ten performances since its phenomenally successful premiere and none since Easter. Morichelli may have taken over Storage's role of Lilla with some trepidation. Zinzendorf writes, “Morichelli sang well, but her large and heavy figure did not replace Storage's very well. Many people and very hot.”⁴⁵ The medical student Smith, who attended the same performance, reported, “Yesterday I was at the opera *Cosa rara*: Madame Morichelli performed in it for the first time in place of Storage. The crowding of the masses was such that all of us, soaked in sweat, could barely get our breath. She sang well, was much applauded because she had a large following in the noble parterre and the second parterre. It is from such followings that the fate and fame of persons of the theatre usually depends.”⁴⁶ Both Zinzendorf and Smith agree that Morichelli sang well, although neither is entirely satisfied. Smith notes the support from the parterre, the area reserved for the nobility and their ceremonial guards, with a touch of annoyance. Was he annoyed at the presence of something approaching a *claque* or the fact that the *claque* here was comprised of members of the nobility?⁴⁷ Zinzendorf, for his part, qualifies his approval of

⁴⁴ “Mde Georgio Bandi hat auf ihrer Durchreise zweymal in einer musikalischen Akademie sich hören lassen, und ausserordentlichen Beyfall erhalten. Man hoft, dass sie innerhalb Jahresfrist bey der hiesigen Italiänischen Oper werde engagiert werden, und dann könnten wir die Madame Storage entbehren.” *Wiener Blättchen*, 30 June 1787.

⁴⁵ “La Morichelli chanta bien, mais sa figure grande et lourde ne remplaça pas bien celle de la Storage. Beaucoup de monde et fort chaud.” Zinzendorf, 20 August 1787, in Link, *National Court Theatre*, 299.

⁴⁶ “Heri fui in opera: *Cosa rara*, Madama Morichelli loco *Storazzianae* in hac, prima vice se produxit. Tantus erat confluxus populi, ut omnes sudoribus perfusi vix *Respirium* ducere potuerimus. Bene cecinit, habuit magnum applausum, quia habuit factionem magnam in Noble Parterre, uti in altero, et ab his factionibus plurimum dependit sors et Celebritas personarum Theatralium.” Used by kind permission of Ingrid Fuchs from her essay in *Los siete mundos de Vicente Martín y Soler*, 262 n. 43.

⁴⁷ If Morichelli did have a *claque* or at least strong support from among the nobility, a possibility already noted, then she may have been a pawn in Vienna's local politics. The loud support of Morichelli, the *opera seria* singer, on the part of some of the nobility may have been a way of expressing their displeasure at the enlightenment reforms of Joseph that cut into their privileges. Only a few weeks earlier, Zinzendorf had noted in his diary a disturbing incident that had taken place at a performance of *L'ingano amoroso* [*Le due gemelle*] on 8 July. “The emperor enjoined the Grand Chamberlain to buy for him the brochure *Why is Emperor Joseph not Loved by his People?* yesterday at the theatre, he was not at all applauded, but Morichelli who entered at the same time was very much so” (*L'Emp a ordonné au Grand Chamb. d'acheter pour lui la brochure Warum wird Kaiser Jos. von seinem Volk nicht geliebt? hier au spectacle, on ne l'a point applaudi, mais bien la Morichelli qui sortoit en même tems*). Zinzendorf, 9 July 1787, in Link, *National Court Theatre*, 297. His abandonment by the lower classes was a huge disappointment to Joseph, but it was the antagonism of the nobility, with which he of course reckoned, that eventually helped crush him. To what extent the opera house in Vienna was a forum for the

Morichelli by reiterating that she did not replace Storace. Morichelli may have been uncomfortable in the role, for the next time she performed in *Una cosa rara*, in Paris in 1791, she sang the role of the Queen. When in November Morichelli took over Storace's role in *La grotta di Trofonio*, Zinzendorf wrote, "Morichelli sang well, but with too many ornaments; at the beginning she wore a hoop-petticoat, which she later took off, but she did not replace Storace."⁴⁸ By then that judgment had become a refrain.

In October Morichelli finally had a chance to shine in a role composed expressly for her in Vienna, by Vienna's darling composer Martin y Soler. They of course knew each other from way back in Madrid. Composition of his new opera, *L'arbore di Diana*, with her in the title role, must have begun soon after her arrival. Judging from the music she sang in concerts, about which more below, it is quite clear that Morichelli was marketing herself as a *seria* singer, primarily because that is how she saw herself, but also to put distance between herself and Storace. The over-ornamentation in *La grotta di Trofonio* that Zinzendorf complains about is an example of how she was trying to differentiate between Storace's and her own art. *L'arbore di Diana*, then, was designed for her, for, although it was a comic opera, she was provided with a serious role that allowed for two *seria*-style virtuoso arias. The first, "Sento che dea son io" (I, 13), in which she imperiously asserts her identity as a goddess, abounds with large leaps and long coloratura passages. Her second showcase aria, "Teco porta, o mia speranza" (II, 15), a two-part rondò placed immediately before the second finale, expresses sorrow at having yielded to love.⁴⁹ It begins with a beautifully arching melody in a cantabile triple meter, which returns exquisitely altered in the aria's second section in allegro common time. But Morichelli also had to make a concession to the overall style of the opera and sing two song-style numbers,⁵⁰ the first (I, 3), a short, lyrical da capo aria in a rocking compound meter in which she expresses her love of tranquility, reaffirmed more boisterously by her nymphs in chorus, the second, the briefest of cavatinas (II, 2), in which she charmingly explodes with anger at the intruders. To her surprise, no doubt, only her very first aria, the short number in 6/8, was published, as was the love duet with Endimione (II, 12), which moves in an undisturbed, gentle 3/8 rhythm throughout, except for a brief moment of panic when Endimione is about to flee. Unlike the practice elsewhere, where two or three showcase arias of the leading singer were published to commemorate the performance,⁵¹ in Vienna neither of Morichelli's two great arias were published by Artaria, whereas the bulk of the opera's numbers, arias and ensembles alike,

expression of political positions, as in some other cities, is simply not known, but it is a possibility to bear in mind.

⁴⁸ "La Morichelli chanta bien, mais avec trop d'ornemens, elle avoit d'abord un panier qu'elle ota ensuite, mais elle ne remplaça pas la Storace." Zinzendorf, 21 November 1787, *ibid.*, 306.

⁴⁹ The numbering of the pieces follows that in Vicente Martín y Soler, *L'arbore di Diana*, ed. Leonardo J. Waisman, *Música Hispana A36* (Madrid: Instituto Complutense de Ciencias Musicales, 2001).

⁵⁰ For a definition of the term "song style" see my article "Martín y Soler" in Stanley Sadie, ed., *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., 29 vols. (London: Macmillan, 2001), 16:1-4, directly under the heading "2. Works."

⁵¹ More work needs to be done on what constitutes "hits" in operas, whether they commemorated stellar performances, or whether they supplied the amateur with the latest popular music that could be played at home, or both, and to what extent this varied by locale.

were. What mattered, it seems, was that they be short and song-like, and within reach of amateur singers. If not before, then now Morichelli must have understood the nature of Martin's phenomenal appeal for the Viennese. She was to remember that when they worked together in London.

The opera's overwhelming success swept her along with it. Zinzendorf writes, "Morichelli in the role of Diana turned out to be very good," and for once omits his usual refrain.⁵² However, the anonymous "habitant de Vienne" supplies it for him.⁵³ Detesting everything about the opera except for his favourite singers, of whom Morichelli was emphatically not one, he begins his review of her by reminding his friend in Prague just who she was, "Morichelli, who does everything in her power to wipe out and obliterate the memory of Storace without ever being able to succeed..."⁵⁴ He doesn't like her singing. "She sang for us in the first act a huge *aria d'impegno* far beyond her capabilities, in which she repeated at least 15 or 20 times the same roudades that we have known here for six months and that we have heard in five different operas (and one has the goodness here to call that a first-class singer)... But in my opinion she would have done better not to have sung it at all, for it was very unsuccessful."⁵⁵ He doesn't like her acting. "In the first-act finale our charming Diana manquée, is pricked by Endimion with an arrow that Amor gave him and put into his hand; there you should see the grimaces, contortions and twitching of the body and of the countenance of someone excommunicated or convulsed that our charming actress makes. We believed we saw the devil, floundering in a basin of holy water. She never recovered from this injury and one would have said, seeing her clumsy movements, that she had been struck in the kidneys by the sword of a Prussian granadier."⁵⁶

If we disregard the virulent tone, which persists for the entire review, the "habitant de Vienna" may really only be saying that, by Viennese standards, Morichelli overacts. There is some evidence that the Viennese valued subtlety in their singers' acting. One of the critics praising the highly esteemed Francesco Benucci specifically

⁵² "La Morichelli dans le rôle de Diana paroît fort bien." Zinzendorf, 1 October 1787, in Link, 301.

⁵³ "Letter d'un habitant de Vienne à son ami à Prague, qui lui avait demandé ses réflexions sur l'opéra intitulé L'Arbre de Diana," transcribed in Michtner, 435-9.

⁵⁴ "La Morichelli, qui fait tous ses efforts pour écraser et faire oublier la Storace sans jamais pouvoir y réussir." Ibid., 436.

⁵⁵ "Elle nous a chanté dans le premier acte un grand air d'impegno beaucoup au-dessus de ses forces Dans lequel elle a répété au moins 15 ou 20 fois les mêmes roudades, que nous connaissons ici depuis six mois, et que nous avons entendues dans cinq opéras différents (et on a la bonté d'appeler cela ici une première chanteuse)... Mais à mon avis elle aurait beaucoup mieux fait de ne pas le chanter du tout, car il a bien mal réussi." Ibid., 436.

⁵⁶ "Dans le finale du premier acte notre charmante Diana manquée et piquée par Endimion d'un trait, que l'Amour lui a donné et mis en main; c'est là, qu'il faut voir les grimaces, contorsions et élans de corps et de figure d'excommuniée ou de convulsionnaire, que fait cette charmante actrice. Nous avons crû voir le diable, qui se débattait dans un bénitier. Elle ne relève plus de cette blessure et on dirait à voir ses gaucheries, qu'elle a reçu un coup de sabre dans les reins par un grenadier prussien," *ibid.*, 437.

says that, unlike most *bassi buffi*, he never exaggerates.⁵⁷ As Benucci later discovered to his misfortune, the subtleties of his performance were lost on the London opera audiences.⁵⁸ Vienna's tradition of acting in the spoken theatre had been quickly absorbed by the leading singers who joined the *opera buffa* company created in 1783. Both Benucci and Storace studied and copied the actors, which Joseph observed with approval. Celeste Coltellini, who arrived later, credited Vienna as the place where she learned how to act.⁵⁹

Perhaps the “habitant de Vienna” eventually calmed down and attended another performance, for all of Vienna flocked to the opera; indeed, *L'arbore di Diana* became the most frequently performed opera in Vienna during the Josephine years. And yet Morichelli's performance did nothing to change her status at the opera. She took on no further roles, except for *La grotta di Trofonio*, as already mentioned, and continued to sing in the same six operas to the end of the season in mid-February. She herself seems not to have liked *L'arbore di Diana*, for she performed it only once more, in Milan in 1788.

Meanwhile, Morichelli took advantage of whatever opportunities she could to display her talents in *opera seria*. She frequently donated her services to other musicians' benefit concerts, where she performed her favourite arias.⁶⁰ After one of these concerts Zinzendorf recorded that she sang to perfection.⁶¹ During lent, when the leading singers were entitled to benefit concerts, she persuaded a number of them to pool their nights and perform the oratorio, *Il convitto di Baldassare*, a pasticcio in which she had sung in Naples in carnival 1786.⁶² She took no half measures with the production. Zinzendorf

⁵⁷ For a discussion of Benucci's singing, see Dorothea Link, *Arias for Francesco Benucci, Mozart's First Figaro and Guglielmo* (Middleton, WI: A-R Editions, 2004), vii-xviii.

⁵⁸ In spring 1789 Benucci joined Nancy Storace at the King's Theatre, but he left after a few months after it had become clear that the English preferred the broader acting and louder voice of the resident *basso buffo* Giovanni Morelli.

⁵⁹ Link, *National Court Theatre*, 489.

⁶⁰ On 13 October, in the concert of the Böck brothers, she sang an unidentified recitative and rondò and an aria di bravura. On 15 February 1788, in Stefano Mandini's concert, she sang “Se cerca” from Domenico Cimarosa's *Olimpiade* and a scene and rondò by Francesco Bianchi. On 23 February, in the academy for Josepha Müllner, she sang a recitative and aria “Perche se tanti siete” by Paisiello and a “duet aria” with Caterina Cavalieri, “La destra ti chiedo” by Felix Alessandri.

⁶¹ “Dela au Concert d'une demoiselle Catoni qui est jolie et chante fort mal. La Morichelli chanta en perfection un air del'Olympiade. Piangendo parti.” Zinzendorf, September 8, in Link, *National Court Theatre*, 300.

⁶² Among its 20 numbers by eight to ten composers (*ibid.*, 311 n. 190), the pasticcio contains the duet “Ne gioni tuoi felici” and the aria “Tu me da me dividi” from Paisiello's *dramma per musica Olimpiade*, written for Morichelli in Naples in carnival 1786. The duet was the undisputed hit in the opera, judging from the number of manuscript and printed copies listed in Robinson, *Paisiello Thematic Catalogue*, 1:369-72, while the aria was a little less popular. Martín y Soler is also represented in the pasticcio with a “Preludio” to Part 2. See the work list in Leonardo J. Waisman, *Vicente Martín y Soler, un músico español en el Clasicismo europeo* (Madrid: Instituto Complutense de Ciencias Musicales, 2007), 571.

reports that there were sets and luxurious costumes,⁶³ and the theatre poster announces the participation of choruses.⁶⁴ Of the four performances, three were benefits for her and one was for Calvesi. The theatre librettist Lorenzo Da Ponte was to copy her idea the following lent with his pasticcio opera *L'ape musicale*. The ambassador of Venice continued to sponsor concerts for her in his palace. On 10 February 1788 she sang in a concert that included Stefano Mandini, Josepha Müllner playing the harp, and Mozart playing the fortepiano.⁶⁵ On 30 March she organized a performance of the oratorio *Jefte* by Antonio Sacchini.⁶⁶ One wonders at the size of her luggage, if she carried all those scores and possibly parts with her.

Whether or not the Viennese in the end liked Morichelli, she did not stay on another season. When Ferrarese appeared six months after Morichelli's departure, in Morichelli's role of Diana no less (but with her own arias), she, too, was not considered a replacement for Storace, at least initially,⁶⁷ because her acting was weak, but the Viennese took to her, because she could sing. "Connoisseurs of music claim that in living memory no such voice has sounded within Vienna's walls. One pities only that the acting of this artist did not come up to her singing."⁶⁸ In a letter of 8 November 1788 the archduchess Elisabeth writes to her husband, "There is currently a new singer here called Ferraresi; she is causing a commotion, for she is thought to sing very well. I heard her once, but I confess that she did not please me nearly as much as Storace; her acting is atrocious, so much the more in *L'arbore di Diana* where she plays the role of Morichelli, who was steeped in grace, as you know."⁶⁹ The pamphlet *Grundsätze zur Theaterkritik*,

⁶³ "Le soir au Theatre Il convitto di Baldassarre, oratoire pour le benefice de la Morichelli. Mandini fit le Roi Belsazer, sa femme la Pesse de Babylone [Nitocri?], la Morichelli [Palmyra?] fille du roi de Judaé, les habillemens avoit du luxe et les decorations pas mal." Zinzendorf, 8 February 1787, in Link, *National Court Theatre*, 311.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 121.

⁶⁵ "Dela chez l'Amb. de Venise, ou il y avoit grand monde. Un Concert, ou Mandini et la Morichelli chanterent, Mozart et une certaine Muller, fille de Cordonnier toucherent l'un du piano forte, l'autre de la harpe." Zinzendorf, 10 February 1787, *ibid.*, 311. Zinzendorf's "Muller" is the same Josepha Müllner, in whose academy Morichelli sang on 23 February.

⁶⁶ "Après 6h au Concert chez l'ambassadeur de Venise. Jefte. Il y chanta la Morichelli, Adamberger, les Saal." Zinzendorf, 30 March 1787, *ibid.*, 314. The composer is known from Sartori, libretto 14025.

⁶⁷ The comparisons with Storace soon stop. Zinzendorf later (14 January 1789, in Link, *National Court Theatre*, 326) reports that Ferrarese sang Storace's aria "Dolce mi parve un di" from *La grotta di Trofonio* much better than Storace did. On 7 May 1790, after a performance of *Le nozze di Figaro*, he writes, "Ferrarese's rondo always pleases" (le rondeau de la ferraresi plait toujours). *Ibid.*, 355. This is the rondò, "Un moto di gioia," K. 579, that Mozart wrote for her as the replacement for Storace's "Deh vieni, non tardar."

⁶⁸ "Kenner der Musik behaupten, daß seit Menschengedenken in Wiens Mauern keine solche Kehle geklungen hat. Man bedauert nur, daß das Spiel dieser Meisterin nicht ihrem Gesang entsprach." *Rapport von Wien*, 15 October 1788, cited in Michtner, 272-3. The English translation is by Christopher Raeburn, "Ferraresi del Bene, Adriana," in Stanley Sadie, ed., *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 20 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1980), 6:490.

⁶⁹ "Il y a à present une nouvelle chanteuse ici qui s'appelle Ferraresi; elle fait bruit, car on trouve qu'elle chante fort bien. Je l'ai entendue une fois, mais j'avoue qu'elle ne me plait à beaucoup près

which reviews the 1789-90 season, also compares the two singers. “The singer Ferrarese affords her listeners very pleasurable sensations or, better said, feelings of satisfaction, with her beautiful and unusual voice. Just what would she be capable of, if, like Morichelli musically, she were at the same time an actress of the same fine calibre as Morichelli? because her voice has so much variety, while Morichelli's has a wearying sameness; which, notwithstanding all her art, brings about a certain *ennui*, wherein that certain sameness resembles undoubtedly excellent, but still, because of daily consumption, food tasted too often.”⁷⁰ This is undoubtedly one of the most perceptive observations made about Morichelli: though technically perfect, her singing had a wearying sameness.

PARIS

The contrast with Morichelli's reception in Paris two year later could not be greater. The Italian opera company of the Théâtre de Monsieur enjoyed a short existence or perhaps, given the times, a relatively long existence, from January 1789 to August 1792. Morichelli joined the company in May 1790, left temporarily after seven months to take up a previous engagement in Torino for carnival 1791, and returned in spring 1791. She was engaged as one of two *prime donne*, alongside Rosa Balletti. Both sopranos were paid 16800 livres, the same as the *buffi caricati* Luigi Raffanelli and Stefano Mandini, and the tenor Giuseppe Viganoni.⁷¹

She seems to have suffered from stage fright at her debut in *Le due gemelle*. The criticism made about her weak voice is reminiscent of that at her debut in Vienna.

The work is long: the prima donna is almost always on stage; her frequent changes of costume, combined with the extreme heat of the hall and the emotion inseparable from a first debut seemed to tire the voice of Madame Morichelli a bit in the second act and alter the purity of her sounds, although they never lost their most rigorous precision. Those who would like to conclude that her voice is weak, that her manner is labored, and that her singing lacks facility, would commit a large injustice; we invite them to listen to her several times and in several roles; we do not doubt that in a very short time they will see dissipated that which appeared to them to be lacking in this virtuoso and preventing her from achieving the highest degree of perfection.⁷²

autant que la Storaci: son jeu est affreux d'autant plus que dans l'Albore di Diana elle fait le role de la Morichelli qui était pétrie de graces comme vous savez.” Weyda, 111-262.

⁷⁰ “Die Sängerin Ferarese gewährt ihren Zuhörern sehr angenehme Empfindungen, oder besser zu sagen: genugthuende Gefühle, durch ihre schöne und ungewöhnliche Stimme. Was würde sie erst vermögen, wenn sie wie die Morikelli musikalisch, und in einem so hohen Grade, wie diese, zugleich Schauspielerin ware? weil ihre Stimme so viel mannigfaltiges, die der Morikelli aber ein ermüdendes Einerlei hat; und bei all ihrer Kunst ein gewisses Etwas verursachte, das dem gewissen Einerlei, in einer zwar vortrefflichen, aber doch des täglichen Genusses wegen, zu oft geschmäkten Speise sehr nahe.” *Grundsätze zur Theaterkritik* (Vienna, 1790).

⁷¹ The salary figures are found in a document dated 1792, cited in Di Profio, 60.

⁷² “La piece est longue: la *prima Donna* est presque toujours en scene; ses toilettes frequentes, jointes à l'extrême chaleur de la salle et à l'émotion inséparable d'un premier début, ont paru fatiguer un peu la voix de madame Morichelli au second acte, et altérer la pureté de ses sons,

After her second performance, the reviews were by and large positive.

That famous singer demonstrated the day before yesterday more self-assurance, and the public was better able to judge her. She employed all the resources of her art, with a superiority of which there exist few examples. A superb manner of singing and a very large vocal range, supported by all that reflection, experience, and tenacious work alone can bring about, won her unanimous approval.⁷³

Morichelli achieved a greater success at the second performance than at the first. She has a wide vocal range, flexibility, and perfect knowledge of her art; but she still leaves something to be desired. Maybe in other roles she will better justify the brilliant reputation that she enjoys in all of Europe.⁷⁴

Morichelli achieved a greater success at the second performance than at the first. Her voice is beautiful and of a wide range: her talent as a musician is valuable to people given to art: but one would desire that she sometimes soften certain sounds hard on the ear. It seemed to us that a fault in pronunciation impedes her in the 'i's and in all the closed vowels; and sometimes the intonation was not precise enough; defects for which one cannot reproach Mlle Baletti; but Morichelli has flexibility and infinite taste. We believe that the more one hears her, the more she will justify the great reputation that she enjoys in all of Europe.⁷⁵

quoiqu'ils n'aient jamais manqué de la justesse la plus rigoureuse. Ceux qui en voudraient conclure que ses organes sont affaiblis, que sa maniere est pénible, et que son chant manque de facilité, commettraient une grande injustice; nous les invitons à l'entendre plusieurs fois, et dans plusieurs rôles; nous ne doutons pas qu'ils ne voient se dissiper, en fort peu de tems, ce qui leur a paru manquer à cette virtuose pour obtenir le plus haut degré de la perfection," *Gazette nationale, Moniteur universal*, 1 June 1790, 618, *ibid.*, 364.

⁷³ "Cette fameuse Cantatrice y a montré avant-hier plus d'assurance & le Public a pu mieux la juger. Elle y a déployé toutes les ressources de son art, avec une supériorité dont il existe peu d'exemples. Une superbe maniere de chanter & une très-grande étendue de voix, soutenues par tout ce que la réflexion, l'expérience & un travail opiniâtre peuvent seuls faire acquérir, lui ont concilié l'unanimité des suffrages." *Affiches, annonces et avis divers ou Journal général de France*, 2 June 1790, 1552, *ibid.*, 364.

⁷⁴ "La signora Morichelli a obtenu plus de succès à la seconde représentation qu'à la première. Elle a une grande étendue de voix, de la flexibilité et une parfaite connoissance de son art; mais elle laisse encore quelque chose à desirer. Peut-être, dans d'autres rôles, justifiera-t-elle mieux la réputation éclatante dont elle jouit dans toute l'Europe." *Le Spectateur national*, 3 June 1790, 9, *ibid.*, 365.

⁷⁵ "La Signora Morichelli a obtenu plus de succès à la seconde représentation qu'à la première. Sa voix est belle & très-étendue: son talent, comme musicienne, est précieux pour les gens de l'Art; mais on desireroit qu'elle adoucît souvent certains traits dur à l'oreille. Il nous a semblé qu'un défaut de la prononciation la génoit dans les *i* & dans toutes les voyelles sourdes; & quelquefois les intonations ne sont pas assez prononcées; défaut que l'on ne peut reprocher à M.lle Baletti; mais la Signora Morichelli a de la flexibilité & infiniment de goût. Nous croyons que plus on l'entendra, plus elle justifiera la haute réputation dont elle jouit dans toute l'Europe." *Journal général de France*, 3 June 1790, 620, *ibid.*, 365.

In the second year of her engagement, Morichelli felt secure enough to take a great risk. She invited comparison with Mme Dugazon, the original Nina in the Dalayrac opera, by performing Paisiello's *Nina*, which she was going to sing for the very first time. On the day of the premiere, Morichelli published an open letter in the *Feuille du Jour*, in which she lauds the superior talent of Madame Dugazon and declares that in her own performance she tries to emulate her by imitating what she most admired in her acting. Morichelli's compliments were reciprocated a few days later in a letter published in the same newspaper by Mme Dugazon, who declared in return that Morichelli had no need of using her as a model, etc. The press had a field day comparing the two performers and the two operas, deciding in the end that each performer was excellent in her own way. The reviews of Morichelli were uniformly effusive in their praise.

Madame Morichelli was astonishing in the role of Nina as much in the recitative as in the arias. It is impossible to put into them more expression and truthfulness or to sing better, despite the continual fatigue of the action.⁷⁶

Signora Morichelli portrayed the role of Nina with a veracity that went to the soul; her acting had nothing exaggerated about it; through the entire work, but especially in the second act, she sang in a manner that deserved and received the most lively applause.⁷⁷

But the main focus of everybody's interest is Madame Morichelli, or rather Nina. When we cannot see her we are thinking about her, and as soon as she is on stage, she is all we see. The impression on our souls of such truthful, heartrending acting, such perfect, passionate singing, eclipses, as it were, all other impressions. Her madness is so involving because it is the madness of love; it is unmistakably that of an innocent, chaste love; we can sense, even when she is sunk in the most profoundly deluded state, that this is madness of the mind and the heart; not a trace of affectation or caricature, not the slightest studied posture, no contortions, no unnaturally deranged movements. Added to all the other difficulties of the role is that of speaking while singing in the scene [recitative passages], and Madame Morichelli derives two advantages from that difficulty; first, without neglecting for a moment the veracity and precision required in declamation, she consistently brings out that touching quality of the singing voice whose expressiveness and sweetness the speaking voice, however sweet it may be, can never match; second, she speaks the recitative with superior skill, an even rarer merit than that of

⁷⁶ “Mme Morichelli a été étonnante dans le rôle de Nina, & autant dans le récitatif que dans les airs. Il est impossible d'y mettre plus d'expression & de vérité, ni de mieux chanter malgré la fatigue continuelle de l'action.” *Journal de Paris*, 5 September 1791, 1014, *ibid.*, 414.

⁷⁷ “La signora Morichelli a rendu le rôle de Nina, avec un vérité qui alloit à l'ame; son jeu n'avoit rien d'outré; elle a chanté dans toute la pièce, mais sur-tout dans le second acte, de manière à mériter, & à obtenir les plus vifs applaudissemens.” *Chronique de Paris*, 5 September 1791, 1000, *ibid.*, 413.

singing with method and artistry; and in that important aspect of the role of Nina, she has once more won her entitlement to the acclaim of the experts.⁷⁸

To keep all this praise in perspective, we should be aware that even Maria Mandini was admired in Paris. In Vienna she had been tolerated on account of her husband, the excellent singer Stefano Mandini. At the head of her only aria in a score of *L'arbore di Diana*, scribbled in red conductor's crayon, are two words, "canta male."⁷⁹ Her singing of that same aria was compared by the "habitant de Vienna" to "the screaming of an enraged cat whose tail has been pulled."⁸⁰ When Zinzendorf had heard her in *Il burbero di buon cuore*, he merely noted, "la Mandini let us see her beautiful hair."⁸¹ But Paris was different. "Oh! La Mandini, I am crazy about her. How her figure is pretty in the theatre! how she is nimble and light! how she has charms! And they are French charms, charms of every country. What gaiety in her utterance! what finesse! what spirit in her acting!...." And so on for many more lines. But eventually the reviewer addresses the criticisms sometimes levelled at her, "I admit that Madame Mandini is not remotely a singer: that she has little voice, and what little there is is neither terribly in tune nor pleasant; that she cannot execute the slightest difficulty, not even an ordinary one. I give her failing marks on that point; but I deny all the rest. And the proof that she is a charming actress is that I like her and that all of Paris likes her as much as I do."⁸²

⁷⁸ "Mais c'est principalement sur Mad. Morichelli, ou plutôt sur Nina, que se réunit l'intérêt. Quand on ne la voit pas, c'est à elle que l'on pense; & dès qu'elle paraît, on ne voit qu'elle. L'impression que laisse dans l'ame un jeu si vrai, si pathétique un chant si parfait & si passionné, efface, pour ainsi dire, toutes les autres impressions. Quelle folie intéressante! c'est celle de l'amour; il n'a point à s'y méprendre: c'est celle d'un amour innocent & chaste; on le sent même au milieu du plus profond délire: c'est une folie qui n'est que dans la tête & dans le coeur; point d'affection ni de caricature, ni de position étudiée, ni de contorsions, ni d'égarement forcé. A toutes les difficultés de ce rôle, se joint celle de parler en chantant dans les scènes, & Mad. Morichelli en tire deux avantages: c'est d'abord que, sans manquer un instant à la vérité, à la justesse de la déclamation, elle ne cesse point de faire entendre ce son de voix touchant, que celui de la voix parlée, quelque doux qu'il soit, n'égale jamais en expression & en douceur; c'est ensuite qu'elle dit supérieurement le récitatif; que ce mérite est plus rare encore que celui de chanter avec méthode & avec art; & que, dans cette partie importante du rôle de Nina, elle s'est acquis un titre de plus au suffrage des connaisseurs." *Mercur de France*, 24 September 1791, 148-52, *ibid.*, 418. For the translation into English I am indebted to Felicity Baker, whose expertise on eighteenth-century literature is resoundingly manifested in her essay in this volume ("*L'arbore di Diana*: José II como el dios del amor," 265-75). About this review, she comments: "The style of the passage is the epitome of the French Enlightenment aesthetic of sensibility. There is almost no distinction between the language to describe acting and the language to describe musicality, and that's typical; Diderot's art criticism, i.e., his language to describe painting, is also just like this; in all artistic media it's about the passionate impact of the work/performance on the beholder/listener, the way the effect is produced, its reasons, etc."

⁷⁹ A-Wn, Mus Hs 17795, (1, 10) Britomarte, "Di Cintia seguace."

⁸⁰ "le miaulement d'un chat enragé qu'on tire par le queue." Michtner, 436.

⁸¹ "la Mandini nous fit voir ses beaux cheveux." Zinzendorf, 4 January 1786, in Link, *National Court Theatre*, 262.

⁸² "Oh! La Mandini, j'en raffolle. Comme sa figure est jolie au théâtre! comme elle est leste et légère! qu'elle a de graces! et ce sont des graces françaises, des graces de tous les pays. Quelle gaieté dans son débit! quelle finesse! quel esprit dans son jeu!... J'avoue que Madame Mandini

The *Chronique de Paris* of 2 July 1790 reported an extraordinary performance of the comic opera *I viaggiatori felici*, in which Morichelli played the role of Bettina. Unlikely as it may sound, Morichelli successfully introduced into the opera a scene from an *opera seria*, in which she feigns madness.⁸³

Gianetto, married in secret to Bettine, ran away with her to escape the persecutions of his father Pancrace, a rich merchant, who wants to make him marry Isabelle whom he has never seen; Gianetto passes himself off as a dancing master and Bettine likewise as a dancer. Don Gaston, a Spanish lord, finds the dancer pretty, offers her a casket, which she accepts to maintain her cover. The father arrives with Isabelle in pursuit of his son; he does not recognize his daughter-in-law, falls in love with her, and wants to fight with the Spaniard who, for his part, had loved Isabelle and abandoned her. All these characters find themselves together on stage and recognize one another in the finale of the first act, which ought to lead to the denouement; but two more acts are required: they are filled up with scenes that have no consequence or verisimilitude. Such is the subject of the *Viaggiatori felici* or *The Happy Travellers*, given Wednesday at the Théâtre de Monsieur. Two tragic excerpts were inserted; Pancrace should ask his son, the dancing master, whether he knows how to dance; but instead he asks him sing in order to give him a chance to perform a scene from *Alexandre aux Indes*, and Bettine pretends to be mad in order to insert a scene from *Didon*: both were very well performed and much applauded.⁸⁴

n'est point chanteuse: qu'elle a peu de voix, et que ce peu n'est ni très-juste, ni très-agréable; qu'elle ne pourrait rendre aucune difficulté, même ordinaire. Je passe condamnation sur cet article; mais je nie tout le reste. Et la preuve que c'est une actrice charmante, c'est que je l'aime et que tout Paris l'aime autant que moi." *Gazette nationale, Moniteur universel*, 20 January 1790, 85-6, in Di Profio, 330.

⁸³ Giambattista Casti and Antonio Salieri used the same stratagem in *Prima la musica, poi le parole* to allow Coltellini, as Tonina, to sing a bizarre succession of musical excerpts. Leonardo Waisman points out that Martín y Soler had already set feigned madness in *La vedova spiritosa* (Irene, II, xi) and in *In amor ci vuol destrezza* (Zolfanello, I, finale). See his *Vicente Martín y Soler*, 194-5, 238-9.

⁸⁴ "Gianetto, marié en secret à Bettine, a fui avec elle pour éviter les persécutions de son pere Pancrace, riche marchand, qui vouloit lui faire épouser Isabelle qu'il n'a jamais vue; il se dit maître de danse, & Bettine danseuse. Dom Gaston, seigneur espagnol, trouve la danseuse jolie, lui offre une boîte qu'elle accepte pour soutenir son rôle. Le pere arrive avec Isabelle pour courir après son fils; il ne connoit pas sa belle-fille, en devient amoureux, & veut se battre avec l'Espagnol qui, de son côté, a aimé Isabelle & l'a abandonnée. Tous ces personnages se trouvent ensemble sur la scene, & se reconnoissent pendant la finale du premier acte, ce qui devoit amener le dénouement; mais il falloit deux actes de plu: on les a remplis par des scenes sans suite ni vraisemblance. Tel est le sujet des *Viaggiatori felici* ou *les heureux Voyageurs*, donné mercredi au Théâtre de Monsieur. On y a inseré deux morceaux tragiques; Pancrace devoit demander à son fils, maître de danse, s'il sait danser, au contraire il le fait chanter pour lui donner occasion d'exécuter une scene d'*Alexandre aux Indes*, & Bettine feint d'être folle pour placer une scene de *Didon*: toutes deux ont été très-bien rendues & très-applaudies." *Chronique de Paris*, 2 July 1790, 731, in Di Profio, 371.

According to the libretto examined by Alessandro Di Profio, Morichelli's *seria* scene consisted of the recitative and aria “Dove, povera me, dove son io?—Nel lasciarti, o prence ingrato” by Gaetano Andreozzi.⁸⁵

LONDON

In the late eighteenth century London was perhaps the ultimate testing ground for singers. With a constant flow of the world's top talent across its stages, the city's musical audiences, though boorish in some ways, had developed a sound, almost ruthless, sense of discrimination in the matter of voices. Since the opera company comprised both an *opera buffa* and *opera seria* ensemble, Morichelli was inevitably compared to Banti, with whom she was locked in battle for professional survival. The two arrived “in the packet boat from Spain at Plymouth”⁸⁶ in April 1794 to finish out the 1793-94 season and to sing in the 1794-95 season. The terms of Morichelli's and Banti's employment are unknown. The salary figures reported by “Veritas” in 1797 where he shows them receiving equal amounts cannot be verified.⁸⁷ Whether or not they were paid the same salary, Banti came out better overall, as their 1794 benefits illustrate. Banti was given the use of the opera house for one night, while Morichelli was granted the proceeds of one of the regularly scheduled performances.

Comments about Morichelli's singing range from the polite to the damning. In his memoirs of 1830, William Parke makes a brief mention of Morichelli's debut in rather conventional terms. “Another first appearance took place Saturday May 17th, in Madame Morichelli, who performed in a new comic opera, entitled 'Il Burbero di buone core'. Morichelli, both in singing and acting was admirable, and was greatly applauded.”⁸⁸ *The Times*, reporting on the premiere of *La scuola dei maritati*, the most successful comic opera of the 1795 season, writes, “Morichelli's first air is an enchanting composition; -- that and the duet between this charming Actress and Morelli had a warm encore.”⁸⁹ *The Morning Chronicle*, 3 March 1795, regarding the Opera Concert at the King's Theatre the previous night, is more informative.

BANTI is unfortunately ill, and her admirers, or rather adorers, were deprived last night of the exquisite delight which her uncommon talents afford; but MORICHELLI was no unworthy substitute. She is now better acquainted with her

⁸⁵ Di Profio, 482, lists three possible operas by Gaetano Andreozzi from which Morichelli might have taken the scene: *Didone abbandonata* (St. Petersburg, 1784), *Virginia* (Rome, 1786), and *Semiramide* (not included in the composer article in *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*). What is certain is that Andreozzi and Morichelli had worked together in four operas: *L'equivoco* (with the double role of Lauretta and Livietta, already mentioned), Florence, 1781; *I pazzi per disimpegno*, Venice, 1782; *L'Olimpiade*, Pisa, 1782; and *Bajazet*, Florence, 1783.

⁸⁶ Alfred Loewenberg, “Lorenzo da Ponte in London,” *Music Review* 4 (1943), 174.

⁸⁷ “1400 pounds each, as we learn from an anonymous pamphlet called *Opera House* by ‘Veritas’ (no date, but published about 1997).” Ibid.

⁸⁸ *Musical Memoirs of W.T. Parke* (London: 1830; reprinted New York: Da Capo Press, 1970), 183.

⁸⁹ *The Times*, 29 January 1795, p. 3c, cited in Frederick Petty, *Italian Opera in London 1760-1800* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1972), 299.

auditors; the timidity, which at first repressed her powers, is worn off, and she displays much science, taste, and feeling.⁹⁰

A harsh judgment of her is found on a handbill that survives for Haydn's benefit concert on 4 May 1795 to which many musicians, including Morichelli and Banti, had donated their services. In the margins of the handbill, an unidentified hand has written a number of comments. The annotation next to one of Morichelli's arias reads "Nothing more than a decent second opera singer." What lends this evaluation credibility is the annotation next to Banti's name, which suggests the author was hearing both singers for the first time. "Banti has a clear, sweet, equable voice, her low & high notes equally good. Her recitative admirably expressive. Her voice rather wants fullness of tone; her shake is weak and imperfect."⁹¹

Mount Edgumbe, of whom more below, compares the two singers directly.

Together with Banti came Morichelli, who was cried up beforehand as her equal if not her superior. If her admirers were forced to admit that her voice was inferior to Banti's, she was, they said, a much better musician. So she might be, but never could have been half so delightful a singer, and she was now past her prime; her voice was not true, her taste spoiled by a long residence at Paris, where she adopted much of the national style, and her manner and acting were affected. In short, she did not please generally, though there was a strong party for her (who foretold she would in time eclipse her more brilliant rival), and after her second season she went away, leaving behind her, in every print shop, her portrait, with the flattering, but false inscription, 'Parti, ma vide che adorata partiva'.⁹²

A review in the *Star*, 17 February 1795, of a concert the previous evening, is sympathetic to Morichelli's position.

A new Cantata [aria], set on purpose by Signor Bianchi, for Signora Banti, was introduced in the second part of the concert, and the audience were at a loss which to admire most, the execution, or the composition. The other singers acquitted themselves with sufficient credit; but the rules of discretion oblige us to make proper allowances for the humble predicament in which they all find themselves, when in competition with the Queen of the Quaver, the matchless Banti. –Signora Morichelli received some applause in a new song, set by Signor Martini, the harmony of which afforded an exquisite delight to the Connoisseurs.⁹³

⁹⁰ H. C. Robbins Landon, *Haydn: Chronicle and Works*, vol. 3, *Haydn in England, 1791-1795* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976), 295.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 308. On p. 306 Landon describes the source as a "hand-bill, owned by Mr. Albi Rosenthal."

⁹² Richard, Earl of Mount Edgumbe, *Musical Reminiscences, Containing an Account of Italian Opera in England, from 1773*, 4th ed. (London, 1834; reprint New York: Da Capo Press, 1973), 109-10.

⁹³ Landon, *Haydn in England*, 292.

As everyone was aware, Morichelli was completely overshadowed by Banti. Richard, Earl of Mount Edgcumbe reviewed many singers with great discernment and in some cases enthusiasm in his *Musical Reminiscences*, but none with the passion with which he remembered Banti's singing. Looking back over many years of operatic history, he could recall only Banti as worth talking about—and how he talked of her.

The most delightful singer I ever heard....Her natural powers were of the finest description: her voice, sweet and beautiful throughout, had not a fault in any part of its unusually extensive compass. Its lower notes, which reached below ordinary sopranos, were rich and mellow; the middle, full and powerful; and the very high, totally devoid of shrillness: the whole was even and regular, one of those rich *voci di petto*, which can alone completely please and satisfy the ear. In her youth it extended to the highest pitch, and was capable of such agility, that she practised and excelled most in the bravura style, in which she had no superior: but losing a few of her upper notes, and acquiring a taste for the cantabile, she gave herself up almost entirely to the latter, in which she had no equal.⁹⁴

Against such a voice, there is no competing.

To make matters worse, Banti was a thoroughly unpleasant person. The opera company at that time was managed by the barely competent William Taylor, whom Banti soon had under her thumb. It also lacked a first-class *primo uomo* who would have kept Banti's excesses in check with his own demands. Banti thus was pretty well able to do as she liked. She had conceived an implacable hatred of Morichelli in Spain and was now doing everything in her power to destroy her. Unbelievably, their present positions continued the situation they had just left in Spain. There they also had sung in the same company, Banti as *prima donna seria*, with a salary of 100,000 reales, and Morichelli as *prima donna buffa*, with a salary of 74,000 reales.⁹⁵ As the worst of her kind, Banti sang only when she pleased. She did not appear in her first opera until two months into the season, on 30 May, the nameday of the Prince of Asturias, when she performed in *Zenobia di Palmira* to great acclaim. Morichelli, meanwhile, had already successfully appeared in two comic operas (the first of which had been *Le due gemelle*) and continued to sing in a new opera at the rate of one per month. Her performance in her fourth opera, *Nina*, was particularly successful. Banti roused herself to perform in a second *opera seria*, *Ines de Castro*, for the name day of the Queen on 25 August. Her next opera, *Pirro*, was scheduled for the Prince's birthday on 14 October. For some reason Banti would or could not sing. Morichelli, who had sung the leading role in 1790, offered or agreed to take the part, whereupon Banti, with her aristocratic supporters, launched a vindictive campaign against Morichelli, accusing her of being a Jacobin. Banti revived a rumour that had flown about Venice the first year Morichelli had sung in Paris and that had resulted in Morichelli's being denied permission to enter Milan in 1792.⁹⁶ Morichelli was

⁹⁴ Mount Edgcumbe, 78-80. This is an unusually precise and perceptive description of a voice and for that reason alone is worth quoting.

⁹⁵ Cotarelo, 351-2.

⁹⁶ Cotarelo does not appear to know about the nasty business in Italy, which can be read in Mooser, *Annales de la musique*, 2:272-3, who cites as his source Taddeo Wiel, *I teatri musicali*

forced to defend herself again.⁹⁷ She was cleared of the accusation and sang in *Pirro* with truly sensational success, drawing an audience almost the same size as Banti's audiences for her previous first nights.⁹⁸ Now in London Morichelli was paying for her victory.

Who was this Banti? She was born in about 1756 near Cremona. Following her debut in Paris in 1776, she sang in London in 1779 and joined the Italian circuit in about 1783; her appointment in London in 1794 crowned her career. She stayed there until her retirement in 1802 and died four years later. She sang exclusively in *opera seria*. Mount Edgumbe tells the story of her astonishing career.

She had begun the world as a *cantante di piazza*, and as such, having attracted notice by her fine voice, she had been taken from her humble calling, taught, and brought out as a singer in concerts, first at Paris, and then in England, as before mentioned, at the Pantheon, under the name of Giorgi. But though she had the best masters, she was an idle scholar, and never would apply to the drudgery of her profession: but in her, genius supplied the place of science, and the most correct ear, with the most exquisite taste, enabled her to sing with more effect, more expression, and more apparent knowledge of her art, than many much better professors. She never was a good musician, nor could sing at sight with ease; but having once learnt a song, and made herself mistress of its character, she threw into all she sung more pathos and true feeling than any of her competitors.⁹⁹

Many other reports confirm that Banti had a voice so exceptional that people were willing to excuse her worst failings.

For the theatre's librettist Da Ponte, however, Banti's humble origins made her a dangerous colleague.

The Banti woman, at that time one of the most celebrated singers in Europe in serious parts... was much sought after and exorbitantly paid for the splendors of a glorious voice, the single gift she had received from Nature.... Banti... was an ignorant, stupid, insolent woman. Accustomed from early girlhood to singing in cafés and about the streets, she brought to the Opera, whither her voice only had elevated her, all the habits, manners and customs of a brazen-faced Corsica. Free of speech, still freer of action, addicted to carousals, dissolute amusements and to the bottle, she showed herself in the face of everybody for what she was, knowing no measure, no restraints; and when anyone of her passions was stirred by

Veneziani nel settecento: Catalogo delle opera in music rappresentate nel secolo XVIII in Venezia (1701-1800) (Venice: Visentini, 1897).

⁹⁷ Her letter to the prime minister is printed in Cotarelo, 360-2.

⁹⁸ Morichelli's box-office receipts of 9,954 reales compares to Banti's receipts of 10,000 reales for *Zenobia di Palmira* and 10, 294 reales for *Ines de Castro*. Ibid., 356, 359.

⁹⁹ Mount Edgumbe, 78.

difficulties or opposition, she became an asp, a fury, a demon of Hell, capable of upsetting an empire, let alone a theatre.¹⁰⁰

This then was Morichelli's opponent and this the situation in which she found herself.

Morichelli's strongest ally was Martin. Unlike in Vienna, in London both were in weak positions. Martin was making a bid to return to Europe. For the moment he was merely engaged for the 1795 season as a visiting composer for *opera buffa*, but he may have been hoping for a longer engagement, such as Francesco Bianchi obtained for the serious opera. He had reason to be optimistic, for his music was already known and liked by London audiences.¹⁰¹ Da Ponte, his librettist in Vienna and now the librettist of the Italian opera in London, was keen to have him as a colleague and had not only procured the engagement but also accommodated him in his own home. But given Banti and the high standing of *opera seria*, Martin's success in his two, commissioned *opere buffe* depended heavily on his *prima donna* Morichelli.

Morichelli arrived ahead of Martin. Departing from her usual practice of introducing herself to a new audience in a tried and true opera, she made her London debut in Martin's *Il burbero di buon cuore*, an opera in which she had never sung before. She probably selected this opera knowing that Martin was engaged for the following season and determined to ingratiate herself with him. Would *L'arbore di Diana* not have been the more obvious choice? If not, then *Il burbero di buon cuore* was a good second choice, as it had a strong libretto, which would have pleased Da Ponte as well. Martin had composed the opera in Vienna the year before her arrival. Morichelli might have heard it in Vienna on 9 August 1787, when it was performed once to try out a young soprano, Katharina Himlin.¹⁰² Morichelli, needless to say, changed the arias for the principal role of Angelica. Retaining the cavatina "Voglio marito," which had been popular in Vienna, she replaced Angelica's two other arias with ones of her own choosing, and asked Haydn, who was then in London, for a duet for herself and the great buffo Giovanni Morelli.¹⁰³ Both the opera and her singing had a respectable reception.¹⁰⁴

For her second, and final, opera of the season, Morichelli sang in *La frascatana*, the same opera she had chosen for her second opera in Paris. Banti appeared in only one opera *Semiramide*, in which she continued to sing to the end of the season and in the

¹⁰⁰ Lorenzo da Ponte, *Memoirs*, trans. Elisabeth Abbott (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1929; reprint New York: Dover, 1967), 251-3.

¹⁰¹ Dorothea Link, "The Da Ponte Operas of Vicente Martín y Soler" (PhD. diss., University of Toronto, 1991), 212-4, 236-7 n. 57, and Christine Martin, "Una cuestión de toma y daca: Nancy y Stephen Storace como promotores de la carrera de Vicente Martín y Soler en Londres" in *Los siete mundos de Vicente Martín y Soler*, 283-95.

¹⁰² Link, "The Da Ponte Operas of Martín," 298.

¹⁰³ He supplied the duet "Quel tuo visetto amabile" from his *Orlando Paladino*, 1782, which they sang retexted as "Qual core umano et temer" (Landon: *Haydn in England*, 254). The duet was printed by Corri & Dussek and repeated, with the original words, in Haydn's benefit concert in 1795.

¹⁰⁴ Corri & Dussek published all three of her arias: "Voglio marito" by Martín, "Brillar il cor mi sento" by Vittorio Trento, and "Deh se pietà ritrova" by Giacomo Gotifredo Ferrari.

next. For her benefit night she chose to sing the maid (!) in Paisiello's *La serva padrona*. This incursion into the field of *opera buffa* was no doubt a barb aimed at Morichelli. To be absolutely certain of a success she filled out the program with Paisiello's cantata "La vittoria," using it to celebrate a recent English naval battle, and ended the concert with a performance of "Rule Britannia." The concert was indeed so successful that it had to be repeated several more times. So ended the first season.

For the second season, Banti was able to arrange things so that she got the lion's share of Saturday performances, leaving Morichelli with the less desirable Tuesday nights. By the end of the season, Morichelli had performed on 12 Saturdays and 37 Tuesdays.¹⁰⁵ And then Banti literally pushed Morichelli off the stage. On 23 June Morichelli sang in Sarti's *Fra i due litiganti*, reduced to one act, so that it could be followed by the second act of *Semiramide*, Banti's warhorse. The following week, the same thing happened with *La scola dei maritati*: only the first act was performed to make room for the second act of *Semiramide*. Veritas writes that Morichelli "quitted at the expiration of her engagement in disgust."¹⁰⁶ But not vanquished. For her benefit on 14 May 1795, she ensured a brilliant departure by mounting *Ati e Cibele*, a one-act "entertainment," to follow *La scuola dei maritati*. This unusual work involved two characters, Cibele, sung by Morichelli, and Ati, performed by a dancer. The dancer plays an unfaithful lover, who was deprived of his voice as punishment by the gods and who now has to try win Cibele around by means of dance and pantomime.¹⁰⁷ The advertisement for it identified the work as an "Afterpiece: An Heroic Entertainment in one act, consisting of Songs & Dances with Chorusses, and never performed upon any public Stage, but composed for the private Theatre of a Nobleman at Venice [in 1789]. The words by Count Alexander Pepoli; the music by Cimadoro; the pantomime & dances by Noverre."¹⁰⁸

If Banti was making Morichelli's life difficult, Da Ponte was not much better. Da Ponte's description of the two women is so misogynist, it is hard to take him seriously. Insofar as he had pegged Banti right, however, we might take notice of what he says about Morichelli.

la Morichelli, equally celebrated in comedy [as Banti in serious opera]... [was much sought after and exorbitantly paid] for her acting—she gave a performance that was true, noble, carefully worked out, and full of expression and grace... The Morichelli woman had plenty of talent and a notable cultivation of mind.

High praise, but then he lights into her.

¹⁰⁵ Milhous, Dideriksen, and Hume, 226.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 232, relying on a printed libretto, for which they provide no further details.

¹⁰⁸ Charles Beecher Hogan, ed., *The London Stage, 1660-1800: A Calendar of Plays, Entertainments & Afterpieces Together with Casts, Box-receipts and Contemporary Comments*, part 5, 1776-1800, in 3 vols. continuously paginated (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1960-68), 1755. Cf. Rodney Slathford and Marita McClymonds, "Cimador, Giambattista," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, 1:866-7.

An old fox, she covered her purposes deep under a veil of mystery and finest cunning. She took her measures always at long range, trusted no one, never lost her temper, and though fiercely practising voluptuous indulgences, nevertheless always managed to play the part of a modest and retiring virgin of fifteen. The bitterer the gall she harbored in her soul, the suaver and the more honeyed shone the smile on her face. Of the temper of her dominant passion it is hardly necessary to speak. She was an actress.¹⁰⁹

So, what about Da Ponte? As the librettist for both *opera seria* and *opera buffa*, he had to remain on good terms with both women, but especially with Banti, as she was obviously going to outlast Morichelli. He himself had obtained his position only at the beginning of the 1793-94 season, a few months before the women arrived.¹¹⁰ At the same time Da Ponte was heavily invested in Martin and anxious to have him succeed. This complex dynamic resulted in *La scuola dei maritati*, the most successful comic opera of the season.¹¹¹ Morichelli shone as the central figure, so she was happy. The libretto was a conventional comic opera, so Banti was happy. The libretto allowed for plenty of short, lyrical numbers, so Martin was happy. But then Martin made his stupid mistake of impregnating Da Ponte's maid, and everything unravelled. It is truly amazing how Da Ponte puts the blame on Morichelli. If she had not been involved with Martin, he implies, then Martin's indiscretion with the maid would have amounted to nothing, for it was Morichelli who ferreted out the misdeed and then spread about Martin's lie that Da Ponte was the seducer. Da Ponte goes on to blame her for the failure of *L'isola del piacere*.¹¹² "Certain ridiculous pretensions of the prima donna contributed to my lack of inspiration. She had sung *Nina, pazza per amore* with great effect in Paris, and insisted that, by hook or crook, the second act of my opera should have a mad scene, which fitted about as appropriately there as Pilate in the Lord's Prayer. The whole spectacle failed, accordingly." And why could Da Ponte not have written a libretto with a mad scene? It is entirely conceivable that, having been denied a performance of Paisiello's *Nina*, Morichelli proposed to Martin and Da Ponte that they write their second opera modelled on *Nina*. The pastoral was Martin's *forte*, Da Ponte had a penchant for it, and Morichelli could have shone in a mad scene. However, instead of following her advice, Da Ponte wrote a feeble comedy with pastoral tendencies and Turkish nonsense, and then, because she persisted in demanding a mad scene, wrote a scene in which she does not portray madness but feigns it, all in recitative, which was hardly what she had in mind.¹¹³ Da

¹⁰⁹ Da Ponte, *Memoirs*, 251-2.

¹¹⁰ Da Ponte ingratiated himself with both *prime donne* by writing for each a celebratory sonnet, which he included in the printed librettos of the operas in which they made their London debuts. For the sonnets, see Lorenzo della Cha, ed., *Lorenzo da Ponte: Saggi poetici* (Milan: Edizioni il Polifilo, 2005), 207-8.

¹¹¹ The opera received thirteen performances, one less than Gluck's *Alceste*.

¹¹² The opera was discontinued after four performances. The second performance was designated as Martin's benefit concert, but according to Haydn, who attended, it was "very unsuccessful." Link, "Da Ponte Operas of Martin," 225.

¹¹³ She pretends to hallucinate monsters from Hades (*L'isola del piacere, or The Island of Pleasure*, London, [1801], II, ix; *L'isola piacevole*, Venezia, carnevale 1797, II, xii; Rousset

Ponte was probably reluctant to give Morichelli a mad scene because of his fear of Banti. Or maybe he had problems with good ideas that did not come from himself. The viciousness with which he remembers Giambattista Casti in his memoirs betrays his attempt to mask his great unacknowledged debt to him. What a pity he could not bring himself to write the libretto Morichelli asked for (if indeed she asked for it, as conjectured here).

Throughout all this, Morichelli's primary concern was for her personal success, which she attained even in *L'isola del piacere*. Remembering the popularity of Martin's song-style numbers in Vienna and having observed that London audiences, too, were fond of short, singable numbers, she asked Martin to compose all her music in song-style. She displayed her vocal prowess primarily in ornamentation, which she could improvise differently from performance to performance.¹¹⁴ All three of her arias in *La scuola dei maritati* are periodic on the levels of rhythm, phrase structure, and form. "La donna ha bello il core" (no. 17) maintains a driving polonaise rhythm through the entire aria. "Guardami un poco dal capo ai piedi" (no. 9) employs a 2/4 contredanse meter, as does in a slower tempo "Nel cor mi sento un giúbilo" (no. 20). The phrasing overall is periodic, but with Martin's trademark characteristic irregularities, such as the three-measure phrasing in no. 9, and the 4 + 4 + 2 opening melody of no. 20. Formally the arias favour the return of the opening material in such traditional forms as the rondo (nos. 9 and 17) and da capo aria (no. 20). To be accessible to the amateur, the vocal writing in nos. 9 and 20 is fairly plain consisting of conjunct, syllabic melodies moving within a narrow range. By comparison, the melody of no. 17, the showcase aria, is wide-ranging and ornamented right from the start. The aria, additionally, is accompanied by full orchestra, including trumpets and timpani, to create a sense of weight. Common to the melodies of all three arias is a demand for increasing ornamentation in performance whenever the main tune is restated, as demonstrated by some of the written-out ornamentation. The review in *The Times*, already cited, singles out no. 9 as an "enchanted composition," which may well refer to the effect created by the unusual three-measure phrasing. In any case, all three of her arias and two of her three duets were published.¹¹⁵

edition, II, 17). This text replaces the earlier text seen in the draft libretto submitted to the censor (US-SM, Larpent, no. 1053).

¹¹⁴ In his recent book, *Vicente Martín y Soler*, which he generously allowed me to read ahead of publication, Waisman goes so far as to brand Morichelli's music in the London opera as the "estilo Morichelli" (see pp. 353-5). He observes, first, that the style of her arias is unlike anything Martín had composed up to that point and second, that it is noticeably consistent through all her music in the two operas. The "estilo Morichelli" allows her to display her vocal agility in rapid melismas of four to five notes, which, he suspects, is all that was left of her former ability to spin out the extensive coloratura passages of *opera seria*. The occasional longer melismas are based on the alternation of adjacent notes and are broken into short phrases.

¹¹⁵ The published arias consist of "Guardami un poco dal capo ai piedi" (no. 9), "La donna ha bello il core" (no. 17), "Nel cor mi sento un giúbilo" (no. 20) and the duets "Mirate lo sposo crudel" (no. 14) and "Vedrete che allegria" (no. 19). The numbering follows that of the edition by Christophe Rousset, entitled *La capricciosa corretta, o sia La scuola dei maritati*, Música Hispana A40 (Madrid: Instituto Complutense de Ciencias Musicales, 2003). Rousset's edition includes a fourth aria for Morichelli "Son pur folli" (no. 2), but that aria is a later addition to the opera replacing what was originally a duet.

Morichelli's arias in *L'isola del piacere* continue in the same fashion. Again, forms are favoured that allow for the repetition of melodies that can then be ornamented. Both “Un alma costante” (I, 13) and “Nel caro seno” (II, 17) are in loose rondo forms. “Spuntò una rosa” (II, 8) is in a two-tempo form, but with a great deal of internal repetition. All three arias are strongly rhythmical employing dance meters. The phrasing is correspondingly periodic, but with characteristic irregularities, as in II, 17, where the melody is constructed in phrases of 2 + 2 + 2 + 3 measures. Despite the opera's poor reception, three of Morichelli's four arias were published, as was one of her two duets.¹¹⁶

For the nine Opera Concerts of 1795, organized by Johann Peter Salomon using musicians from the opera house, she sang in at least eight concerts as well as several benefit concerts. She sang arias, none of them identified on the programs, by Cimarosa, Paisiello, Gazzaniga, Mozart (“air of the ballad kind”), Haydn (a slow movement from one of his symphonies), and two arias specially written for her by Martin. The first was “composed here for the occasion” as the advertisements said, for the concert of 16 February 1795, about which the *Morning Chronicle*, 17 February reports, “Martini's new song was given with taste and gait by Morichelli, and was encored.”¹¹⁷ Of the second, on 13 April, the *Morning Chronicle*, 15 April, wrote, “Martini wrote a new song for Madame Morichelli, which was remarkable rather for its energy, than for that playful gait which is the general character of his compositions.”¹¹⁸

Morichelli left London taking the scores of both operas with her. At her next engagement, in Venice, she appeared in a production of *La scuola dei maritati*, retitled *La capricciosa corretta*. She replaced an unsuccessful duet for herself and Giglio with a cavatina (no. 2) “Son pur folli.”¹¹⁹ She arranged for another six productions of the opera in other cities. *L'isola del piacere*, by comparison, she performed only three more times after its London premiere. For it, she replaced her first aria, which had not been published in London with a new aria “Per vivere contenta” (I, 6).¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ The published arias consist of “Un alma costante” (I, 13), “Spuntò una rosa” (II, 8), “Nel caro seno” (II, 17) and the duet “Ho intenso su quel salice” (II, 7). The numbering follows that of the edition by Christophe Rousset, *L'isola del piacere*, Música Hispana A60 (Madrid: Instituto Complutense de Ciencias Musicales, 2006). A fourth aria for Morichelli, “Per vivere contenta” (I, 6), in Rousset's edition replaces the original, no longer extant, London aria, “La vaga.”

¹¹⁷ Landon, *Haydn in England*, 291.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 303.

¹¹⁹ Waisman points out several stylistic features in the second part of the aria that strongly rule out Martín's authorship, the most important one being incorrect text declamation (*Vicente Martín y Soler*, 347-8). As Waisman repeatedly demonstrates in his book, Martín's setting of the Italian language can never be faulted for incorrect text declamation.

¹²⁰ Waisman has ferrited out the source of this aria. It comes from Ferdinando Paer's opera *L'oro fa tutto*, written for Milan in 1793 (*Vicente Martín y Soler*, 363-4). Waisman points out that the composer and Morichelli had a chance to get to know each other after she had returned to the continent, for she created the prima-donna roles in three of Paer's operas: *L'intrigo amoroso*, Venice, 4 December 1795; *L'orfana riconosciuta*, Florence, 2 April 1796; and *L'amante servitore*, Venice, carnival 1797. In the latter season, she also revived *L'isola del piacere* for the first time since its London premiere, adding the aria “Per vivere contenta.”

In reviewing Morichelli's career, the picture that emerges is of a top-rank singer who manages her career exceptionally well, who aims for stardom in *opera seria* but achieves it in *opera buffa*, and who achieves it more for her acting than singing skills. She was undoubtedly one of the great singers of the age and was good enough to sing in every important opera house, but she was overshadowed by the superstars, like Banti, of which there were not many, but who nonetheless set the bar.

Table 1

Anna Morichelli's Roles

* indicates roles specifically written for Morichelli

city	year	date	composer, title (genre)	Role	references
Bologna	1773	aut	Pasquale Anfossi: <i>La Giannetta</i> [<i>L'incognita perseguitata</i>] (dg)	Giannetta	S
		aut	Giovanni Paisiello: <i>L'innocente fortunata</i> (dg)	Bettina	S
Ferrara	1774	carn	P.A. Guglielmi: <i>Le pazzie di Orlando</i> (dg)	Angelica	S
Gubbio	1774	spr	Anfossi: <i>L'incognita perseguitata</i> (dg)	Giannetta	S; ICCU
Madrid	1776- 1777		Vicenzo Martín y Soler: <i>Li due avari</i> ¹	[unknown] *	V
			Antonio Tozzi: <i>Le due gemelle</i> (dg)	[unknown] *	V
			Anfossi: <i>La Giannetta</i>	[Giannetta]	V
			Paisiello: <i>La frascatana</i>	[Violante]	V
Bologna	1777	aut	Anfossi: <i>Il zotico incivilito</i> [<i>Lo sposo disperato</i>] (dg)	D. Aurora	S
Bologna	1778	carn	Anfossi: <i>L'avarò</i> (dg)	Laurina	S
		carn	Paisiello: <i>La frascatana</i> (dg)	Violante	S; V
		carn	Giuseppe Amendola: <i>La schiava fedele</i> (dg)	Zaffira	S; V
Reggio	1778	spr	Sarti: <i>Le gelosie villane</i> (dg)	Giannina	S; V
		spr	Anfossi: <i>Il curioso indiscreto</i> (dg)	[Clorinda]	V
Modena	1778	sum	Anfossi: <i>Il curioso indiscreto</i> (dg)	Clorinda	S
		sum	Giuseppe Sarti; <i>Le gelosie villane</i> (dg)	Giannina	S
Turin	1778	aut	Anfossi: <i>Il curioso indiscreto</i> (dg)	Clorinda	S; V

city	year	date	composer, title (genre)	Role	references
		aut	Paisiello: <i>Le due contesse</i> (dg)	Contessina	S; V
		aut	Sarti: <i>Le gelosie villane</i> (dg)	Giannina	S; V
		aut	Giuseppe Gazzaniga: <i>La vendemmia</i> (dg)	Agatina	S; V
Venice	1778	Dec 27	Antonio Salieri: <i>La scuola de' gelosi</i> (dg)	La contessa *	ICCU; ² V
	1779	carn	Antonio Rossetti: <i>Il piu bel dono inutile</i> (dg)	[unknown]	S; ICCU; V
	1780	aut	Francesco Zanetti: <i>Le cognate in contesa</i> (dg)	Doralice *	S; ICCU; V
	1781	carn	Matteo Rauzzini: <i>L'opera nuova</i> (dg)	Regina *	S; ICCU
		carn	Alfonso Santi: <i>La sposa bizzarra</i> (op buffa)	Rosalba	S; ICCU
		carn	Giovanni Valentini: <i>La statua matematica</i> (dg)	Mad. di Trojenville *	S; ICCU
Florence	1781	May 23	Antonio Sacchini: <i>L'amore soldato</i> (dg)	Ottavina	S; V; W
		Apr 16	Anfossi: <i>I viaggiatori felici</i> (dg)	Bettina	S; ICCU; V; W
		Jun 8	Gaetano Andreozzi: <i>L'equivoco</i> (dg)	Lauretta & Livietta *	S; W
		Jul 16	Paisiello: <i>La frascatana</i> (dg)	Violante	W
Venice	1781	aut	Domenico Cimarosa: <i>L'Italiana in Londra</i> (dg)	Livia	S; ICCU ³
		aut	Luigi Caruso: <i>Il marito geloso</i> (dg)	Giovannina *	S; ICCU; V
Milan	1781	aut	Cimarosa: <i>Il falegname</i> (cm)	Elena	S; ICCU; V
		Oct 1	Felice Alessandri: <i>Il vecchio geloso</i> (cm)	Mad. Lisetta *	S; ICCU; V
Venice	1782	carn	Paisiello: <i>La frascatana</i> (dg)	Violante	S; ICCU

city	year	date	composer, title (genre)	Role	references
		carn	Andreozi: <i>I pazzi per disimpegno</i> (dg)	Metilde *	S; ICCU
		carn	Gaetano Monti: <i>Lo spozalizio per dispetto</i> (dg)	Laurina *	S; ICCU; V
Pisa	1782	spr	Andreozi: <i>L'Olimpiade</i> (dm)	Aristea *	S; V
Lucca	1782	aut	Felice Alessandri: <i>Ezio</i> (dm)	Fulvia	S; ICCU
Florence	1782	Sep 6	Luigi Cherubini: <i>Mesenzio re d'Etruria</i> (dm)	Ersilia *	S; W; Virgo
	1782	Oct 27	pasticcio, <i>Semiramide riconosciuta</i> (dm)	Semiramide	S; W
	1782	Dec 27	Giacomo Rust: <i>Artaserse</i> (dm)	Mandane	S; V; W; Virgo
	1783	Feb 2	Andreozi: <i>Bajazet</i> (dm)	Asteria *	S; V
		carn	Michele Neri: <i>L'infedeltà delusa</i> (dg)	Sandrina *	W
Padua	1783	Jun 12	Felice Alessandri: <i>Demofoonte</i> (dm)	Dircea *	S; ICCU; V
		?	Alessandri: <i>Le virtù rivali</i> (cant)	Genio d'Euganea	S; ICCU
Casalmaggiore	1783	aut	Sarti: <i>Medonte, re di Epiro</i> (dm)	Selene	S; V
Genua	1784	carn	Giuseppe Giordani: <i>Tito Manlio</i> (dm)	Servilia *	S; V
		carn	Lorenzo Rossi: <i>Ifigenia in Aulide</i> (dm)	Ifigenia	W; Virgo
Mantua	1784	Apr	Cherubini: <i>L'Alessandro nell'Indie</i> (dm)	Cleofide *	S; V
Bergamo	1784	sum	Sarti: <i>Medonte</i> (dm)	Selene	S; ICCU; V
Alessandria	1784	Oct	Carlo Monza: <i>Enea in Cartagine</i> (dm)	Elisa *	S; V
Monza	1784	aut	Anfossi: <i>Il geloso in cimento</i> (dg)	D. Flavia	S
Milan	1785	Feb 22	Niccolo Zingarelli: <i>Alsinda</i> (dm)	Zelmira *	S; ICCU; V
		carn	Michele Mortellari: <i>Semiramide</i> (dm)	Tamiri *	S; ICCU; V
Lodi	1785	spr	Sarti: <i>Medonte</i> (dm)	Selene	S; V

city	year	date	composer, title (genre)	Role	references	
Milan	1785	lent	Zingarelli: <i>Telemaco, ossia La vertu vincitrice</i> (cant.)	Calipso	ICCU; V	
Naples	1785	May 30	Ignace Pleyel: <i>Ifigenia in Aulide</i> (dm)	Ifigenia *	S; V; MS	
		Aug 13	Antonio Sacchini: <i>Lucio Vero</i> (dm)	Berenice	S; ICCU; V; MS	
		Nov 4	Guglielmi: <i>Enea e Lavinia</i> (dm)	Lavinia *	S; ICCU; V; MS	
		1786	carn	<i>Il convito di Baldassarre</i> (pasticcio orat.)	Palmira	S; ICCU
		Jan 20	Paisiello: <i>Olimpiade</i> (dm)	Aristea *	S; ICCU; MS	
		May 30	Guglielmi: <i>Belle rive del Sebeto</i> (cant.)	Pallade	ICCU; MS	
		Jun 12	Guglielmi: <i>L'inganno amoroso [Le due gemelle]</i> (cm)	Giulietta & Laretta *	S; ICCU; V	
		Jun 30	Paisiello: <i>L'amore vendicato</i> (cant.)	Alceo *	ICCU	
		Dec 7	Cimarosa: <i>Le trame deluse</i> (cm)	Ortensia *	S; V	
Turin	1787	carn	Cimarosa: <i>Volodimiro</i> (dm)	[unknown] *	ICCU; V	
		carn	Angelo Tarchi: <i>Il trionfo di Clelia</i> (dm)	Clelia	S; ICCU; V	
Vienna	1787	Apr 9	Guglielmi: <i>L'inganno amoroso [Le due gemelle]</i> (cm)	Giuletta & Laretta	Z	
		May 7	Cimarosa: <i>Le trame deluse</i> (dg)	Ortensia	A-Wn, KT 448	
		Jul 28	Paisiello: <i>Le due contesse</i> (dg)	La Contessa	A-Wn, KT 92	
		Aug 20	Martin y Soler: <i>Una cosa rara</i> (dg)	Lilla	Z	
		Oct 1	Martin y Soler: <i>L'arbore di Diana</i> (dg)	Diana *	Z	

city	year	date	composer, title (genre)	Role	references
		Nov 21	Salieri: <i>La grotta di Trofonio</i> (op comica)	Ofelia	Z
		Dec 22	Kozeluch: <i>Moisè in Egitto</i> (orat.)	Merime ⁴	S; Morrow, 269; Pohl, 62
	1788	Feb 8	<i>Il convito di Baldassarre</i> (pasticcio orat.)	Palmira	S; Z
		Mar 30	Antonio Sacchini: <i>Jefte</i> (orat.)	[unknown]	S; Z
Faenza	1788	Apr 28	Giuseppe Giordani: <i>Cajo Ostilio</i> (dramma serio)	Levinia *	S; V
Monza	1788	aut	Guglielmi: <i>Le due gemelle [L'inganno amoroso]</i> (dg)	Giulietta & Lauretta	S; ICCU; V
		aut	Nicolas-Marie Delayrac: <i>Nina ossia La pazza per amore</i> (commedia d'un atto in prosa, ed in verso, e per musica)	Nina	S; ICCU; V
		aut	Cimarosa: <i>Il credulo</i> (farsa)	Norina	S; ICCU; V
Milan	1788	Oct 1	Martin y Soler: <i>L'arbore di Diana</i> (dg)	Diana	S; ICCU; V; Gatti
		Dec 26	Vincenzo Campobasso d'Alessandro: <i>Antigona</i> (tragedia p.m.)	Antigona *	S; ICCU; V
	1789	carn	Giordani: <i>La disfatta di Dario</i> (dm)	Statira *	S; ICCU; V
	1789	lent	Guglielmi: <i>Le due gemelle [L'inganno amorose]</i> (dg)	Giulietta & Lauretta	S; ICCU; V
		lent	Dalayrac: <i>Nina o sia La pazza per amore</i> (commedia d'un atto in prosa, ed in verso, e per musica)	Nina	S; V
Novara	1789	spr	Guglielmi: <i>Enea e Lavinia</i> (dm)	[Lavinia]	V
Naples	1789	May 30	Guglielmi: <i>Ademira</i> (dm)	Ademira *	S; V; MS

city	year	date	composer, title (genre)	Role	references
		Aug 13	Giacomo Siri: <i>Ricimero</i> (dm)	Emelinda	S; V; MS
		Nov 4	Guglielmi: <i>Alessandro nell'Indie</i> (dm)	Cleofide *	S; ICCU; V; MS
	1790	Jan 12	Paisiello: <i>Pirro</i> (dm)	Polissena	S; V; MS
		Feb 27	Giuseppe Giordano: <i>La distruzione di Gerusalemme</i> (azione sacra)	Semira	S; V; MS
Paris	1790	May 29	Guglielmi: <i>Le due gemelle [L'inganno amorose]</i> (dg)	Giulietta & Laretta	Di Profio, 450
		Jun 30	Anfossi: <i>I viaggiatori felici</i> (dg)	Bettina	S; Di Profio, 480
		Sep 9	Cimarosa: <i>L'Italiana in Londra</i> (dg)	Livia	S; Di Profio, 464
		Nov 13	<i>Il dilettante</i> (pasticcio)	[unkown]	Di Profio, 448
Turin	1791	carn	Gaetano Isola: <i>La conquista del vello d'oro</i> (dm)	Medea *	S; ICCU; V
		carn	Giuseppe Gazzaniga: <i>La disfatta de' Mori</i> (dm)	Rossane	S; ICCU; V
Paris	1791	May 20	Salieri: <i>La scuola de' gelosi</i> (dg)	La contessa	Di Profio, 474
		Jun 5	Paisiello: <i>La frascatana</i> (dg)	Violante	Di Profio, 456
		Aug 12	Gazzaniga: <i>Il finto cieco</i>	Camilla	Di Profio, 454
		Oct 24	Gazzaniga: <i>Il convitato di pietra</i>	Zingarelli	Di Profio, 445
		Sep 3	Paisiello: <i>La pazza per amore</i> (commedia in due atti) ⁵	Nina	S; Di Profio, 471
		Dec 3	Martín y Soler: <i>Una cosa rara</i> (dg)	Regina	Di Profio, 446
	1792	Feb 29	Salieri: <i>La bella locandiera</i>	Mirandolina	Di Profio, 439
		Jun 16	Cimarosa: <i>Le trame deluse</i>	[Ortensia]	Di Profio, 479

city	year	date	composer, title (genre)	Role	references
Madrid	1793	?	? : <i>Il Meleagro</i> (melo-dramma in tre atti in prosa, con musica vocale e strumentale ne sui intervalli)	Altea	S
		Apr 4	Guglielmi: <i>Le due gemelle</i> [<i>L'inganno amoroso</i>]	[Giulietta & Lauretta]	Cotarelo, 355; V; Ca
		Apr 30	Cimarosa: <i>Il credulo</i>	[Norina]	Cotarelo, 355; V; Ca
		Jul 13	Paisiello: <i>Nina pazza per Amore</i> (melodrama en música)	Nina	Cotarelo, 357-8; V; Ca
		Sep 21	Cimarosa: <i>Il matrimonio segreto</i>	Eliseta	Cotarelo, 359; V
		Oct 14	Paisiello: <i>Pirro</i> (drama serio en música)	Polisema	Cotarelo, 363
		Nov 12	Cimarosa: <i>Il falegname</i>	Elena	Cotarelo, 364; Ca
		1794	Jan 4	Cimarosa: <i>L'italiana in Londra</i>	[Livia]
London	1794	May 17	Martin: <i>Il burbero di buon cuore</i> (dg)	Angelica	S; MDH; LS
		June 5	Paisiello: <i>La frascatana</i> (dg)	Violante	S; MDH; LS
	1794	Dec 6	Paisiello: <i>L'amore contrastato</i> [<i>La molinara</i>] (dg)	Rachelina	S; MDH; Rob, 421; LS
	1795	Jan 10	Paisiello: <i>I zingari in fiera</i> (dg)	Lucrezia	S; MDH; LS
	1795	Jan 27	Martin y Soler: <i>La scuola dei maritati</i> (comic op.)	Ciprigna *	Link; MDH; LS
	1795	Apr 14	Paisiello: <i>Il conte ridicolo</i> [<i>Il re Teodoro in Venezia</i>] (dr. eroi-comico)	Lisetta	MDH; LS
	1795	May 14	Giambattista Cimador: <i>Ati e Cibele</i> (historic pastoral drama)	Cibele	S; MDH; LS

city	year	date	composer, title (genre)	Role	references
	1795	May 26	Martin y Soler: <i>L'isola del piacere</i> (comic op.)	Amelina *	Link; MDH; LS
Venice	1795	Jun 23	Sarti: <i>Le nozze di Dorina</i> [<i>Fra i due litiganti</i>] (reduced to 1 act)	Dorina	MDH; LS
	1795	aut	Martin y Soler: <i>La capricciosa corretta</i> [<i>La scuola dei maritati</i>] (dg)	Ciprigna	S; ICCU; V
		Dec 4	Ferdinando Paer: <i>L'intrigo amoroso</i> (dg)	Dardane *	S; ICCU; V
	1796	carn	Giuseppe Nicolini: <i>La donna innamorata</i> (dg)	D. Irene *	S; ICCU; V
		carn	Paisiello: <i>Nina o sia La pazza per amore</i> (commedia in prosa ed in verso per musica)	Nina	S; V
Florence	1796	May 3	Martin y Soler: <i>La capricciosa corretta</i> [<i>La scuola dei maritati</i>] (dg)	Ciprigna	S; V; W
		Jun 11	Paisiello: <i>Nina, o sia La pazza per amore</i> (dg)	Nina	S; ICCU; V; W
		Mar 28	Paer: <i>L'orfana riconosciuta</i> (dg)	Lauretta *	S; V; W
Udine	1796	sum	Martin y Soler: <i>La capricciosa corretta</i> [<i>La scuola dei maritati</i>] (dg)	Ciprigna	S; ICCU; V
Venice	1796	Oct 5	Marcos Portugal: <i>La donna di genio volubile</i> (dg)	Contessa *	S; ICCU; V
	1797	carn	Paer: <i>L'amante servitore</i> (cm)	Adelaide *	S; ICCU
		Feb 18	Francesco Gardi: <i>Amor l'astuzia insegna</i> (dg)	Ortensia *	S; ICCU; V
		carn	Martin y Soler: <i>L'isola piacevole</i> [<i>L'isola del piacere</i>] (dg)	Amelina	S; ICCU; V ⁶
Pisa	1797	spr	Martin y Soler: <i>La capricciosa corretta</i> [<i>La scuola dei maritati</i>] (dg)	Ciprigna	S; V
		pr	Portugal: <i>La donna di genio volubile</i> (dg)	Contessa	S; V
Florence	1797	sum	Martin y Soler: <i>L'isola piacevole</i> [<i>L'isola del piacere</i>] (dg)	Amelina	S; V; W

city	year	date	composer, title (genre)	Role	references
		sum	Martin y Soler: <i>La capricciosa corretta</i> [<i>La scuola dei maritati</i>] (dg)	[Ciprigna]	V; W
		sum	Portugal: <i>La donna di genio volubile</i> (dg)	[Contessa]	V; W
Venice	1797	Oct 10	Gaspere Spontini: <i>Adelina Senese o L'amore segreto</i> (dg)	Adelina *	S; ICCU; V
		aut	Martin y Soler: <i>La capricciosa corretta</i> [<i>La scuola dei maritati</i>] (dg)	[Ciprigna]	V
		aut	Sebastiano Nasolini: <i>Il medico di Lucca</i> (dg)	Madama Ernestina *	S; ICCU; V
	1798	carn	Johann Simon Mayr: <i>Avviso ai maritati</i> (dg)	Contessa Lindora *	S; ICCU; V
Naples	1798	1 st op.	Martin y Soler: <i>La capricciosa corretta</i> [<i>La scuola dei maritati</i>] (dg)	Ciprigna	S; V
		sum	Giacomo Tritto: <i>La donna sensibile</i> (cm)	Elvira *	S; V
		3 rd op.	Paisiello: <i>L'inganno felice</i> (cm)	Leonilde *	S; V
Mantua	1800	carn	Paer: <i>L'intrigo amoroso</i> (dg)	Dardane	S; V
		carn	Portugal: <i>La donna di genio volubile</i>	[Contessa]	V
Florence	1800	Apr 15	Vittorio Trento: <i>Lidia</i> (dm)	Lidia *	S
		?May	Vincenzo Pucitta [sic]: <i>Bianca De'Rossi</i> (azione tragica)	Bianca De'Rossi	W
Udine	1800	sum	Andreozzi: <i>Pamela nubile</i> (dr.comico serio)	Pamela	S; ICCU
Trieste	1800	aut	Cimarosa: <i>Gli Orazi e i Curiazi</i> (tragedia per musica)	Marzia	S

ABBREVIATIONS

cant. = cantata; cm = commedia per musica; dg = dramma giocoso; dm = dramma per musica; orat. = oratorio

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¹ "Poesia del Sig. Gerolamo Bosello." *Indice*, 1776-77, pp. 77-8 (Verti, 211)

² The casting information comes from the score of the duet “Quel visino e da ritratto,” sung by Morichelli and the tenor Antonio Palmini, RISM A/I, S567

³ T. Wiel, *I teatri musicali veneziani del settecento*, 905, lists this production for autumn 1780.

⁴ My thanks to John Rice for identifying the role. See his forthcoming article on Ferraresi del Bene.

⁵ Sartori, libretto 18235. Di Profio, *La révolution bouffon*, 492, cites a libretto for apparently the identical production (August 1791), which was a “commedia in un atto.”

⁶ Listed in *Indice* as *L'isola del capriccio*.

⁷ Since the *Almanacco* is not entirely reliable, it is best used in conjunction with other primary sources such as librettos, published numbers from operas, payment records, etc. I have used it mainly to confirm information found in Sartori and ICCU. I added operas from the almanac only where they are known to have been previously sung by Morichelli. The almanac was not issued for 1800-1803.