



# A BRIDGE OF MUSIC

## An Italian Journey To New York



NEW YORK  
SEPTEMBER 24-25, 2023



Ministero degli Affari Esteri  
e della Cooperazione Internazionale



COMUNE DI GENOVA



REGIONE LIGURIA



 COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY  
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK



COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY  
**THE ITALIAN ACADEMY**  
FOR ADVANCED STUDIES IN AMERICA



**Claudio Orazi**  
General Manager  
Fondazione Teatro  
Carlo Felice, Genova

A few steps from the crossroads where tens of thousands of New Yorkers move daily over the bridge that has connected Manhattan with the mainland since 1883, over half a century earlier, one great Italian created a virtual bridge of trans-oceanic dimensions that still connects the United States to our Fatherland on the golden wings of *belcanto*: a Bridge of Music, the art that forms the spirit and conveys the words, as the perfect vehicle of Italian culture on American shores from 1800 onwards.

As a sign of destiny, highly congenial to our Latin sensitivities, the man's name—*nomen omen*—was Lorenzo Da Ponte, which means 'as a Bridge'. His reputation as a distinguished playwright is still firmly associated, in the collective mind, with the three librettos he composed in Vienna for Mozart (*Le nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutte*). However, when, in 1805 at the age of fifty-six, leaving both triumphs and vicissitudes behind him, he disembarked in the New World determined to recreate his life, his first aim remained that of promoting, on the far shore of the Atlantic, "the most noble and enticing of the many spectacles that human genius has invented": Italian Opera, the genre that has best represented Italy since the early baroque period, propagating its style and language throughout the world.

He was well aware, moreover, of "the advantages our literature would gain, and to what extent our language would spread through the enticements of Italian drama", especially when assisted by the persuasive power of melody. This vision was particularly encouraged by the continuous feedback he received in his new role as Professor of Italian Language and Literature at what was then Columbia College, located in Park Place.

That same square also housed the prestigious Park Theater, home to the most sought-after spectacles in New York. It was there that in 1825 a passionate businessman, the Irish American Dominick Lynch Jr., clearly inspired by Da Ponte's example, managed to open the first Italian Opera season in the United

States. For this occasion, he brought the legendary tenor Manuel García, one of Rossini's favorite singers, with his company of family members and colleagues, among whom shone the star of his seventeen-year-old daughter Maria. In fact, after triumphing on the stage and capturing the hearts of New Yorkers, in March 1826, she married a fifty-five-year-old businessman, Eugène-Louis Malibran, thus taking the surname by which she is known to history.

Three months later, Maria returned to the stage to take part, together with the entire troupe, in the performance of the legendary *Oratorio for the Benefit of the Orphan Asylum*, a fundraising concert of sacred and spiritual music for the city's Catholic orphanage, of which we have recently promoted the first historical reconstruction. The performance, conducted in the basilica itself on October 26, 2018, by Maestro Donato Renzetti, was also the subject of the splendid documentary 'The Oratorio', featuring Martin Scorsese—a film by Provenance Productions, which, just a few days ago, lost its wonderful leader, Jonathan Mann, to whose memory we offer our heartfelt tribute.

After the conclusion of the first Italian Opera Season and the dissolution of the García company, there was a risk that this very special genre, with which the American audience was beginning to become acquainted, would remain an isolated experience. So Da Ponte, with the aim of launching the necessary artistic turnover, personally took the reins of the project, dusting off, after twenty-five years, his beloved role as a librettist. Thus, in April 1830, again at the Park Theater, the pastiche *L'ape musicale* ('The Musical Bee') had its debut. It was the first Italian opera conceived in the United States for a declaredly American audience, as can be deduced from the dedication "To the Inhabitants of the City of New York" and its setting "in one of the Fortunate Islands", a metaphor suggesting Manhattan itself. This brilliant and pioneering title, even now a curiosity for scholars, although it can rightly be defined as Da Ponte's spiritual testament ("And Italian Opera triumphs again!", predicted the protagonist Don Nibbio), simultaneously constitutes the manifesto of the planned itinerary that we wish to follow in retracing the salient stages of our great Bridge of Music, with targeted productions and major synergies.

In this perspective, Columbia University and us have already seized the opportunity to bring *L'ape musicale* back to its roots—after 188 years—through the meticulous reconstruction by musicologist Francesco Zimei. This remarkable event took place on October 15, 2018, at the renowned Low Memorial Library, which, with its towering neoclassical architecture, overlooks the vast Morningside Heights campus. To complement this achievement, just a few hours earlier at the Italian Academy for Advanced Studies, an international symposium on 'Lorenzo Da Ponte and the Birth of Italian Opera in New York' celebrated this significant restoration and its unique historical context.

These events have also given rise to two books that we will present for the first time in the United States in these days alongside the two concerts described in the following pages and the unveiling of a commemorative plaque in honor of Lorenzo Da Ponte at Old St. Patrick's: *Un Ponte di Musica: Itinerari dell'Opera Italiana in America* (2020), edited by me, and *Italian Opera in the United States* (2023), edited by Giuseppe Gerbino and Francesco Zimei. This marks just the prelude to the initiatives that, in collaboration with the Lorenzo Da Ponte Institute and a number of significant American cultural institutions, we aim to dedicate to the forthcoming bicentenary of the introduction of Italian Opera in America (1825-2025). This way, we hope that this musical journey will continue to resonate passionately between the *Lanterna*, the lighthouse that has illuminated the port of Genoa for eight centuries—since the mid-nineteenth century, the primary Italian departure point for immigration to the United States—and the Statue of Liberty.

**Claudio Orazi**

*General Manager*

*Fondazione Teatro Carlo Felice, Genova*



Sunday, September 24, 2023, 3:00 p.m.  
The Basilica of St. Patrick's Old Cathedral

## LORENZO DA PONTE & FRIENDS

**Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**

*Overture to Le nozze di Figaro* KV 492 (organ elaboration by Jared Lamenzo)

**Manuel García Sr.**

*Ebor nova* (on the ship to New York, 1825)

**Franz Joseph Haydn**

*With verdure clad*

(*The Creation / Oratorio for the Benefit of the Orphan Asylum*, 1826)

**Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**

*"Non mi dir, bell'idol mio"* (*Don Giovanni*)

*"Dalla sua pace la mia dipende"* (*Don Giovanni*)

*"Porgi, amor, qualche ristoro"* (*Le nozze di Figaro*)

**Antonio Salieri**

*"Come ape ingegnosa"* (*Axur re d'Ormus / L'ape musicale*, 1830)

**Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**

*Laudate Dominum*, KV 339 (*Vesperae solemnes de Confessore*)

**Gioachino Rossini**

*Cujus animam gementem* (*Stabat Mater*)

**Gregorio Allegri**

*Miserere*

Sopranos **Amani Cole-Felder, Angelica Disanto**

Tenor **Leonardo Cortellazzi**

Piano **Davide Cavalli**

Narrator **Erik Hoover**

With the kind participation of Jared Lamenzo at the 1868 Henry Erben Organ  
and the Basilica Schola Cantorum conducted by Jared Lamenzo

A renewed interest in Lorenzo Da Ponte's American years has provided new impetus to the study of a topic central to an understanding of the dissemination of Italian culture across the Atlantic. The early history of Italian opera in the United States does not present itself as a self-contained and easily definable unit—historical processes rarely do. If anything, these were erratic and uncertain years, but we might also say dynamic and transformative. They approximately coincided at one end with the arrival of Da Ponte in the United States in 1805, and at the other with the brief but eventful life of the Astor Place Opera House between 1847 and 1852. The presence and legacy of Da Ponte loomed large as attempts to make Italian opera a staple of New York's society and economy became increasingly inventive, but also costly and ultimately unsuccessful. Before Da Ponte, Filippo Trajetta, the son of the opera composer Tommaso Trajetta, and a political refugee in the wake of the fall of the Neapolitan Republic in July 1799, played an early and multifaceted role in the diffusion of Italian music as a composer, instrumentalist, singer, teacher, and occasional impresario. However, the logistics of opera production required a concerted effort involving multiple stakeholders with enough financial and cultural interests to sustain a large-scale transatlantic import. In the 1820s, New York, a city with a growing population and capital as well as a flourishing entertainment business, presented the right conditions. It was mostly thanks to the efforts of the wine merchant and music enthusiast Dominick Lynch Jr. that the famous tenor Manuel García and his opera company (which included his entire family) crossed the Atlantic with a season engagement at the Park Theatre in November 1825.

The first season of Italian opera in New York became the catalyst of change, innovation, and controversy. Questions surrounding American self-perception of its own cultural identity took center stage together with the beguiling sound of music that pushed against the grain of the conventions of the English musical theater with its strangely natural display of foreign

language and vocal virtuosity. Underlying the debate on Italian opera—which newspapers helped thrust into public discussion—and the claim that musical taste could reveal the essence of a nation were pressing financial considerations. Deprived of the mixed economy of the European patronage system, opera had to find a way to survive in a new business-driven system of theater production. By the time the García troupe left for Mexico in October 1826, the question of squaring ticket sales with the financial support of the affluent stretched beyond the accounting books of the managers of the Park. One of the legacies of the García experiment was to accelerate a reflection on the role, if any, that Italian opera should play in American society in relation or in contrast to the European experience, and especially London, which was still regarded as the arbiter of theatrical taste. Different but interlocking goals merged into a complex design. For singers migrating from Europe, New York offered new economic opportunities. Their motivation was not so different from that of the stars of the English stage who crossed the Atlantic with the promise of more lucrative engagements and the prospect of a less competitive theatrical scene. Italians living in the United States such as Da Ponte, or the food entrepreneur and opera impresario Ferdinando Palmò, saw themselves as patriotic, and perhaps nostalgic, importers of the musical goods of their native land. On the other hand, for the supporters of Italian opera in New York, the ability to establish and sustain a permanent opera house came to represent a test of character in the arena of national musical identity. Perhaps not surprisingly, the historical afterlife of this phenomenon was a tendency to invest strategies of opera production with civic and moral values.

Da Ponte was directly involved in the recruiting of the second Italian opera company to reach New York, in October 1832, exactly six years after the García troupe bid farewell to the city with their last performance of Gioachino Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. Leading the new enterprise was the tenor and impresario Giacomo Montresor, to whom Da Ponte wrote:

I have the daring to tell you with the greatest frankness in the world that a good and well-organized company of Italian singers would make a fortune in America.

I have said a good company, but I should have said a very good, magnificent, excellent company, so that it could compete with and possibly win over that of Garzia [*sic*].

The next decades witnessed a relatively steady succession of investments and failures. No company became profitable enough to last more than a few seasons. The Montresor company folded after a year and little less than sixty performances between New York and Philadelphia. Vincenzo Rivafinoli's company lasted about a year before it went bankrupt in 1834.

However, some significant trends started to emerge. Two complementary forces drove the cultural and monetary economy of Italian opera: the desire to build a permanent opera house and establish a resident company as a precondition for the 'naturalization' of Italian opera in America, and the increasing circulation of travelling companies expanding and enriching musical and linguistic networks. Against this backdrop of mobility and permanence, a narrative of musical progress also started to solidify around an embryonic historiography of opera in the United States. Over time, it contributed to the formation of new plot structures inextricably bound to the question of musical dependence from Europe.

Figures such as Trajetta and Da Ponte, who found themselves in a new country not by choice but by necessity, seem to have played the role of isolated actors moving within a "foreign" cultural environment in which the preservation of their cultural identity and the simultaneous commodification of such identity for new audiences gave rise to a constantly evolving set of social strategies and modes of cooperation. Overall, the impression is that a sense of commonality and shared experience gradually transformed an artistic know-how into an agent of social aggregation, turning individual initiatives into a larger, loosely collective, project of cultural conservation and promotion. Sustaining such a

project soon required attracting new talent from Italy, often with the promise that there was a fortune to be made. A parallel and complementary interest in establishing Italian opera on an institutional level on the part of the New York elites enhanced the capacity of both parties to implement the different values to which they were committed, creating shifting patterns of social and cultural interaction. Da Ponte's enthusiasm might have been premature, but his contribution was not forgotten.

**Giuseppe Gerbino and Francesco Zimei**

(excerpted from *Italian Opera in the United States, 1800-1850:*

*At the Origins of a Cultural Migration*. Lucca: Libreria Musicale Italiana, 2023)



Sunday, September 24, 2023  
immediately following the performance  
The Basilica of St. Patrick's Old Cathedral courtyard



A plaque honoring Lorenzo Da Ponte  
will be unveiled and dedicated  
in the Basilica courtyard on Mott Street.





Sunday, September 24, 2023, 5:30 p.m.  
The Basilica of St. Patrick's Old Cathedral, 32 Prince Street  
(the South West corner of Mott and Prince Streets)

Book Presentation

## **UN PONTE DI MUSICA** **Itinerari dell'Opera Italiana** **in America**

edited by  
**Claudio Orazi**

Varese: Zecchini Editore, 2020

With Giuseppe Gerbino, Claudio Orazi and Francesco Zimei





Monday, September 25, 2023, 5:00 p.m.  
Columbia University, Butler Library – Room 523

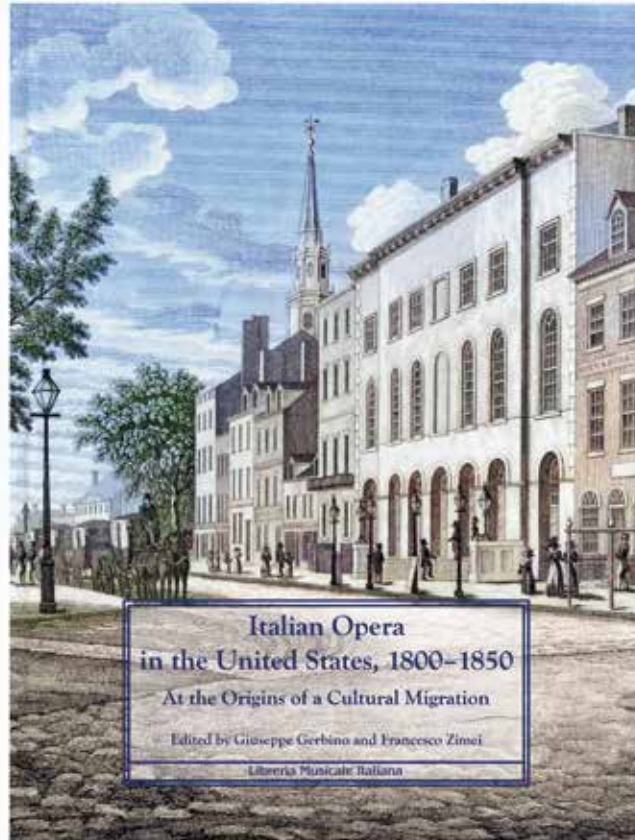
Book Presentation

## Italian Opera in the United States, 1800-1850: At the Origins of a Cultural Migration

edited by  
**Giuseppe Gerbino and Francesco Zimei**

Lucca: Libreria Musicale Italiana, 2023

With Julia Doe, Giuseppe Gerbino, Claudio Orazi and Francesco Zimei



*Italian Opera in the United States, 1800-1850* explores the events that led Italian opera to cross the ocean and settle in the United States. A raft of neglected documentary artifacts, including hitherto unexamined records from historical newspapers, sheds new light on this phenomenon, which saw Italian artists and intellectuals immigrate to the United States during the century's first decades. Previously known but only partially understood episodes including Lorenzo Da Ponte's personal campaign to promote the Italian language in the US, and New York's Park Theatre controversial opera season of 1825-26, are newly contextualized in light of social, cultural, and political trends of the period. The book also maps the complex network of historical actors who labored to bring Italian opera to life in America. This network included political refugees such as Filippo Trajetta and Piero Maroncelli, passionate patrons such as Dominick Lynch Jr., and bold and sometimes unscrupulous theater managers including Stephen Price and Charles W. Sandford. Italian opera was met with both admiration and suspicion, optimism and skepticism, enthusiasm and irony. Musical traditions and national identities found new meanings along the route of this early Italian migration to North America.



Monday, September 25, 2023, 7:00 p.m.  
Teatro, The Italian Academy for Advanced Studies in America

## **Recital by Cecilia Molinari: TWO CENTURIES OF ITALIAN MUSIC**

**Giuseppe Martucci**  
*La canzone dei ricordi*

**Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco**  
*Shakespeare Songs:  
Sigh, no more Ladies  
The Willow  
Ophelia*

**Gioachino Rossini**  
*"Nacqui all'affanno" (La Cenerentola)*

Mezzo-soprano **Cecilia Molinari**  
Piano **Claudio Marino Moretti**

The myth of America as a land of conquests and hospitality, well-being and freedom has permeated the collective imagination, especially since the 1850s. Since the end of the Civil War in 1865, the United States was on the verge of becoming, within a few decades, a solid economic and industrial force, which would attract a considerable number of emigrants from Europe. Italian immigration to the United States was a phenomenon that began around 1881, as a consequence of the severe agricultural crisis that had hit the European economy and peaked between 1906 and 1920: between 1880 and 1920 four million Italians migrated to North America. Specifically, Italians were motivated to move to the United States by two push-and-pull factors. On the one hand, they left Italy in search of work and fortune, encouraged by the letters of those who had already emigrated, and who assured their compatriots that leaving Italy would be the only prerequisite for enacting a new 're-discovery' of America, i.e. of a new Promised Land; and on the other hand, a sense of unavoidable 'removal' from the Old Continent motivated the Italians to embark on the New World.

The migration phenomenon contributed massively also to the evolution of American music. After 1890, eminent European concert performers, orchestra conductors, and singers relied heavily on American tours to establish their fame and fortunes. Although coming from a Europe with a centuries-old tradition, European musicians chose the United States as their second home, as a land of exile, as a country of conquest, or as a means for their social and artistic affirmation. Among the ambitious Italian emigrants, Mozart's librettist Lorenzo Da Ponte (1749–1838) and conductor Arturo Toscanini (1867–1957) are just two of the most brilliant Italian personalities whose presence enthused audiences across the Atlantic.

Da Ponte, after his European successes, was one of the first Italian intellectuals to become part of the American socio-cultural fabric. Fleeing from the debts of an entrepreneurial crash, Da Ponte settled in the United States in 1805. In New York he opened an Italian bookstore on Broadway, and in 1825 he became the first professor of Italian literature in the history

of Columbia College (today Columbia University), a position he held until his death. Having assumed the profile of a man of letters, Da Ponte attracted a large number of students and gradually gained the esteem of New York's high society by acquainting it with Italian poetry, painting, music, taste and traditions. At the same time, he developed the idea of instilling a love of opera in the Americans, as in fact, until then they knew only the operatic ballads of European operas, as well as certain musical comedies sung in English and accompanied by farces (favorite composers were Samuel Arnol, Henry Rowley Bishop, Michael Kelly, Joseph Mazzinghi, and especially Stephen Storace). Therefore, Da Ponte brought the company of the established Spanish tenor Manuel García Jr. (1775–1832) to the United States and organized with him the American premiere of Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, and of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* at the Park Theatre in New York. Garcia had prepared other four operas by Rossini, among them perhaps the finest of his three popular comedies: *La Cenerentola* (1817), based on Perrault's fairy tale, with a libretto from Jacopo Ferretti who adapted Isouard's opéra-féerie *Cendrillon* (1810). Angelina's beautiful aria "Nacqui all'affanno", a concert aria for the prima donna, using Almaviva's Act II cabaletta from the Barber, is dramatically redundant and delightful. *La Cenerentola's* first American performance took place in 1825: today, it is one of Rossini's most beloved operas, second only to the *Barbiere*, and the 21st most performed opera in the world.

After Garcia's season ended in 1826, Da Ponte wrote his first 'American' opera libretto, *L'ape musicale*, in New York, and promoted the establishment of the Italian Opera House, inaugurated in 1833 with *La gazza ladra* by Rossini. Although the Opera House rapidly went bankrupt, Da Ponte's contribution facilitated the diffusion of Italian opera and culture overseas, especially in New York, where, beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, there was massive public participation and increased interest in European opera. Reporting on a visit to America in 1893, French poet and critic Paul Bourget (1852–1935) wrote in the *New York Herald*: "I remember a gala evening at the opera in New York where the music was sung by one character in German, by another in

French, while the choir replied in Italian... This audience accepts it because they are obsessed with the need to assimilate European values”.

Years later, a similar ‘obsession’ with European culture is also shared by another Italian composer, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1895–1968), who was Jewish and escaped from Italy with his family after Mussolini’s promulgation of the shameful ‘Racial Laws’ of 1938. For too long, his cultural and cosmopolitan personality has been framed by a context limited almost exclusively to the fame of his works for the classical guitar. This potentially overlooks the originality of his instrumental, symphonic, and vocal output as well as the depth of his poetics in terms of the sources he employed. First and foremost, Castelnuovo was also a refined intellectual, polyglot, and cosmopolitan; secondly, he was a renowned composition teacher, destined to shape the careers of composers aligned with Hollywood such as John Williams, André Previn, and Henry Mancini; and, as a ‘third job’, he was active as a music critic for many years. Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s *Mandragola* (1920) was the first of his many works inspired by great literature and included quotations of works by Aeschylus, Virgil, Keats, Wordsworth, Whitman, and especially Shakespeare. The latter would inspire many works by Castelnuovo, such as two operas (*The Merchant of Venice and All’s Well That Ends Well*), eleven *Shakespeare Overtures* and numerous settings of songs and sonnets, such as the 33 *Shakespeare Songs*, op. 24, written between 1921 and 1925. For Castelnuovo as for many of his colleagues past and present, Shakespeare’s language was “perfectly musical: it unites the spiritual subtlety of English with the sonorous splendour of Italian”. It must also be said that to compose a cycle for voice and piano was an act of audacity, in twentieth-century Italy, where the main output for the voice was concerned almost solely with the stage and where vocal chamber music was neglected.

In nineteenth-century Italy, Neapolitan composer and conductor Giuseppe Martucci (1856–1909), while his championing of Wagner saw the Italian première of *Tristan und Isolde* in 1888, had the same kind of bravery when he approached a cycle for voice and orchestra, such as *La Canzone dei Ricordi*

(“The Song of memories”), op. 68, showing how influential he could be in reviving Italian interest in non-operatic music. As we know, Martucci was working on it from 1886 (it is interesting to note that Mahler had then just completed his *Songs of a Wayfarer*) and used a text by poet Rocco Emanuele Pagliara (1856–1914). Although divided into seven parts, the work presents an admirable homogeneity and unity of inspiration. It expresses nostalgic dreams, regrets of days and things long gone. The original version for voice and piano here presented is more intimate and perhaps less opulent than the orchestral one and represents a real drawer of Italian music to be opened, discovered, and appreciated.

**Valentina Bensi**

The overseas experiences of Italian composers as well as the European-American cross-pollination in the field of Western art-music are the subject of a recent in-depth study: see Valentina Bensi, *The Italian-American Musical Experience: A Journey from Busoni to Berio*.

Lucca: Libreria Musicale Italiana, 2023.

## BIOGRAPHIES



Hailing from Somerset, New Jersey, Soprano **Amani Cole-Felder** made her Opera Theatre of Saint Louis debut as Lucy/Lovie Alexander in the Damien Sneed re-imagined version of Joplin's *Treemonisha* under the direction of George Manahan. Amani also covered the title role of *Susannah* and performed in the Center Stage Concert with the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra during her time as an OTSL Gaddes Festival Artist.

Earlier this season Amani performed Cretan Woman in *Idomeneo* at the Metropolitan Opera, where she debuted as Strawberry Woman in *Porgy and Bess* in 2021. During her tenure as a Met Opera Lindemann Young Artist, Amani's scene performances and role studies included: Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus*, Angelica/Fiordiligi in *Furiosus*, Liù in *Turandot*, Sister Rose in *Dead Man Walking*, Mary in *Highway 1, U.S.A.*, Juliette in *Roméo et Juliette*, Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* and Musetta in *La bohème*.

Amani previously sang the role of Pamina in *The Magic Flute* with the Aspen Opera Theater in 2021 as an inaugural Renée Fleming Artist Fellow, under the direction of Patrick Summers. She returned to AOTVA and performed the role of Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* under the direction of Dame Jane Glover.

Amani won third place in the 2023 Harold Haugh Light Opera Competition and was awarded a career grant as a semi-finalist in the 2023 Pasadena Vocal Competition. She won second place in the 2022 Annapolis Opera Competition. In 2020, she was a finalist in the MONC Auditions Eastern Regionals and a semi-finalist in the Houston Grand Opera Eleanor McCollum Competition. Ms. Cole-Felder holds a Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Performance from Westminster Choir College and a Master of Music degree in Vocal Performance from the New England Conservatory of Music.



Born in Poland in 1995, **Angelica Disanto** graduated cum laude at the Conservatory of Matera under the guidance of M° Enzo Dimatteo. She took part to various masterclasses in singing with Stefania Bonfadelli, Marcello Lippi, Gemma Bertagnolli, Luca Dordolo. Angelica has established herself in major international competitions, winning prizes such as the first prizes at the "Jacopo Napoli" Competition and "Valerio Gentile" international singing competition.

Angelica has already made her debut in roles such as Adina (Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore*), Serpina (Pergolesi's *La Serva Padrona*), Berta (Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*), Semplicina (*Duni's L'Isola dei pazzi*), Musetta (*Puccini's La Bohème*), Lola (*Mascagni's Cavalleria Rusticana*) and Clarina (Rossini's *La cambiale di matrimonio*).

Past engagements include a tour in the Balkans with the Magna Grecia Orchestra (ICHO), Vivaldi's *Gloria* at the Duni Festival and Mozart's *Exsultate Jubilate* by Mozart with the Bari Symphony Orchestra.

Most recently she sang at the Fondazione Petruzzelli in Bari in the production of Massenet's *Werther* (Kätchen) under Bisanti and in Gassmann's *Gli Uccellatori* at the Festival della Valle d'Itria in Martina Franca. She made her debut in the role of Norina in Donizetti's *Don Pasquale* under Ciampa at Opera Carlo Felice in Genova, where she will return to sing in two symphonic concerts in the coming season (a selection of arias from Mozart's *La Betulia Liberata* under Fasolis and Dvorak's *Stabat Mater* (piano version).

Other future engagements include Haydn's *Kleine orgelmesse* with the Orchestra di Padova e del Veneto and a series of Baroque Concerts with Orfeo Future Ensemble on tour in Italy.



Born in Mantua, **Leonardo Cortellazzi** completed his studies in Parma where he graduated in Marketing at the Faculty of Economics and at the same time in singing at the Conservatory. Since 2007 he has participated in the biennium of the Teatro alla Scala Academy under the guidance of Leyla Gencer during which he had the opportunity to perform in concerts and operas (*Così fan tutte*). He will continue to collaborate with La Scala as Guglielmo in *Le convenienze teatrali*, Alberto in *L'occasione fa il ladro*, Ernesto in *Don Pasquale*, participated in the Monteverdi Trilogy as Telemaco and Nerone (the latter role performed also at Carnegie Hall), Tempo in *Il trionfo del tempo e del disinganno* and Nagg in the world premiere of *Fin de partie* by Kurtág, revived in Amsterdam and soon at the Budapest Spring Festival and the Theater de Chatélet.

Thanks to his versatile repertoire, that makes him feel at ease from Monteverdi to Mozart, from Belcanto to Verdi, to the 1900s and contemporary music, he is a regular guest of Theatres such as La Fenice, Maggio Musicale Fiorentino and in Verona (*Aeneas*, *Tamino e Nemorino* at Filarmonico and *Don Ottavio* and *Tybalt* in *Roméo et Juliette* in Arena). He has been also performing at San Carlo di Napoli, at Comunale di Bologna, at Massimo di Palermo, at Petruzzelli di Bari, at Lirico of Cagliari, at the Teatri del Circuito Lombardo, at the Festival della Valle d'Itria of Martina Franca and Rossini of Wilbad.

Leonardo Cortellazzi has been collaborating with conductors such as Alessandrini, Chailly, Chung, Conlon, Dantone, Fasolis, Matheuz, Mehta, Montanari, Oren, Ranzani, Rustioni and Santi and with stage directors such as Audi, Carsen, Flimm, Hampe, Michieletto, Pizzi, Ronconi, Vick, Wilson.

Among his recent and future engagements Nemorino in Muscat and Naples, Don Ottavio in Liège where he returned in the title role of *La clemenza di Tito*, Carolino in *Che originali!* of Mayer at Festival Donizetti in Bergamo, Alfredo in Treviso, Admet in Lisboa where he already debuted Percy in *Anna Bolena* and will be back with Leicester in *Maria Stuarda*, again Percy at Sidney Opera, Un servo in *Luci mie traditrici of Sciarrino*, Alfredo, Nemorino and Goffredo in *Rinaldo* and *Le baruffe* at La Fenice, *Acis e Galatea* in Kiev, Nagg in *Fin de Partie* in Paris, Oslo and Antwerp, Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* at NNTT in Tokyo, *Lucia di Lammermoor* at La Scala, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* and *Adriana Lecouvreur* at Opéra de Paris.



**Davide Cavalli** began his piano studies with Alfredo Speranza, graduating with honours from the Conservatory in Pescara. Subsequently, he attended specialisation courses with Edith Fischer, Robert Szidon, Aquiles Delle Vigne and Pier Narciso Masi and he obtained a Master of Arts in Musical Disciplines, specialising in Piano, with Roberto Cappello, and a Master of Arts in Chamber Music with Pierpaolo Maurizzi, both from the Conservatory of Parma and with full marks and honours. He has performed, both as soloist and in chamber music ensembles, at prestigious

musical institutions, including the Teatro La Fenice in Venice, the Odessa Philharmonic Society, the Tel Aviv Opera House, the Etihad Museum of Dubai, the Hindemith Foundation of Blonay, the Valle d'Itria Festival, the Ravenna Festival, the Teatro Regio of Parma, the Joaquín Turina hall in Seville, the Schubert Club of Saint Paul and the University of Minnesota. He also gave concerts at the Église de Saanen and the Auditorium Kirchgemeindehaus in Gstaadt, the Eglise Saint Marc in Brussels, the Salle des Arts in Paris, the Teatro Municipale in Piacenza, the Paganini Auditorium in Parma, the Royal City Conservatory, the Palacultura of Messina in Prague, Barcelona, Des Moines (Iowa), Milwaukee, Philadelphia. As part of the Internationales Kammermusik Festival Austria, he recorded the Suites for piano duo by Sergej Rachmaninov for the Austrian radio and television (ORF) at the Stift Altenburg Bibliothek, together with Davide Muccioli. Cavalli was the overall winner of the Seiler Piano Competition in Crete, the Frédéric Chopin Competition in Rome and the Camillo Togni Competition in Brescia. He also obtained the first prize in several national piano competitions. He has been intensely active in the musical theatre, collaborating with prestigious institutions and conductors such as Muti, Fournillier, Dantone, Battistoni, Brott, Paszkowski, Montanari, and with directors including Vick, Pizzi, Mazzavillani Muti, van Hoecke, Chiara Muti, Neshat, Lievi, Sagi, De Rosa. He works regularly with the Luigi Cherubini Youth Orchestra. To celebrate the bicentennial of Giuseppe Verdi, he took part to the “Echi notturni di incanti Verdiani” project, in collaboration with Rai 1, in Roncole di Busseto, birthplace of the Maestro, writing a musical arrangement for the death scenes of the of the Popular Trilogy’s heroines. Since 2015, he is the pianist of the Riccardo Muti Italian Opera Academy. In August 2017, he was korrepetitor and musical assistant for the staging of *Aida* at the Salzburg Festival conducted by Riccardo Muti, with Anna Netrebko, Francesco Meli, Ekaterina Semenchuk and Luca Salsi. On April 6th, 2019, together with tenor Francesco Meli, he performed in Rome, at Palazzo Madama, as part of the series of concerts “Senato & Cultura”, to celebrate Franco Zeffirelli’s Career Award, which was conferred by the Senate President. In 2020, he performed Donizetti’s cantata *Il Conte Ugolino*, alongside baritone Luca Micheletti, for the opening of the celebrations of the 700 years since Dante Alighieri’s death, in the presence of the President of the Italian Republic. Since 2022 he has been musical director of the Opera Academy at Opera Carlo Felice Genova.



Italian Mezzo-soprano **Cecilia Molinari** is the winner of the Bel Canto Prize “Rossini in Wildbad” and the Special prize “Pavarotti Giovani” at International Competition “Marcello Viotti” in Vercelli. She earns highest honours degree both in Flute and vocal performance and she made her operatic debut as Zaida in *Il turco in Italia* at Teatro Comunale di Treviso and at Teatro Comunale di Ferrara. In 2015, she has been selected as a member of the Accademia Rossiniana at Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro under the guidance of M° Zedda and

she has debuted the role of Marchesa Melibea in *Il viaggio a Reims*. Cecilia Molinari has quickly established herself as one of the most refined Rossini, Mozart and belcanto interpreters of the young generation.

Her most recent engagements include a new production of *Giulio Cesare* (Sesto) signed by Calixto Bieito at Dutch National Opera in Amsterdam under the baton of M° Haïm, a new production of *Orfeo e Euridice* as Orfeo at Teatro La Fenice in Venezia under the baton of M° Dantone, a return to Teatro Comunale di Bologna as Cherubino in *Nozze di Figaro*, the cantata *Berenice, che fai?* by Haydn with Filarmonica della Scala under the baton of M° Dantone, a new production of *Falstaff* at Salzburg Festival under the baton of Ingo Metzmacher, a triple house debut at Wiener Staatsoper with her signature role of Rosina in *Barbiere di Siviglia* under M° Montanari, at Semperoper in Dresden in *Così Fan Tutte* (Dorabella) with M° Omer Meir Wellber and at Amsterdam Concertgebouw in Rossini’s *Stabat Mater* under the baton of M° Michele Mariotti, the double-debut (role and house debut) as Ariodante by Händel at Teatro São Carlos in Lisbona, her house debut at MÜPA Festival in Budapest as Maffio Orsini in *Lucrezia Borgia*, Mozart Concerts at *La Seine Musicale* in Paris with Insula Orchestra and Laurence Equilbey, a new production of *Anna Bolena* under the baton of M° Mazzola at Dutch National Opera in Amsterdam, at Teatro dell’Opera di Roma as Rosina in *Barbiere di Siviglia*, a house debut at Teatro de la Maestranza in Sevilla as Cherubino in a new production of *Nozze di Figaro* and the title role in *Béatrice et Bénédicte* in a new production of Damiano Michieletto at Opera Carlo Felice in Genova. Future engagements include *Nozze di Figaro* (Cherubino) and *Barbiere di Siviglia* at Dresden Semperoper, the house debut at Deutsche Oper Berlin as Rosina in *Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Cenerentola* (Title role) at Smetana Hall in Prague, the role debut of Idamante in *Idomeneo* at Opera Carlo Felice Genova, the house debut at Opéra de Lyon in *Béatrice et Bénédicte*, *Mozart Requiem* with M° Harding at Teatro alla Scala, Pergolesi’s *Stabat Mater* with Orchestra Nazionale dell Rai di Torino with M° Orozco-Estrada.



**Claudio Marino Moretti** first began his musical studies at the Brescia Conservatory. He then moved to the Conservatory of Milan and studied composition with Franco Donatoni and piano with Antonio Ballista. Moretti then collaborated for several years with Maestro Mino Bordignon at the Civic Choirs in Milan and later with Bruno Casoni at the Teatro Regio in Turin. He founded the Children’s Choir of the Teatro Regio in Turin and the G. Verdi Conservatory of Turin with whom he carried out intense teaching and concert activities. Since 2001 he has been Choirmaster of the Teatro Regio in

Turin and, among other things, he recorded Verdi’s *Requiem* in Cologne with the Cologne Radio Choir and the Radio Choir of Hamburg, directed by Maestro Bychkov. From 2008 to 2021 he was Choirmaster at the Teatro la Fenice in Venice and in addition to the great operatic and symphonic repertoire, he prepared the Choir for the world premiere of Bruno Maderna’s *Requiem* and later for Luigi Nono’s *Intolleranza*. Many choral concerts are to his credit, with a repertoire ranging from Bach’s complete motets to composers of the historical and contemporary 20th century. Moretti has collaborated with many conductors such as Luisi, Nosedà, Campanella, Frizza, Chung, Gardiner, Herding, Prêtre, Plasson, Bichkov, Abbado and many others. He also works as a piano accompanist. From 2022 Claudio Marino Moretti is Choirmaster at Opera Carlo Felice Genova.







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