

# **The Power of Affections: Poetry, Music, and Spectacle in Seventeenth-Century Italian Opera Librettos**

An international conference organized by the Center for Italian Studies and the Music Department of the University of Pennsylvania in collaboration with the Institute for Music of the Fondazione Giorgio Cini in Venice, Italy.

University of Pennsylvania, 12–14 November 2014

Class of 1978 Pavilion, Kislak Center of Van Pelt Library, 6th floor

Organizing Committee: Mauro Calcagno, Fabio Finotti, Carlo Lanfossi, Marina Della Putta Johnston.

Today, scholars from various disciplines fully recognize the great cultural value of seventeenth century opera librettos and their extraordinary effectiveness in working as a conduit for music and spectacle, contradicting Giovan Mario Crescimbeni's 1700 claim that librettos like Giacinto Andrea Cicognini's *Giasona* (music by Cavalli) were emblematic of the decline of Italian poetry and of the diminishing power of affections (*la forza degli affetti*). The conference will situate these works in relation both to contemporaneous European literatures and to the musical settings and productions for which librettos provide the indispensable launching platform. Another focus will be the lives, careers, and roles of individual librettists, as participating in larger networks of production, circulation and consumption involving patrons, impresarios, composers, set designers, and other agents involved in the business of opera.

## **Wednesday 12 November**

7:30pm Concert "The Power of Affections: Vocal Music from Seventeenth-Century Italy."  
Julianne Baird, soprano; Rebecca Harris and Mandy Wolman, violins; Richard Stone, chitarrone; Rebecca Cypess, clavicymbalum and harpsichord; Christa Patton, harp.  
Music by Francesco Cavalli, Claudio Monteverdi, Stefano Landi and Luigi Rossi  
(free of charge)

## **Thursday 13 November**

9:00am Coffee and conference registration

9:20am Opening remarks - Jay Reise, University of Pennsylvania

9:30am Session I – Questions about Genre and Performance - Presider: Mauro Calcagno,  
University of Pennsylvania

Tim Carter, University of North Carolina - *Epyllia and Epithalamia: Some Narrative  
Frames for Early Opera*

Robert Holzer, Yale University - *Il (libretto) barocco in Arcadia: Crescimbeni's Critique,  
Xerse, and the Legacy of the Seicento*

Guillaume Bernardi, York University - *The Singer-Actor of Francesco Cavalli's Operas  
and the Performance of Recitative*

11:00am Coffee Break

11:15am Session II – Librettos and Their Sources - Presider: Fabio Finotti, University of  
Pennsylvania

Karen Raizen, Yale University - *The Lost Pilgrim: Locating Dante in the Seventeenth-Century Opera Libretto*

Katarina N. Piechocki, Harvard University - *Herculean Pro/Creations: Genre and Gender in Early Seventeenth-Century Italian Opera Librettos*

Alessandra Origgi, Freie Universität Berlin - *La tragedia e gli esordi dell'opera: una lettura dell'Andromeda di Ridolfo Campeggi [Tragedy and Early Opera: For a Reading of Ridolfo Campeggi's Andromeda]*

12:45pm Lunch

2:30pm Session III – Early Opera Academies and Patronage - Presider: Federico Schneider, University of Mary Washington

Beth Glixon, University of Kentucky - *The Librettist and the Prince: Matteo Noris, Ferdinando de' Medici, and the Art of the Libretto*

Anne-Madeleine Goulet, CNRS, Centre de musique baroque de Versailles - *Producing Meaning inside the Arts. Flavio Orsini (1620-1698), Roman Prince, Art Collector, and Librettist*

Joel Schwindt, Brandeis University - *Stylistic Differentiation of Gendered Discourse in Alessandro Striggio and Claudio Monteverdi's Orfeo*

4:00pm Tea Break

4:30pm Session IV – Horror, Magic, and Enchantment - Presider: Eva Del Soldato, University of Pennsylvania

Davide Daolmi, Università degli Studi di Milano - *Performing Horror: The Legitimation of Tragedy in Frigimelica's Rosimonda (1695)*

Alessandra Munari, Università degli Studi di Padova - *The Melancholy of the Third Genre in Early Seventeenth-Century Opera*

Eugenio Refini, Johns Hopkins University - *Charming Sirens: Vocal Seduction in Early Modern Opera*

## Friday 14 November

9:00am Coffee and conference registration

9:30am Session V – Tracing Performance in Librettos - Presider: Carlo Lanfossi, University of Pennsylvania

Thomas Lin, Harvard University - *From Prose to Verse: Revising Cicognini/Cavalli's Giasone (1649)*

Eleanor Selfridge-Field, Stanford University - *"Pageant, Prologue, Ballo: Where are the affetti?"*

Magnus Tesson, Stockholms Universitet - *The Serpent, the Mirror and the Woman with Two Faces: An Allegorical Reading of L'Incoronazione di Poppea*

11:00am Coffee Break

11:15am Session VI – Opera Circulation in Italy and Beyond - Presider: Wendy Heller, Princeton University

Jonathan Glixon, University of Kentucky - *Erismena trasportata*

Giada Viviani, Giorgio Cini Foundation - *Cesti's Tito on Stage (1666-1676)*

12:15pm Lunch

2:30pm Session VII – Nicolò Minato, Librettist I - Presider: Ellen Rosand, Yale University

Hendrik Schulze, University of North Texas - *Cavalli, Minato, and the Property of Affects: What Is the Role of the Librettist in Representing Affections in Opera?*

Sara Elisa Stangalino, Università di Bologna - *From Herodotus to Handel: Xerse's Thousand Years*

Barbara Nestola, CNRS, Centre de musique baroque de Versailles - *From Public Stage to Private Court: The Representation of the King in the Parisian Version of Minato/Cavalli's Xerse (1660)*

4:00pm Tea Break

4:30pm Session VIII – Nicolò Minato, Librettist II - Presider: Giuseppe Gerbino, Columbia University

Devin Burke, Case Western Reserve University - *Appropriating the French Infernal: Minato, Cavalli, and the Adaptation of Lully's Dancing Statues in Muzio Scevola*

Robert Ketterer, University of Iowa - *Il turco in Italia: Classical Antiquity and Ottoman Presences in the Venetian libretti of Nicolò Minato*

5:30pm Closing Remarks - Fabio Finotti, University of Pennsylvania

[8:30pm Conference Dinner, upon registration or invitation only]