

Violoncello Obligato Edition

Bernardo Sabadini

The Solo-Obbligato Violoncello Arias

- ‘Un laberinto al giubilo’ – *Zenone il tiranno* (Countertenor, Violoncello, Continuo)
- ‘Veder quel che m’adora’ – *Zenone il tiranno* (Soprano, Violoncello, Continuo)
- ‘Amor fammi goder’ – *Olimpia placata* (Male soprano, Violoncello, Continuo)
- ‘Creder alla speranza’ – *L’Ercole trionfante* (Soprano, Violoncello, Continuo)
- ‘Penar per un bel volto’ – *L’Ercole trionfante* (Countertenor, Violoncello, Continuo)
- ‘Se il mio pregar’ – *L’Ercole trionfante* (Male soprano, Violoncello, Continuo)
- ‘Amar e non mirar l’oggetto’ – *Hierone tiranno di Siracusa* (Soprano, Violoncello, Continuo)
- ‘Risana cor mio’ – *Amor spesso inganna* (Alto, Violoncello, Continuo)
- ‘Preparati a gioir’ – *Amor spesso inganna* (Countertenor, Violoncello, Continuo)
- ‘Chi spera di goder’ – *Amor spesso inganna* (Alto, Violoncello, Continuo)
- ‘Spero di ridere’ – *Amor spesso inganna* (Soprano, Violoncello, Continuo)
- ‘Amor le tue faville’ – *Amor spesso inganna* (Countertenor, Violoncello, Continuo)
- ‘Sol da te mio bel conforto’ – *La pace fra’ Tolomeo e Seleuco* (Countertenor, Violoncello, Continuo)

edited by

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INTRODUCTION

In Northern Italy after 1685 the violoncello began to appear regularly as an *obbligato* instrument, i.e. not as part of the continuo, in opera and oratorio arias. Domenico Gabrielli, Bernardo Sabadini and Giovanni Bononcini composed more than twenty-five such arias, although other composers sporadically employed the *obbligato* violoncello in arias as early as the 1670s, and by the early 1690s its use was relatively widespread. Despite the ongoing debate on the early violoncello's playing position and the recent surge of interest in the reduced sound of the late seventeenth-century performing ensemble in Italian opera, no publication is available to players of these relatively unknown arias. These three volumes bring together for the first time Gabrielli's, Sabadini's and Bononcini's *solo-obbligato* violoncello arias, i.e. arias scored for voice, violoncello and continuo.

This second volume collects all such arias by Sabadini composed during the period 1686–92. Sabadini, a composer and organist, worked at the Farnese court in Parma from 1681 where he became *maestro di cappella* in 1689. During his employment there, he was responsible for the music of operas performed in Parma and in Piacenza. The arias here presented are collected in aria anthologies housed at the Biblioteca Estense Universitaria and Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana. For further information consult the forthcoming publication in *Miscellanea Ruspoli* 'Bernardo Sabadini and his solo-obbligato Bass Violin Arias'.¹

ZENONE IL TIRANNO

In 1687 this opera was performed in Piacenza. The music was composed by Sabadini who included two arias with *solo-obbligato* violoncello in this opera.² The aria 'Un laberinto al giubilo' is sung by Zenone, a tyrant ruling the East. This role was played by Francesco Antonio Pistocchi. Zenone had ordered the murder of Consalvo, his brother, and Emilia's son, but Uberto and Ascanio did not obey to his commands. Betrayed by his subjects, he turns to his soldiers declaring that who is disloyal to him will die. He exhorts his soldiers to dance around the effigy that celebrates his glories. This is the conclusive aria of the second act and is followed by a *ballo* of the soldiers. This is the text in the libretto:

Un laberinto al giubilo
Sì, sì, formate, sì:
Sempre ne' vostri giri
Ad inchinarsi miri
Ciò, che l'arte à voi scopri.³

In the third act, the aria 'Veder quel che m'adora' is sung by Anagilda, Ascanio's lover, a role taken by Margherita Mugnai. After finding her clothes hanging off a tree, Ascanio believes that she died. Disguised as a shepherd's boy, Anagilda enters the room where Ascanio is preparing the poison to kill Zenone. She plans to reveal him her real identity but Zenone interrupts her and takes Ascanio away. Anagilda sings her torment, as Ascanio has not recognise her.

Veder quel, che m'adora,
Ne poter dir son quella,
È pena insopportabile:
La sorte è sì' rubella?
O pur quel ben, che ascolto,
Non mi conoscosce al volto?
La mente ne l'amar è così labile?⁴

OLIMPIA PLACATA

In 1687 this opera was performed in Parma. It was a revision of an earlier libretto, hence Sabadini made some changes to the music, originally composed by Domenico Freschi. The aria 'Amor fammi goder' with *solo-obbligato* violoncello was composed by Sabadini for this occasion.⁵ After arriving to Ibernica, Bireno, the young Prince of Zelandia, falls in love with Alinda, sister of Oberto, the King of Ibernica. With the help of his servant Niso, Bireno reveals his love in the hope that Alinda may be sharing the same feeling. Bireno and Niso also seek the benevolence of Ersilla, servant of Alinda and Oberto. At this point of the drama, Bireno is at the fishing lake waiting for a written response from Alinda and is full of hope. However, he does not know that Ersilla is in reality Olimpia, who he abandoned earlier, looking for revenge. This libretto, written by Aurelio Aurelii, has its origins from Orlando Furioso's story on Olimpia and Bireno by Ludovico Ariosto. In scene twenty-four of the second act Bireno sings:

¹ A. Sanguineti, 'Bernardo Sabadini and his Solo-Obbligato Bass Violin Arias', in *Miscellanea Ruspoli* 4, (in preparation).

² B. Sabadini, *Canzonette dell'Opera di Piacenza dell'anno 1687*, I-MOe Mus. G. 294. Biblioteca Estense Universitaria, Modena, is subsequently mentioned using the RISM library sigla I-MOe.

³ 'Create a circle and cheer. Whilst you spin, bow and admire what the art reveals you?'

⁴ 'To see, who loves me, but not to be able to reveal myself, is insurmountable sorrow. Is the destiny so cruel? Does he, whom I listen to, not recognise me? Is the brain, when in love, so feeble?'

⁵ B. Sabadini *et al.*, *Arie di Parma del 1688*, I-MOe Mus. G. 250.

System 1: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature, key signature of one flat. The staff contains whole rests. The bass clef staff contains a complex rhythmic accompaniment with eighth and sixteenth notes, including a triplet of eighth notes. A fermata is placed over the final note of the bass line, which is marked with a circled 'b'.

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System 2: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature, key signature of one flat. The staff contains whole rests. The bass clef staff continues the rhythmic accompaniment from the previous system, featuring a triplet of eighth notes and ending with a fermata marked with a circled 'b'.

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System 3: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature, key signature of one flat. The staff contains whole rests until the fourth measure, followed by a vocal line: "Un la - be - rin - to al giu - bi - lo". The bass clef staff continues the rhythmic accompaniment, ending with a fermata marked with a circled 'b'.

23

System 4: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature, key signature of one flat. The staff contains whole rests. The bass clef staff continues the rhythmic accompaniment, ending with a fermata marked with a circled 'b'.