THE COMPOSITION AND THE PRODUCTION OF THE OPERA SCORE
Beth L. Glixon and Jonathan E. Glixon
in Inventing the Business of Opera: The Impresario and His World in Seventeenth-Century Venice

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This chapter discusses the composition of opera in mid-17th-century Venice and the production of the score. Nearly all opera composers also pursued other means of employment, but the significant fees that could be earned made the extra work worthwhile. The most highly paid composer was Francesco Cavalli, who managed to negotiate favorable contracts at several different theaters. Pietro Andrea Ziani was another popular composer who continued to supply operas even after he took a job in Vienna. The composer was usually responsible for supplying copies of the score; he often assisted at rehearsals, made revisions to the score (tailoring it to the various singers), and led the orchestra as well. On occasion an older score was mounted, rather than a new one, inevitably saving the impresario money.

MARCO FAUSTINI AND HIS COMPANIES
Beth L. Glixon and Jonathan E. Glixon
in Inventing the Business of Opera: The Impresario and His World in Seventeenth-Century Venice

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This chapter follows the career of Marco Faustini at three different Venetian theaters: S. Aponal, S. Cassiano, and SS. Giovanni e Paolo (the most prestigious theater of its time) between the years 1651 and 1668. Marco Faustini began to participate in opera production after the
death of his brother, the librettist Giovanni Faustini, who had previously rented the Teatro S. Moisè, and then S. Aponal. Throughout his years as an impresario, he was helped by a variety of men, the patricians Alvise Duodo and Marc Antonio Correr, and, for a time, the cittadini Bortolo Pasinetti and Polifilo Zancarli; over the years, Faustini built up a reliable network of artisans, recruiters, and top-notch singers. Although Faustini worked with a variety of composers, he most frequently turned to Francesco Cavalli and Pietro Andrea Ziani.

AN HONORABLE AND NECESSARY WORK
Jonathan E. Glixon
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This chapter treats musical activities at the scuole piccole in the 17th century. Their patronal feasts remained important occasions for music, but other events also become significant. The Scuola dello Spirito Santo sponsored elaborate music for Pentecost, employing, among others, Francesco Cavalli and Antonio Lotti. Other scuole employed musicians for weekly compline services, monthly processions, and regular expositions of the Holy Sacrament. Services at the Fraterna Grande di Sant'Antonino included laude performed by the brothers. Many scuole, especially the parish-based Holy Sacrament confraternities, continued to build and maintain organs and employ organists. The Sovvegno di Santa Cecilia, founded by the singers of the city, organized an annual festivity that was one of the most elaborate in the city, with the participation of the entire chapel of San Marco and many others.

Didone and the Voice of Chastity
Wendy Heller
in Emblems of Eloquence: Opera and Women's Voices in Seventeenth-Century Venice
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This chapter describes Dido, queen of Carthage, in Francesco Cavalli's La Didone. It also explains the tragic despair of Hecuba and Didone’s guilt. It concentrates on the relationship between recitative and aria
—that is, between “operatic speech” and song. It also considers the significance of Cavalli’s somewhat idiosyncratic use of tonal language. La Didone provides an ideal vantage point from which to investigate the operatic encoding of women’s voice and to view the emergence of a feminine musical rhetoric in the first decades of Venetian opera. Dido's story warns women about the debilitating nature of female desire and the necessity of retaining control when dealing with a client. The Trojan act highlights the difference between male and female virtues, and the importance of civic duty over private passion. Didone's political power and protestations about chastity must necessarily be overthrown.

Seventeenth-Century Opera and the Sound of the Commedia dell’Arte
Emily Wilbourne

in Seventeenth-Century Opera and the Sound of the Commedia Dell’Arte

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The conclusion completes the historical through line of the previous chapters by showing how each of the musical techniques already identified as echoes of commedia dell’arte practice are evident in the music of Francesco Cavalli. While the comic characters of Cavalli’s oeuvre have been frequently linked to commedia dell’arte prototypes, and while his libretti trade in stereotypical scenarios popularized by the dell’arte theatre, the argument in this chapter concerns the codified musical languages of the Cavalli’s various character types and the extent to which the music of the mid-century Venetian theatre transposed the dialect traditions of the commedia dell’arte into musical-stylistic terms. Cavalli’s use of sound as a means of characterisation is directly reliant on the assumptions of the commedia dell’arte theatre, rendering the earlier spoken drama a decisive factor in the success of operatic development and on the epistemological foundation on which the very concept of drama in music rests.

The Nymph Calisto and the Myth of Female Pleasure
Wendy Heller

in Emblems of Eloquence: Opera and Women's Voices in Seventeenth-Century Venice

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This chapter explains the mythical realm of Arcadia in Francesco Cavalli's La Calisto, and looks towards a libretto by Giovanni Faustini. The opera La Calisto engages with the myth of Venice in an entirely new manner, intersecting in surprising ways with the city's unique self-image, political ideologies, and libertine tendencies. With La Calisto, Cavalli and Faustini find a novel way to manage the problem of women's desire and eroticism in opera, casting a somewhat different light on the Venetian ambivalence toward female sexuality. Cavalli illustrates a skill at motivic unity and text painting that was less apparent in La Didone. The transformation of female sexual desire into spiritual fulfillment is demonstrated. Cavalli provides a musical language that represents explicit female pleasure, but nonetheless contrives for its ultimate suppression in the guise of spiritual enlightenment.

Gender Ambiguities and Erotic Excess in the Operas of Cavalli
Susan Mcclary
in Desire and Pleasure in Seventeenth-Century Music
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“Gender Ambiguities and Erotic Excess” approaches the often-bizarre gender configurations on the Venetian stage through the debates surrounding the boy-actor problem in the plays of Shakespeare. The operas of Francesco Cavalli feature not only castrati in leading male roles but also plots hinging on mistaken identities that offer the frisson of same-sex entanglements. Instead of trying to explain away these idiosyncrasies, the chapter explores the pleasures and hints of illicit desires that made Cavalli's operas so popular.

Seventeenth-Century Opera and the Sound of the Commedia Dell'Arte
Emily Wilbourne
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This book considers the relationship between commedia dell’arte and early operatic forms, from the court operas of the first years of the seventeenth century, through semi-private productions in Rome, to
the public stages of Venice over fifty years later. While musicology has largely ignored the commedia dell’arte, except in cases of specifically comic opera characters, this book offers a corrective. A substantial re-contextualisation of the term “commedia dell’arte,” in line with recent scholarly developments in Italian-language theatre studies, emphasizes the partial nature of standard musicological treatments of the genre. The importance of serious commedia dell’arte characters is articulated, with particular attention given to the prime donne innamorate and the use of lament. Through a series of case studies based on commedia dell’arte plays, musical performances, pedagogical texts on acting, and several of the century’s best-known operatic works, the book argues that sound itself functioned as a crucial and influential component of commedia dell’arte dramaturgy. Furthermore, the author argues that the aural epistemology of the commedia dell’arte theatre—in which the gender, class, geographic origins, motivations and predilections of each character were audible in their voice—trained Italian audiences in habits of listening that rendered the musical drama of opera verisimilar according to existing dramatic norms, thus underwriting the success of the genre.

The Porous Grate
Jonathan E. Glixon

in Mirrors of Heaven or Worldly Theaters?: Venetian Nunneries and Their Music
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There were several reasons why the nunnery found it necessary to hire male music teachers. While in most cases new nuns learned plainchant from the older members of the choir, in certain situations outside expertise was required. Novices also required training in singing their portions of the rituals of clothing and profession, a role often carried out by secular professionals. The nunneries also housed young women resident students, whose studies, in addition to languages and comportment, sometimes included vocal or instrumental music. Teachers for these various purposes included G. B. Volpe, Giovanni Rovetta, Bartolomeo Barbarino, and Francesco Cavalli. All of these activities involved potentially dangerous interactions between the nuns and unrelated men, so the civil and ecclesiastical authorities attempted to maintain close control, if necessary arresting and trying men, including the organist Giovanni Pichi, who violated procedures.