

### *Gazzetta musicale di Milano* (1866-1902)

“Opportunity reasons”—Antonio Ghislanzoni declares in the introductory pages to the first issue of the reborn *Gazzetta musicale di Milano* [GMM] (1 April 1866)—are given for having suspended printing the journal on 28 December 1862, after twenty years of almost uninterrupted publication. In his view, the suspension was to be attributed to the “feverish political turmoil” and to the “significant changes” that were introduced in Italian institutions from the Alps to Sicily (excluding Rome and Venice) following unification under the reign of Vittorio Emanuele II. This situation determined a drastic reduction of subscriptions to the periodical. Nevertheless, the cultural and artistic revival that took place from 1863 to 1866 induced publisher Tito Ricordi (Milan, 1811-1888) to endorse, in the spring of 1866, an appeal of his young son Giulio (Milan, 1840-1912) to resume publication of the *Gazzetta musicale*. But Giulio wanted to introduce significant changes in the technical and scientific imprint given in the past to the periodical by his father Tito. These changes were destined to characterize the journal for almost four decades—until 1902, when it ceased publication—and can be summed up as follows: less emphasis on scientific discussion, more space given to inside information of artistic events; that is less theoretical, more practical.

In fact, the prevailing technical aspect that distinguished the periodical under Tito Ricordi’s directorship in the years 1842-1862 is cut short and almost disappears, seemingly substituted by an emphasis on factual information. Ghislanzoni himself states it explicitly, presumably urged by the young Giulio Ricordi, director of the *Gazzetta*:

A journal which concentrates almost exclusively on musical art cannot exclude technical studies that deal with scientific topics. Nonetheless, we intend to dedicate little space to austere topics, which are more properly treated in scholarly books and music treatises. The aim of a journal is above all to gratify its readers [...]. In order to attract erudite readers, we will try to make our essays interesting to the professional artist as well to the general public.<sup>1</sup>

The basic reason for this position is to justify the ample space—considered an *essential*—assigned to notices of theatrical activities. On 25 June 1865 a law on authors’ rights was passed, that was strongly promoted not only by Ricordi but above all, and *in primis*, by Giuseppe Verdi, as elected deputy of the first Italian Parliament. Verdi collaborated actively in

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<sup>1</sup> GMM XXI, no. 1 (1 April 1866): 1-3.

drafting the law (it is significant that the first page of the reborn *Gazzetta* is explicitly addressed “To Theatrical Managements”). Within the context of the politics of Italian unification, this law made possible, once and for all, a direct control of all theaters scattered throughout the national territory in addition to the control that was now possible to undertake abroad through conventions with the major European States (see by comparison the 1886 Bern Convention). It was an epochal revolution that transformed the editors into real managers, who could now influence the organization of operatic seasons. In this new economic context the actual employers of operatic composers became the editors in place of impresarios and theatrical managements. The editors commissioned new operas, drew up contracts, granted honoraria to young composers, and organized, directly or more often indirectly, operatic seasons of major Italian theaters. Ricordi in particular, the most influential Italian music publisher (as reflected in his catalogue that included almost the entire production of Verdi’s works) and Lucca (the firm that acquired the exclusive Italian rights to Meyerbeer and Wagner’s works) were in strong competition with each other with regard to the rights for the performance of foreign works. During this time, precisely from 1874 onward, Edoardo Sonzogno also participated in the rivalry between publishers. His firm purchased the exclusive rights to the works of various French composers. Thereafter (1883), in search of new talents Sonzogno organized a national competition for a one-act opera, thus creating a direct conflict with Ricordi, especially after the latter’s absorption of the Lucca firm (1888), including its vast repertory and all contracts in progress.

The adoption of the authors’ rights within the context of Italian unification and of the newly established relations between major European nations, modified the operatic industry and the wide dissemination of operas, and thus contributed to a lessening of the economic and financial crisis that the industry was suffering at the outset of Italian unification. The crisis was marked by a series of government restrictions regarding co-ownerships of theaters decreed in 1867; the situation deteriorated further by introducing in 1868 a 10% tax on tickets. This contributed to the establishment of the foundation of a standard operatic repertory, in keeping with the tendency already set in motion in the 1830s and that was to last well beyond the nineteenth century.

In order to meet the demands of the operatic industry Ricordi arranged the pages of the reborn *Gazzetta* as a weekly newsletter, to serve as a first-hand resource for mostly

contemporary information, by means of the rubric “Telegrammi” devoted to notices of current musical activities in Italy and abroad. It featured mainly operatic events, but also concert performances and occasionally prose works. It also reserved greater space for reviews and chronicles.

Another tendency that characterized the 1860s must be considered: if previously specialized critical essays appeared mostly in theatrical journals as well as in periodicals dedicated to various artistic expressions (for example *I Teatri*, *Figaro*, *Il Pirata*, *La Fama*, *the Gazzetta dei Teatri*, *L’Arpa*, *Il Trovatore*), now they are published mainly in the columns of daily political newspapers. In Italy the most reputed columnists in this field are Filippo Filippi of Milan’s *La Perseveranza*, Francesco D’Arcais of *L’Opinione*, the Turin’s governmental journal, successively published in Florence and then in Rome; his successor Ippolito Valetta; Amintore Galli of Milan’s *Il Secolo*; Girolamo Alessandro Biaggi of Florence’s *La Nazione*; Leone Fortis (*Doctor Veritas*) of Milan’s *Il Pungolo*. These writers dominated Italian music criticism of the second half of the nineteenth century.

The *Gazzetta* takes account of this situation and indeed views it as an opportunity to reserve space for critical essays published in the daily Italian and foreign press; these essays were included under a new rubric featuring notices of significant music events, for example, important *premières*. The press notices are often grouped in the supplements of the *Gazzetta musicale di Milano*, and today constitute a very precious and almost unique source of information for scholars of nineteenth-century music.

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The impassioned and undisciplined character of Giulio Ricordi’s youth had no effect on his managerial ability when he started working for the firm of his father Tito in 1862. He aimed to boost the production of the firm by acquiring music stocks (Escudier, Pigna, Schmidl) and by absorbing other publishing firms (Lucca among others in 1888). Giulio skilfully promoted the interests of Casa Ricordi by opening branches all over the world: in Leipzig, Paris, London, New York and Buenos Aires. He had the temper of a dynamic businessman, yet a vivid artistic temperament as well: painter, caricaturist, watercolorist, keen and refined writer. But above all he was a well-trained musician, a pianist and a composer who signed his works—among which is a string quartet awarded a prize at the Basevi competition in Florence in 1864—under the pseudonym J. Burgmein. Among other things, Giulio was responsible for founding in 1864,

together with Arrigo Boito, the Società del Quartetto di Milano. Giulio also deserves merit for persuading Verdi to return to the Teatro alla Scala in 1869, after the composer boycotted the theater for almost twenty years. Consequently, the Teatro alla Scala assumes a *central* role, as it were, in Giulio Ricordi's business activities, as amply reflected in the pages of the *Gazzetta*. Verdi's return to Milan, persistently encouraged by Giulio, constituted the basis of the long-lasting renewal of that theater, which became a point of reference for other Italian theaters. Still to be attributed to Giulio Ricordi's strong intuition and to his tenacious personality are some further merits: especially to have brought closer, with patience and determination, two forceful and contrasting personalities, those of Verdi and Boito, thus preparing for the creation of *Otello* and *Falstaff*, two late masterpieces of nineteenth-century Italian opera. Giulio also deserves merit for the early launching (notwithstanding the negative opinion of friends and counsellors) of a young composer destined to dominate the operatic scene after Verdi: Giacomo Puccini, to whose successes the *Gazzetta* will devote most of its yearly issues from 1897 to 1902.

As director of the *Gazzetta* Giulio Ricordi was assisted by an editor-in-chief Antonio Ghislanzoni (1824-1893); formerly a singer, then a brilliant journalist, novelist and librettist from 1866 to 1871. He was succeeded from 1872 to 1886 by Sardinian critic and novelist Salvatore Farina (1846-1918), by critic and composer Alfredo Soffredini from 1887 to 1893, and by Giuseppe Anfossi from late autumn 1894. Nonetheless, Giulio maintained, until the end, total responsibility for the management and the critical imprint given to the periodical; he himself often intervened in the columns of the periodical to comment on important events or to engage in polemics by means of editorials, which he signed with his full name or by his initials.

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Until 1888 the structure of the *Gazzetta musicale di Milano* is maintained with few exceptions in all issues: weekly eight-page installments ("published every Sunday" until 28 November 1895 when "it is published every Thursday"), in a format of ca. 41 x 28.5 cm. From 1889 to 1902 the format of the *Gazzetta* is reduced (33 x 25 cm.), but its number of pages is doubled to sixteen per issue, in turn enriched by an unnumbered cover, occasionally containing on its verso page rubrics entitled "Alla rinfusa" and "Bibliografia musicale." Each yearly volume is subdivided in two parts, each containing one half of the issues for an entire year. At times a

issue is enriched by a Supplement, dedicated mostly to press reports of important operatic *premières* in Italy and abroad (for example Verdi's *Aida* and *Otello*, Boito's *Mefistofele*, Massenet's *Re di Lahore*, Ponchielli's *La Gioconda* and *I Lituani*) as well as important commemorations such as Verdi's artistic jubilee in 1889 and the Rossini centenary in 1892.

The opening essay is dedicated to a variety of topics: at times it deals with current issues, occasionally polemical in character, or may register a necrology; more frequently it contains a critique of an operatic or concert performance, reviews of music editions and of books of musical interest. Rather frequently the fascicle is introduced by a *medaglione*, that is a biographical profile of a composer or concert performer, with an annexed lithograph of his portrait. The Appendix—commonly utilized by journals in those years with the intent of maintaining constantly the interest of its subscribers—features mostly literary topics; this rubric is suspended in June 1884. After an initial phase of ambiguity, the rubrics following the opening essay have a regular structure and a characteristic imprint. As said, they give absolute prominence to dispatches of theatrical events, arranged variously: in the first place a chronicle commenting on musical activities that took place in Milanese theaters and other artistic institutions (e. g., the rubric “Rivista Milanese”), regarding (although limited to the early issues) plays recited in prose. A central role in the *political* outlook of the *Gazzetta* is assigned in particular to the activities of the Teatro alla Scala, which become determinant when Verdi, following an absence of almost twenty-five years, finally returns in the theatre, that saw his debut, with a new version of *La Forza del destino*, thus launching a new phase of reform of the theater's orchestral and operatic productions. After the “Rivista Milanese” follows the “Carteggi”, or *Corrispondenze* from Italy and abroad which conclude with additional short theatrical and artistic notices. These rubrics, which constitute the most important section of the periodical, are followed by other rubrics that feature various types of information: the rubric “Bibliografia musicale,” reserved mainly for Ricordi publications and signed by such scholars as Ghislanzoni, Filippi, Mazzucato, Chilesotti, and Untersteiner among others, and to which are added reports from the press; the rubrics “All rinfusa”—a sort of weekly diary, filled with inside information on various, often not well known, current musical events—and “Varietà.”

A new rubric regularly published in the 1880s is titled “Concerti”: it reflects the evolving growth of non-operatic activities, with particular attention given to symphonic concerts. In addition, due to the interest in the genre stirred up by Giovanni Tebaldini, considerable

importance is given to notices of sacred music; from 1889 onward a regular rubric is reserved to reports of performances and quests for reforming this genre. Often published is a “Rubrica amena,” dedicated to short notices and polemical commentaries. The closing section of the journal features obituaries, announcements of available positions, theater contracts, texts of telegrams about special events, and notices of new publications by Casa Ricordi. From 1871 onward each issue concludes with a series of games (rebus, charades, puzzles), almost always introduced by the rubric “Posta della Gazzetta,” aimed at amateurs of puzzles, and containing only a few lines of text, rather difficult to resolve, and at any rate lacking any type of musical or cultural information. Therefore, this rubric has not been catalogued.

Quite extensive is the number of collaborators of the *Gazzetta musicale di Milano* contributing correspondence from Italy and abroad. Regular correspondence is published from Rome (D’Arcais, Valetta, Cametti), Naples (Acuto, i. e. Federico Polidoro), Florence (Vincenzo Meini, then Emilio Ricordi), Venice (E. Parenzo, then Piero Faustini), and Genoa (Minimus, i. e. Giuseppe Perosio). Rather frequently appear correspondences from Turin (Corinno Mariotti, G. I. Armandi, Alberto Luigi Villanis), Bologna (Francesco Biagi, then Antonio Cervi), Padua (Truth, i. e. Valeria Faccanoni Ponzio Vaglia), Trieste (O. V.), Livorno (Arturo Rolfini), Pisa (Arnaldo Della Santa), Parma (Parmenio Bettòli, Paolo Emilio Ferrari, Mario Ferrarini), Modena (Vincenzo Tardini), Cremona (Bortolo Piatti), Bari (Niccolò Ragni-Caporizzi), Palermo (Pietro Florida, then Enrico Gasperoni), etc. Particularly frequent is the correspondence from Paris, which is published almost weekly from 1866 to 1893, signed A. A. (i. e. Achille de Lauzères). Frequent also is correspondence from London (P. M., i. e. Pietro Manzoni, then Cesare Lisei, Alice Zimmern), Vienna (Berggruen, then Eisner von Eisenhof), Berlin (Eugenio Pirani), Louvain in Belgium (Xavier van Elewyck), Bruxelles, the Iberian Peninsula, Warsaw (Alessandrina Gröer), New York, San Francisco (Riccardo A. Lucchesi), and South America. These correspondents furnish information on the most up-to-date musical events. From 1892 particularly assiduous is the correspondence from Munich (almost weekly reports signed Monacensis, i. e. H. Moltan), Dresden (Lillian) and other German cities.

The “scholarly” essays published periodically in the journal are assigned in particular to Alberto Mazzucato, Alfredo Soffredini, Luigi Ferdinando Casamorata, Martino Roeder, Alberto Cametti, Oscar Chilesotti, Giovanni Tebaldini, Alfredo Untersteiner. Numerous polemical debates are advanced by Ghislanzoni, Cosimo Mariotti, Alberto Villanis, Filippo Filippi. The

debate on the *corista normale* (namely the standard tuning) figures among the subjects given most attention. Other topics treated are those regarding singing and singing schools; the disposition of the orchestra; subventions to theaters; authors' rights; the peculiar characteristics and the future of Italian music; Wagner's music—at first strongly opposed, then object of much attention following Ricordi's acquisition of the rights to the composer's operas; ancient music (compare in particular the debates that got under way regarding the newly found *Inno ad Apollo*); and topics related to harmony.

Among the most significant contributions that deal with music history and that are published in continuous installments are Filippi's analyses of Verdi's *Don Carlo* (1869), Cametti's articles on Palestrina (1894-95) and on Roman librettist Jacopo Ferretti (1896-97), and Soffredini's chapters on *Verdi e le sue opere* (1889-90).

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Given the thorough and up-to-date types of information transmitted from opera theaters and concert halls, the *Gazzetta musicale di Milano* constitutes as a whole a sort of *radiografia* of Italian and European musical life of the second half of the nineteenth century.

The present inventory was based on the copy of the periodical in the Sezione Musicale of the Biblioteca Palatina, Conservatorio di Musica "Arrigo Boito" in Parma and in the archive of the Répertoire International de la Presse Musicale in Baltimore.

Errors in names and titles are given in the correct version without comment.

In the rubric "Necrologie" the notice of death is repeated in successive issues; the repetition is usually ignored, unless the repeated notice supplies more precise and circumstantial information: in such a case the updated notice is registered while the previous one is ignored.

Among the authors that signed their contributions with only initials or with a pseudonym, the following have been identified with certainty:

A...	Francesco D'Arcais (Florence, then Rome)
A. A., A. de L.	Achille de Lauzières (Paris)
(a. c.)	Augusto Cameroni
A. C.	Alessandro Cortella
A. D.	A. Duarte (Lisbon)
A. F.	Antonio Falchi

A. G.  
 A... G...  
 a. g. c.  
 A. R., A. Rolf..., Arturo R.  
 Acuto  
 ag  
 agc  
 Arnaldo  
 Avv. N. R., Avv. N. R. C., n. r. c.  
 Azim  
 B. P.  
 Bequadro  
 C. di Barga  
 C. G.  
 C. L.  
 C. M.  
 C. Sch.  
 Clm  
 D. E. P., D.r E. P., Dott. E. P., Dott. E.  
  
 D. F., D. F. F., D.r F. F., F., F.D.r F., F. F.  
 D. V.r  
 D'E., D'e., d'E., d'e., cav. v. E.  
 d'X, D'X  
 Do, Do.  
 Dott. E. G., E. G., e. g., (g.)  
 Dott. Libertà  
 Drago, M. R., Raro, Raro Drago  
 E. D. V.  
 E. F.  
 E. P., Eug. P.  
 e. r., em. ri., em. ric., emi ricor, Emilio Rd  
 E. T. V.  
 Edwart  
 Emme-effe  
 Estense  
 f. b., F. B.  
 F. S.  
 Folchetto  
 Franco  
 G. Alb.  
 G. B. N.  
 G. C.  
 G. D.  
 G. D. V.  
 G. I. A.  
  
 Antonio Ghislanzoni (Milan)  
 Alessandrina Groër (Warsaw)  
 A. G. Corrieri  
 Arturo Rolfini (Livorno)  
 Federico Polidoro (Naples)  
 Antonio Gramola  
 A. G. Corrieri  
 Arnaldo Della Santa (Pisa)  
 Niccolò Ragni-Caporizzi (Bari)  
 Alice Zimmern (London)  
 Parmenio Bettòli (Parma, then Bergamo)  
 Pietro Floridia (Palermo)  
 Gabardo Gabardi  
 Carlo Gallone (Karlsruhe)  
 Cesare Lisei (London)  
 Corinno Mariotti (Torino)  
 Carlo Schmidl  
 Alfredo Colombani  
 E. Parenzo (Venice, Mantua, Geneva, Siena,  
 Padua, Bologna)  
 Filippo Filippi  
 Leone Fortis  
 Angelo Eisner von Eisenhof (Vienna)  
 Xavier van Elewyck (Leuven, Belgium)  
 Giovanni Battista Pollini (Siena)  
 Enrico Gasperoni (Catania, then Palermo)  
 Lodovico Alberti  
 Raro Miedtner (Berlin)  
 Edgardo Del Valle de Paz  
 Ernesto Ferrettini  
 Eugenio Pirani (Berlin)  
 Emilio Ricordi (Florence)  
 Eugenio Torelli-Viollier  
 Edoardo Perelli  
 Mario Ferrarini (Parma)  
 G. B. Boldrini (Ferrara)  
 Francesco Biagi (Bologna)  
 Francesco Somma  
 Giacomo Caponi  
 Vincenzo Venturelli (Mantua)  
 Giuseppe Albinati  
 Giovanni Battista Nappi  
 G. Celsi (Vienna)  
 G. Dinaro (Verona)  
 G. Ducati (Piacenza)  
 G. I. Armandi (Turin)

G. P.  
G. R., g. r., gr.,  
G. Teb  
gace, gaci  
gm.  
H. K.  
Il Misovulgo  
Inirdnas  
Ittarom  
Jarro  
L. A. V.  
L. L.  
L. V.  
Lianovosani  
L'Italico, P.o., Primo  
M. C., M. N. C.  
M. R.  
Minimus  
Monacensis  
N. S.  
O. B., O. Bn.  
O. C., Dott. O. C.  
P. B.  
P. F.  
P. E. F.  
P. M.  
R. A.  
R. V.  
- s. -  
S. F.  
t. m.  
Tom  
Truth  
uc, u.c., U. C.  
V. F., V. Fed...  
V. M.  
V. M. Z.  
V. T., v. t., vt  
W. M.

Giovanni Paloschi  
Giulio Ricordi  
Giovanni Tebaldini  
Antonio Cervi (Bologna)  
Gustavo Macchi  
Henry Kling (Geneva)  
Aldo Noseda  
Alfredo Sandrini (La Spezia)  
Moratti  
Giulio Piccini  
Alberto Luigi Villanis (Turin)  
Luigi Lianovosani  
Liberio Vivarelli (Florence)  
Giovanni Salvioli  
Primo Levi  
Michele N. Crisafulli (Messina)  
Martino Roeder  
Giuseppe Perosio (Geneva)  
H. Moltan (Munich)  
N. Sunguroff (St. Petersburg)  
Oscar Berggruen (Vienna)  
Oscar Chilesotti  
Bortolo Piatti (Cremona)  
Pietro Faustini (Venice)  
Paolo Emilio Ferrari (Parma)  
Pietro Mazzoni (Londra)  
Riccardo A. Lucchesi (San Francisco)  
Renzo Valcarenghi (Palermo)  
Alfredo Soffredini (Milan)  
Salvatore Farina (Milan)  
Tancredi Mantovani (Bologna)  
Eugenio Checchi  
Valeria Faccanoni Ponzio Vaglia (Padua)  
Ugo Capetti  
Vito Fedeli (Foligno, Spoleto, Perugia)  
Vincenzo Meini (Florence)  
Vincenzo Maugeri Zangàra (Catania)  
Vincenzo Tardini (Modena)  
R. Wogan Macdonnel

Translated by Elvidio Surian