

stressing the importance of material from the baritone Antonio Cotogni, as handed down through the publications of Luigi Ricci.

Among the contributions devoted to singing Verdi today, two did not originate from the conference: John Deathridge's wide-ranging conversation with Sir Antonio Pappano, which took place in the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden in 2015, and Andrew Moravcsik's explanations for the shortage of excellent *spinto* and dramatic voices since the 1980s.<sup>3</sup> Dominique Meyer, Intendant of the Wiener Staatsoper considers the difficulty of casting within the constraints of the international star-system, which requires contracts to be signed many years in advance of an engagement. Finally, the remaining items in the volume are lively interviews with baritone Leo Nucci (by Dominique Meyer) and mezzosoprano Christa Ludwig and tenor Ramón Vargas (by Stephan Mösch).

The book offers an excellent introduction to the topic, and it is particularly gratifying that it originated at one of the world's most prestigious opera companies. Although the historical material will be quite familiar to scholars, it will likely be a revelation for conductors and singers who have not encountered these ideas before. In addition, since the authors avoid technical jargon in their essays, the book is also accessible to general readers and operagoers. At the conference, many of the oral presentations included recorded excerpts; these are listed in the footnotes for each chapter, and are readily available on *youtube*.

David Lawton

*Verdi, Wagner, Strauss: tre drammaturgie musicali (Atti delle giornate di studio «Chi mi toglie il regio scettro? Verdi e Wagner, opera e dramma, regie e registi per cinquant'anni», Bologna, R. Accademia Filarmonica, 5 ottobre 2013 [e] «Riccardo Strauss in Italia e in italiano», Bologna, R. Accademia Filarmonica, 8 novembre 2014, a cura di Piero MIOLI, Bologna, Pàtron, 2016, 256 pp.*

Loris AZZARONI, *Presentazione* (7) – Piero MIOLI, *Introduzione: Concordia discordie* (9) – Piero MIOLI, *Qual risorta fenice novella. Opera, Italia, Unità* (23) – Giancarlo LANDINI, *La Scala con Verdi e Wagner: reale e imparziale?* (37) – Giorgio APPOLONIA, *«Sempre libera degg'io». Registi e primedonne tra Verdi e Wagner* (49) – Stephen HASTINGS, *La*

<sup>3</sup> On the basis of extensive interviews with opera professionals, Moravcsik concludes that there are three main reasons for this shortage: the difficulty of identifying young vocal talent because of the predominance of singing with microphones; the problem of late vocal maturity for such voices; and the overemphasis on visual appearance in casting decisions.

visibilità del regista in tre allestimenti della «Forza del destino» (63) – Matteo MARAZZI, *La baruffa e la frattura. «I Maestri cantori di Norimberga» da Cosima a Katharina* (71) – Antonio CASTRONUOVO, *Francesi alla conquista di Bayreuth. L'«Anello del Nibelungo» di Chéreau e Boulez* (83) – Piero MIOLI, *Trovatore sul Walhalla ossia Karajan alla Scala* (95) – Gherardo GHIRARDINI, «Aus Italien». *Musiche di viaggio nel Bel Paese* (117) – Piero MIOLI, *Primadonna e «Frau»*. *Della voce di soprano nel teatro di Strauss* (123) – Cesare ORSELLI, *Vicende fiorentine del «cantore del mondo di ieri»* (161) – Luigi VERDI, «Elettra» di Strauss e «Cassandra» di Gneccchi (169) – Claudio SANTORI, «Di rigori armato il seno». *Cantanti italiani per Strauss* (209) – Alessandro ZIGNANI, *Il barbaro in Italia. Trionfi e rovelli di Strauss nel paese del Melodramma* (217) – Piero MIOLI, *Libri sessantaquattro. Sulle continue fortune bibliografiche di Strauss* (225)

The Verdi/Wagner bicentenary in 2013 was marked by tributes across the world, not least within the academy. From the classroom to the convention center, the occasion provided an opportunity to (re)evaluate the legacy of the two composers, and their continued centrality in the repertoire today. One result of this scholarly efflorescence is the present volume, half of which comprises the proceedings of a study day concerning Verdi, Wagner, and staging in the post-war era, which took place in late 2013 at the Regia Accademia Filarmonica di Bologna. Taking up the other half are the proceedings of a subsequent study day at the Accademia in 2014, on Richard Strauss's Italian connections, writ large. Though a merger was not originally intended, the two sets of essays make for relatively comfortable bedfellows. For, as the convener of both events and the editor of the volume, Piero Mioli, notes, Strauss inherited both Wagnerian compositional techniques and a Verdian dedication to vocal lyricism. And Strauss's ambiguous entanglement with the Nazi regime, much like the deployment of Verdi and Wagner's legacies in support of totalitarian ideologies, raises pressing questions about the agency of artists and the legitimacy of art in such times. Grouping the three composers together—the *tre drammaturgie musicali* of the title—is historiographically appealing.

Due to the bifurcated origins of the volume's fourteen essays, topics range widely: from Stephen Hastings on the prominence of directorial choices in three stagings of *La forza del destino* to Cesare Orselli on Strauss reception and performance in Florence. But diversity of subject matter is balanced by methodological consistency. Axes of argumentation, once identified, are pursued chronologically. Giancarlo Landini's discussion of Verdi and Wagner productions at post-war La Scala according to the succession of general managers at the theater is typical, in this respect, as is the editor's own contribution to the Strauss study day—a thorough survey of over half a century of academic literature on the composer, arranged by

methodology and by subcategories of his oeuvre, and taking in four European languages (Italian, German, French and English). The benefits of this approach include the sense that notable events (influential or radical productions, say, or key musical works) often emerge from a backdrop of incremental change, whether personal, aesthetic, or institutional.

Most successful are those essays which occasionally dismount from the “bird’s-eye” perspective enabled by chronology, in order to consider individual cases at a granular level. The arc of Matteo Marazzi’s intervention on *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, for instance, tends towards the opera’s 2007 outing at Bayreuth, in a staging by Katharina Wagner (the composer’s great-granddaughter). In dwelling on the deep-rooted political currents attending this production, Marazzi brings into sharper focus issues of tradition—of Austro-Germanic conducting, of Italian lyric singing, of operatic staging itself—thematized by nearly all the contributors. One only wishes that Marazzi, cleaving to primary sources, had more fully integrated other critical readings of the opera (some cited at the beginning of his essay) into the body of his own argument. Meanwhile, in one of the few contributions to deal with music directly, Luigi Verdi uses modern technologies to prosecute a 100-year-old case of plagiarism: namely, the accusation that in composing *Elektra* (1909), Strauss lifted material from *Cassandra* (1905), a precocious effort by the young composer Vittorio Gnegchi. Though Verdi’s conclusion (that the charges were mostly spurious) seems inevitable, his extensive analytical tables allow us to engage in depth with a fascinating, little-known work.

Not all the presentations from the two study days are represented in the volume, for reasons adumbrated in the Introduction. Three additional essays by the editor are included in their stead. While the desire to make up the shortfall is understandable, one wonders whether this supplement was truly necessary. Not only do the editorial contributions generally run longer than the conference-derived ones, but their relation to the topics of the study days feels somewhat incidental. Mioli’s essay on Strauss’s use of the soprano voice, to cite one example, lacks the Italian angle motivating the Strauss proceedings overall. More space might have allowed for presentational concerns to be addressed; it is unfortunate, for instance, that the layout of examples in Verdi’s explicitly comparative essay does not enable easy comparison between the works he discusses. But the cramped formatting is unfavorable to other essays, too, including those by Giorgio

Appolonia (on collaborative singer-director pairs) and Antonio Castromuovo (on the famous Chéreau *Ring*), both of which reproduce several long quotations from historical sources.

These considerations aside, the volume demonstrates that even for figures so thoroughly documented as Verdi, Wagner and Strauss—composers so productive of critical engagement and debate, both now and in their own day—there remains a wealth of historical material to be uncovered. The latter will, no doubt, inspire new critical perspectives with which to confront the composers' works, as they recede ever further into the past. It's exciting to imagine what we might have learned by the time the Strauss centenary rolls around in 2049.

Marco Ladd

*La vera storia ci narra: Verdi narrateur = Verdi narratore: actes du colloque international* (Saint-Denis, Université Paris 8, Paris, Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art, 23-26 octobre 2013), a cura di Camillo FAVERZANI, Lucca, Libreria Musicale Italiana, 2014, XXI + 583 pp.

[Replica del curatore e di una parte degli autori alla recensione di Vincenzina C. Ottomano, pubblicata su questa rivista, I, 2016, pp. 228-234]

Aufgrund eines redaktionellen Irrtums wurde im letzten Heft dieser Zeitschrift (2 [2017], S. 251f.) eine Replik des Herausgebers und einiger Beiträger dieses Tagungsberichts abgedruckt, wie sie zunächst der Redaktion vorgelegt worden war. Die unterzeichneten Personen bestehen auf der Veröffentlichung einer später übersandten, davon abweichenden Replik, die sie als «l'unica versione autorizzata» qualifizieren.

*Assai spesso, una recensione, positiva o negativa che sia, appare come un verdetto senza appello cui l'autore può difficilmente sottrarsi, se non affidandosi al giudizio del lettore. Siamo quindi grati alla redazione di «Verdiperspektiven» per averci concesso lo spazio necessario alla replica alla recensione di cui sopra. Se in un primo tempo la recensente sembra aver colto nel proprio approccio l'aspetto interdisciplinare del volume, incontro (in un convegno) tra ricercatori di stampo letterario e musicologi (ma non solo), le pesanti critiche rivolte a numerosi saggi derivano dalla formazione stessa della recensente che utilizza come sola chiave di lettura quella della pura musicologia. È una preferenza che spicca in modo piuttosto vistoso nei numerosi appunti d'ordine bibliografico e che conduce l'autrice a scartare immediatamente saggi che si iscrivono in campi estremamente diversi. Così a Christine*