RUGGERO LEONCAVALLO IN NEW YORK AND OTHER AMERICAN CITIES: 1906 AND 1913

by

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A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Music in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts,
The City University of New York
2011

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the
Graduate Faculty in Music in satisfaction of the
dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts.

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Abstract

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This dissertation deals with Ruggero Leoncavallo's two trips to the United States—and New York in particular—in 1906 and 1913. It looks at those trips mainly through the lens of the press, both musical and daily, national and local, with the Appendix providing complete press notices drawn from the collection of Leoncavallo materials at the Lincoln Center Library of the Performing Arts. Briefly, Leoncavallo scored an enormous success in New York, as he did throughout the rest of the United States during these highly publicized tours.

The study also touches on the New York premieres of *Pagliacci* and three of Leoncavallo's other operas: *La Bohème, Zazà*, and *Edipo Re*.

In all, the dissertation sheds new light not only on Leoncavallo's career, but also on a compelling and important time for the growth and development of opera in New York City.

Chapter 1 deals with Leoncavallo's 1906 tour to New York and other cities in the United States and Canada. Chapter 2 outlines his 1913 visit to New York (including a lengthy and important interview), as well as the reception of *Zazà* and *Zingari* on the West Coast and in Chicago. Chapter 3 discusses the success of *Pagliacci*, its premiere at the Metropolitan Opera, and its American reception in general. Chapter 4 deals with the New York premieres of *La Bohème*, *Zazà*, and *Edipo Re*. The dissertation concludes with an Appendix of 105 newspaper and journal articles that form the documentary basis of the study.

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INTRODUCTION

Since its spectacular premiere in 1892, Ruggero Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci* has been one of the most popular operas in the repertory, still presented regularly at all major opera houses in the world (usually in tandem with Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana*). Certainly it is the rare operagoer who is unfamiliar with Canio's "ridi, Pagliaccio," the climactic, applause-provoking phrase of "Vesti la giubba." Yet the scholarly literature has largely ignored Leoncavallo, often dismissing him as a one-opera composer (despite his having produced several works that were popular around 1900). As John W. Klein put it in 1958, "is he not the only composer of a world-famous work whose biography nobody has ever bothered to write?"[1] And only in 1985 did Daniele Rubboli produce the first authoritative biography of Leoncavallo, entitled *Ridi, Pagliaccio!*[2]

Yet despite Rubboli's biography, misinformation about Leoncavallo (1857-1919) persists even in recent publications (many of which veer toward the "popular," as opposed to the scholarly-critical). First, the correct spelling of his given name is "Ruggero," not "Ruggiero," as it so often appears. Second, most biographical sketches of Leoncavallo written before 1975 give his birthdate as March 8, 1858, when it is, in fact, April 23, 1857. And finally, there are mistakes regarding the date of compositions and the historical background of the operas.

This dissertation sheds new and detailed light on two aspects of Leoncavallo's career: (a) his two sojourns to the United States and to New York in particular in 1906 and 1913; and (b) the reception of Leoncavallo's works in the United States, as documented in the Appendix. Although the amount of newspaper coverage during these visits is substantial, there has been no

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[1] John W. Klein, "Ruggiero Leoncavallo (1858-1919)," *Opera* 9 (1958): 236.

[2] Daniele Rubboli, *Ridi, Pagliaccio!* (Lucca: Fazzi, 1985). More recently, there is a comprehensive study by Konrad Dryden, which, however, appeared too late for me to utilize.

all-embracing report of Leoncavallo's New York activities. Particularly valuable in the press coverage are the many highly opinionated interviews of the composer (especially in 1906) that provide fascinating insight into both his character and his artistic-aesthetic creed. Moreover, since Leoncavallo had not scored a major critical success in Europe with any of his post-*Pagliacci* operas, he was determined to prove himself as more than a one-opera composer by presenting his works to the "new world." It was a wise decision. Though New York criticism was somewhat mixed, it was generally positive, and Leoncavallo enjoyed tremendous success and popularity throughout his two visits to America. Finally, the coverage tells us much about the state of music and "high culture" in New York, as Leoncavallo's visits to the city coincided with the rise of New York as an important player on the international cultural scene.

The dissertation consists of four chapters and an Appendix: Chapter 1, "The 1906 Tour," chronicles Leoncavallo's concert experiences in New York and other North American cities, citing several of his interviews and discussing many of his day-to-day activities; Chapter 2, "The 1913 Tour," begins with an account of the composer's productivity during the years between his two visits to the United States, and goes on to describe his second sojourn to New York (which lasted a mere two days), concluding with performances in San Francisco and Chicago; Chapter 3, "*Pagliacci*," gives a summary of the New York premieres of Leoncavallo's most famous opera, and; Chapter 4, "Other Operas in New York," deals with *La Bohème, Zazà*, and *Edipo Re,* the only other Leoncavallo operas ever to be performed in New York City. The Appendix consists of 105 notices concerning Leoncavallo gleaned from the American—and especially the New York—press.

I would like to thank Professors Allan Atlas and John Graziano for their constant and invaluable help. Thanks are also due the members of the Baisley Powell Elebash Fellowship

Committee for the generous Elebash Fellowship that they awarded me in 2006, without which this dissertation would have been much longer in the making.

CHAPTER I. THE 1906 TOUR

Introduction

Ruggero Leoncavallo arrived in New York for the first time on October 2, 1906. He had embarked on his voyage across the Atlantic on September 26, as a celebrated passenger on the Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse. Greeted by a large crowd of local officials, Italian immigrants, reporters, and musicians, Leoncavallo's first words upon his arrival, as he took note of the shores of Staten Island, were: "Splendide! Magnifique! Perhaps I shall find a theme over here for an opera!"[3]

The tour had taken sixteen months to negotiate, and involved Leoncavallo conducting soloists and members of the La Scala orchestra in fifty-six concerts throughout the United States and Canada in just sixty days. All of the concert arrangements were expertly arranged by the New York impresario Rudolph Aronson,[4] with the financial and publicity matters handled by the management firm of Cort and Kronberg. All the performances were dedicated solely to Leoncavallo's music, and thus designed to introduce his works to a country that was, at the time, familiar only with his *Pagliacci* (1892). The concerts, which featured an occasional aria or scene from *Pagliacci*, were devoted mainly to excerpts (in concert form) from a number of his other operas, *Chatterton* (1877), *I Medici* (1893), *La Bohème* (1897), *Zazà* (1900), and *Der Roland von Berlin* (1904), along with a few orchestral and non-operatic vocal compositions. Advance publicity for the tour began early in the spring of 1906, and by the summer there were announcements in nearly all the New York newspapers and music journals.[5] The following notice from *Musical America* (July 14) appeared as part of a lengthy biographical sketch of

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[3] "Leoncavallo Here, Cries "Magnifique," *New York Herald*, October 3, 1906 (Appendix, No. 28). Note that when items from the press are cited subsequently the full citation (title of article, source, and Appendix number) appears again.

[4] Rudolph Aronson (1856-1919) was a composer, manager, and producer of vaudeville and Broadway shows.

[5] These included, among the dailies: *The New York Times*, *New York Herald*, *New York Telegraph*, *New York Daily Tribune*, and *The New York Sun*; the two most important magazines are *Musical America* and *Musical Courier*.

Leoncavallo:

> Leoncavallo's tour of America, while rather limited because of the lack of time, will yet be a most important feature of the coming musical season. The noted composer, whose fame in Europe is greater than ever, recently gave a concert at the San Carlo theatre in Lisbon before an audience which included the King and Queen of Portugal, the Duke and Duchess of Orleans and other members of the royal family. After he had finished conducting 'Pagliacci,' Leoncavallo was summoned before the curtain ten times, the King bestowing upon him the collar of 'Commander of the Order of Santiago.'[6]

That Leoncavallo did all he could to convince Americans that he was a composer with a vision, that his goals were lofty, is evidenced by this interview in the *New York Telegram* (September 25):

> Having decided to write epic music, where shall one find the necessary inspiration? I want living subjects, with flesh and blood like myself, who shall feel and think like men and women, who shall suffer from the same passions that sway our own hearts and senses . . . To bring to life a whole epoch! To multiply the miracle of Lazurus and command the tombs to give up their dead. To seek for the philosophical link existing between events which seem unconnected but are in reality the logical production of one scheme of life and politics! . . . All this tempts me, and I say to myself, 'So much the worse for you if the burden is too heavy for your back and if the ruins of the vast buildings crush you. But at least you will die honorably.[7]

Leoncavallo had left for New York from Cherbourg on September 26, 1906. The New York-based, Italian-language newspaper *Il Progresso Italo-Americano* noted the following:

Il maestro è atteso a New York martedì, 2 ottobre. Il rimanente degli artisti e l'orchestra arriverrano a New York mercoledì, 3 ottobre, a bordo del vapore "Prinzess Irene."[8]	The maestro is expected in New York on Tuesday, October 2. The remainder of the artists and the orchestra will arrive in New York on Wednesday, October 3, on board the ship "Princess Irene."

[6] "Leoncavallo, Composer Who Will Tour America," *Musical America*, July 14, 1906 (Appendix, No. 17).
[7] "Leoncavallo's Theory Of Operatic Composition," *New York Telegram*, September 25, 1906 (Appendix, No. 21).
[8] "Leoncavallo in America," *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, September 27, 1906 (Appendix, No. 23).

By the time Leoncavallo arrived in New York, the musical community was brimming with excitement, and expectations were high. As the *New York Telegraph* reported on October 3:

> With a new march called 'Viva L'America' in his suitcase, composed in commemoration of his visit to this country, Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo, the composer of 'I Pagliacci,' 'I Medici,' and other operas; who is considered one of the greatest living writers of musical scores, arrived late yesterday afternoon on the Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse. A man of universal artistic renown and of an attractive personality, his coming is an event of great importance to the music-loving public.[9]

News of Leoncavallo's arrival focused on more than just his artistic merits. Journalists took the opportunity to comment on every aspect of both his nature and his appearance, from his short stature (5' 5") to his ample girth, the thickness of his neck, and his handlebar moustache. In turn, Leoncavallo took full advantage of any chance he had to express his strong opinions about the arts to the New York public. He was surely his own most vociferous press agent:

> Realism to many people . . . means the delineation of the lower classes - the rude Sicilian peasantry of *Cavalliera* [*sic*] *Rusticana*, the strolling players of *Pagliacci*. I believe in the realistic treatment of all operatic types, even in the characters of a historical opera, in *Roland of Berlin*, as well as in *Zaza*. Flaubert in literature applied the realistic method of historical romance in the case of his *Salammbo*. By treating ordinary contemporary subjects a composer may give his opera a definite bearing on the lives of the people.[10]

The reference to Flaubert deserves a comment. Leoncavallo was one of the most cultured of the "giovane scuola" (the group of composers that also included Puccini, Mascagni, Giordano, and Boito), having obtained a degree in literature from the Università di Bologna while pursuing his musical studies. As a young man, he was an ardent admirer of Wagner, not solely for his musical genius, but because Wagner also wrote his own libretti, and the young

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[9] Associated Press, "Famous Composer In America," *New York Telegraph*, October 3, 1906 (Appendix, No. 27).

[10] "Leoncavallo and Realism," *New York Globe*, October 5, 1906 (Appendix, No. 29). Since Leoncavallo's English was quite poor, most of his American interviews were conducted in French.

Italian decided to follow in his footsteps.

Filled with ambition and hopeful determination, Leoncavallo intended to conquer the hearts of New Yorkers, not to mention the rest of the United States. And though he sincerely wished to learn as much about American life and culture as possible, there can be no doubt that the main reason for his visit was to capitalize on his fame as the composer of *Pagliacci*.

> I have been dreaming for years about coming to America . . . The voyage was splendid. I regret that my wife did not come to a country that is so discerning. I know the Americans are extremely intelligent and that they appreciate good music. New York is almost as big as Milan from an Italian standpoint, and I shall feel at home, I know. Do you know I find the entrance to New York even more beautiful than the Bay of Naples or the approach to Constantinople? Those tall buildings in the distance, they are grandiose.
>
> New compositions? Well, I am to play here for the first time my *Ave Maria* composed for the aid of the earthquake sufferers at Calabria. Also a new march, *Vive l'Amerique*, which I have dedicated to President Roosevelt. It is built on the two melodies *Yankee Doodle* and *Dixie*. Other numbers will be excerpts from *Roland of Berlin* and from my opera *Zazà* which is now playing in the Teatro Lirico, in Milan. I am now working on my *Jeunesse de Figaro*, the first production of which I hope will be made in this country.[11]

Leoncavallo's reference to *La Jeunesse de Figaro* remains something of a mystery. A few days later the same newspaper noted, "Among his maturing scores Mr. Leoncavallo mentioned prominently a merry little opera he is writing called 'La Jeunesse de Figaro.' Of this two acts are already finished."[12] Moreover, virtually every list of the composer's works, including that in *New Grove 2*, refers to this "operetta" as having been premièred in the United States in 1906.[13] Now, while there is Leoncavallo's testimony that he considered this project and discussed the idea of its being produced in this country (see above), there is no record of such a work ever having been produced, whether in the United States or elsewhere. Further, when

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[11] "Leoncavallo Here, Cries "Magnifique," *New York Herald*, October 3, 1906 (Appendix, No. 28).
[12] Editorial, *New York Herald*, October 7, 1906 (Appendix, No. 30).
[13] William Ashbrook, "Ruggero Leoncavallo," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell (London: Macmillan, 2001), xiv, 672-4.

Leoncavallo proudly named all his operas in an interview in 1913, he made no mention of *La Jeunesse de Figaro*. Thus, although some biographers have actually referred to its American première as having been a fiasco,[14] the work seems to be a phantom. It would not be the only work that Leoncavallo would announce and then abandon: the fates of *Camicia Rossa*, *La Foscarina*, *Prometeo*, and *Ave Maria* will be discussed in a later chapter.

During these early days, Leoncavallo basked in the publicity surrounding his American visit. In another interview he went on to say:

> My visit to America has more significance than a mere tour. It is my purpose while here to get the material for at least one opera based on American life. I want to go to the theaters, to see the people and meet and talk with them, to learn their ideas and ideals and see if I write them into words and music. I have not studied so much of the American literature as I could wish, but believe after all that it will be better for me to learn at first hand by meeting the people.[15]

The La Scala soloists and orchestra arrived in New York on October 4 (one day later than reported in *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*), and immediately began rehearsing for the first of three concerts at Carnegie Hall, each of which featured a different program. The vocal soloists were Adele Rizzini and Mme. Calvi,[16] sopranos; Esther Ferrabini, mezzo-soprano; Augusto Barbaini and Nino Perya, tenors; and Virgilio Bellatti and Raffaele De Ferran, baritones. Barbaini, a celebrated tenor in Italy, sang the role of Canio in *Pagliacci* in Parma and Genoa prior to the American tour with Leoncavallo.[17] Perya was born in Palermo, made his debut in Alexandria (Egypt) as Alfredo in Verdi's *La Traviata*, and would go on to become a prominent artist at the Teatro Nazionale in Rome, particularly as Canio and in the title role of Gounod's

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[14] These biographers include David Ewen, William Ashbrook, Richard Streatfeild, among others.
[15] Associated Press, "Famous Composer In America," *New York Telegraph*, October 3, 1906 (Appendix, No. 27).
[16] Mme. Calvi was a last-minute replacement for another soprano, Alma d'Alma.
[17] http://www.lacasadellamusica.it/ferrarini/discografia.htm#b.

Faust,[18] while the baritone Bellatti was well-known for his portrayal of Sharpless in Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*.[19] The instrumentalists, advertised as the Orchestra of La Scala, consisted of musicians who had all performed in the La Scala Orchestra at one time or another. One of the double bassists, a Signor Maragoni, was reported by one of the newspapers to be Italy's "second Bottesini."[20] All of the artists remained with Leoncavallo for the entire 1906 tour.

Though the majority of American opera lovers eagerly awaited Leoncavallo's performances, not everyone was enthusiastic about his visit, as Germanophiles took issue with the artistic merits of the composer of *Pagliacci*.[21] Leoncavallo resented this critical view, since he made no secret of his admiration for Wagner, and longed to create an Italian cycle that would be comparable to the *Ring* in scope, a trilogy featuring great figures from the Italian Renaissance: Lorenzo de' Medici, Girolamo Savonarola, and Cesare Borgia.[22] Moreover, he took great pride in the fact that Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany had personally commissioned him—instead of Richard Strauss—to write a "German National Opera," *Der Roland von Berlin*, with a plot based on the House of Hohenzollern. Unfortunately, Leoncavallo made a number of pretentious comments to the New York press, implying that he considered himself as great a visionary as Wagner, that the latter's "argumentative dragons and transmogrified toads" were "too indistinct for one to write operas on," and that in comparison with the great Italian subjects of Leoncavallo's own proposed trilogy, "Wagner's gods are the merest pigmies."[23] Amidst the

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[18] http://www.marstonrecords.com/trials/trials_tracks.htm.
[19] http://www.lebrecht.co.uk/lebrecht/puccini.htm.
[20] Evan Baker, "Leoncavallo in the United States and Canada in Fall, 1906," in *Nazionalismo e cosmopolitismo nell'opera fra '800 e '900. Atti del terzo convegno internazionale "Ruggero Leoncavallo nel suo tempo"*, ed. by Lorenza Guiot and Jürgen Maehder (Milan: Sonzogno, 1998), 144. Giovanni Bottesini (1821-1889) was a noted composer, and had a spectacular career as a double bass virtuoso.
[21] Baker, "Leoncavallo in the United States and Canada," 148.
[22] The first of the operas, *I Medici*, was premiered in 1893, with critics for the most part dismissive of Leoncavallo's effort, condemning the work as a cheap imitation of Wagner. Leoncavallo resented the accusation, and defended his own individuality at every turn.
[23] John W. Klein, "Ruggiero Leoncavallo (1858-1919)," *Opera* 9 (1958): 159.

hubbub surrounding the excitement of the upcoming Carnegie Hall concerts, the *New York Herald* printed an article in German, designed primarily to deify Wagner and ridicule Leoncavallo.[24] Realizing his mistake, and with just one day remaining before his New York debut, Leoncavallo spoke up in an interview—reported in the same newspaper on October 7—that, perhaps, comes across as a half-hearted attempt to save face:

> I do not believe . . . that the Italian school will ever be more Germanized than it is at present. I do not think our present tendency is to forsake the natural course of development which our musical traditions, our language and out [*sic*] stage marked out for us. To Wagner all composers stand in debt, of course. He has added to the sum total of musical knowledge and we all profit by it. Moreover, I feel convinced that he carried his operatic form to the loftiest point attainable for it. He said the last word of the kind. But we Italians, despite Verdi's apparent example in 'Falstaff,' have no reason to slavishly imitate him. I believe our duty lies in another direction. Our language must, after all, with our inherited notions of melody, guide us in the way we shall go. The German tongue suggests a style of musical declamation, the Italian one of broad, flowing phrases.
>
> Take our commonest form of salutation, 'Bon [*sic*] giorno, signor,' and compare its euphony with the German love declaration, 'Ich liebe dich,' and you see my point at once. No, we have a distinctive field to work in, we Italians, and we will be wise to keep within it.[25]

The Carnegie Hall Concerts

The first Carnegie Hall concert was held on October 8, 1906. The program consisted of the Intermezzo and the Act II tenor aria from *Chatterton*, three arias and a duet from *Zazà*, the septet from *I Medici*, the overture from *Der Roland von Berlin*, the Nedda/Silvio duet from *Pagliacci*, an *Ave Maria* for soprano and orchestra, and the world première of the aforementioned march, *Viva l'America*.[26]

Yet despite the enormous publicity surrounding the opening concert, there was a noticeable number of empty seats (though the balconies and standing room areas were filled to

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[24] Baker, "Leoncavallo," 148-49.
[25] Editorial, *New York Herald*, October 7, 1906 (Appendix, No. 30).
[26] "Newark's Greeting to Leoncavollo [*sic*]," *Musical America*, October 20, 1906 (Appendix, No. 48).

capacity). The audience consisted largely of Italian-Americans, as well as various dignitaries and celebrities, including the Conte Massiglia, the Italian Consul-General; Arturo Vigna, a conductor of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra; Heinrich Conried, director of the Metropolitan Opera; the music publisher Tito Ricordi; Oscar Hammerstein I; Victor Herbert; and the son of Giovanni Giolitti, the Prime Minister of Italy.

The reaction of the crowd was spectacularly fervent. They demanded repeats of every excerpt on the program, and showered Leoncavallo with applause, bravos, and flowers. As the *New York Sun* reported on October 9:

> [Leoncavallo] made his American debut last night, and while Carnegie Hall was not crowded, those who were present applauded him with a passionate intensity that must have made him think–as the weather doubtless did this morning–that he was in his own beloved Italy.[27]

While the audience cheered, the critics were more reserved, especially with respect to the Milanese orchestra and singers. *The Nation* noted that the orchestra "proved to be quite inferior to that of our Metropolitan Opera House,"[28] and the *New York Sun* agreed, saying that "we have a much better orchestra at our Metropolitan than the Italians have at their best opera house."[29] Although these comments might be considered somewhat self-congratulatory, they are in keeping with the New York musical community's eagerness to maintain itself as a major force on the international level. Local critics were often quick to claim that the quality of music in New York was as good as—if not superior to—anywhere else in the world. Thus the *Brooklyn Eagle* mentioned that "the [La Scala] orchestra is not so bad a company, and when it shall have rehearsed for a bit it will give a good account of itself"; it then went on to say that "most of the

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[27] "A Leoncavallo Concert," *New York Sun*, October 9, 1906 (Appendix, No. 33).
[28] Editorial, *The Nation*, October 11, 1906 (Appendix, No. 38).
[29] "A Leoncavallo Concert," *New York Sun*, October 9, 1906 (Appendix, No. 33).

singers have seen their best days, and it is feared that they were not very good ones."[30] The *New York Daily Tribune* was just as harsh, describing the vocalists as "a company of singers which could only bring back memories of the operatic wrecks that have been stranded on our shores by winds blowing from Mexico and South America."[31]

On the other hand, the critics spared Leoncavallo's music itself such ruthless condemnation, even if they were not overwhelming in their enthusiasm. As the *New York Times* claimed, "the 'Chatterton' intermezzo, interpreted last night, is marked by considerable poetic sentiment, and, while less original than his later compositions, has interest."[32] The same reviewer also commented on the passionate intensity of the *Zazà* excerpts, and further described the music as possessing "a strange morbidity, or musical pessimism." Finally, though the *Ave Maria,* written specifically for the 1905 earthquake victims in Calabria (and dedicated to Pope Pius X)[33] received a great deal of praise from a number of the critics, the excerpts from *Der Roland von Berlin* and *I Medici* fell victim to charges of Wagnerism, and nearly all the critics noted the superiority of *Pagliacci* to Leoncavallo's other compositions. The *New York Daily*

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[30] "Leoncavallo Heard In New York," *Brooklyn Eagle*, October 9, 1906 (Appendix, No. 35). The critic also referred to the singers as "shrieking, bleating and squalling."

[31] "Signor Leoncavallo's Concert," *New York Daily Tribune*, October 8, 1906 (Appendix, No. 31).

[32] "One Beloved Opera," *New York Times*, October 9, 1906 (Appendix, No. 32).

[33] The following letter by Leoncavallo to the Pope, originally published in the *Osservatore Romano* (date unknown), was reprinted by The *New York Evening Post* on October 11, 1906: "O holy father, the cry of distress from the remotest end of our beautiful peninsula which has stirred the whole world, has awakened in my Christian soul a still deeper and more painful echo. With Calabria down there, the terribly mutilated, are associated my sweetest recollections of my parents, and my happy days of childhood. In the shadow of those mountains I grew up, in those Alpine valleys I dreamed my first songs. The first ray of fame, which God's goodness granted me, is connected in thought with that hospitable region of which I consider myself a son. Thus I feel it at this moment my duty to do more than others. Inspired by the deep religious feeling which has always animated me, I resolved to compose a Prayer to the holy Virgin Mary, to have it printed at my expense, and to give one-half of the proceeds to the sufferers in Calabria, the other half for the adornment of the Cathedral of the Madonna della Sera in Montalto Uffugo. Holy father! If I could get prefixed to this song a few lines from the Father of Christendom, granting the lowliest of his children the honor of accepting the dedication of the Ave Maria and commending its sale to the faithful, I should be able, with the mighty assistance of your holiness and the believers, to bestow the noblest, the most Catholic, the most useful charity."

Tribune summed up the concert as follows:

> . . . when all was done the judicious listener went away from the concert room with his early suspision [*sic*] grown to a conviction that the genius of the visitor had thus far spent itself upon the one opera that introduced his name to us and has kept it in bright and grateful memory ever since.[34]

The same program was repeated the following evening at Krueger Auditorium, in Newark, New Jersey. As noted in *Musical America*:

> It was unfortunate that the weather on the opening night of the Newark concert season should have been so unpleasant as it was last Tuesday evening on the occasion of the Leoncavallo concert in Krueger Auditorium. Nevertheless a large audience assembled, in which the Italian population of Newark was numerously represented. The compatriots of the conductor and the performers came to give a welcome to Italian art and their applause was long and hearty.
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> Leoncavallo as a conductor proved to be sincere, earnest and dignified. Though not so originally intended, the programme was a repetition of that of the concert in New York the night before. It included the familiar "Pagliacci" prologue, the overture and a duet from "Roland di Berlin," a septette from "I Medici," an intermezzo from "Chatterton," four selections from "Zaza," an "Ave Maria" dedicated to Pope Pius X, and a march "Viva l'America" dedicated to President Roosevelt. There were melody in abundance, good harmony, a real feeling for dramatic truth, and perfect sincerity.[35]

On Wednesday, October 10, the musicians were once again back in Carnegie Hall for their second New York performance. This time the program comprised excerpts from *Pagliacci* (the Intermezzo, Tonio's Prologue, "Vesti la giubba", Nedda's "Ballatella", the Nedda/Silvio duet, and Beppe's "Arlecchino" Serenade), the *Ave Maria, Viva l'America*, a *Suite Ancienne* in four movements for orchestra, the quartet from *Der Roland von Berlin* (sung in Italian),[36] the Zazà/Cascart duet from *Zazà*, and two arias from *La Bohème* (Musette's Letter

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[34] "Signor Leoncavallo's Concert," *New York Daily Tribune*, October 8, 1906 (Appendix, No. 31).
[35] "Newark's Greeting to Leoncavollo [*sic*]," *Musical America*, October 20, 1906 (Appendix, No. 48).
[36] The libretto for *Der Roland von Berlin*, written by Leoncavallo, was translated from Italian into German by Georg Droescher for the première. Leoncavallo's original version, *Rolando*, or *Rolando di Berlino*, was retained for performances in Italy. While the German version was normally used outside Italy, the excerpts for the American tour were sung in Italian.

scene and Mimì's chanson).[37] Once again, the hall was only partially filled, but the audience, made up of a large number of Italian-Americans, cheered wildly and demanded encores of each selection. The performance seems to have gone off without a hitch, with the exception of Nedda's "Ballatella": Calvi lost her place during the encore, and had to be assisted by Leoncavallo in order to finish with dignity. In addition, an amusing incident was reported by the *New York Daily Tribune*:

> The entertaining informality of the stage proceedings, which occasioned some quiet amusement Monday night, was even more in evidence last night, shorn as the occasion was of the huge wreaths, massive floral tributes, and other trappings of a quasi-official greeting. But unintended drollery reached its acme when in the middle of a solo an emissary bearing a single slim bunch of roses jogged resolutely down the main aisle and as resolutely stood behind the conductor's desk, his right hand upraised with the bouquet. There was a ripple of merriment that did not omit the singer. Luckily a kindly hand from the front row tapped the emissary on the shoulder and steered him safely to a seat. The song over, the singer had her roses. Here, as at other trying moments, Mr. Leoncavallo bore himself with unassuming dignity.[38]

All in all, the reviews were noticeably more favorable than those of the first concert. The general reaction was that the singers and orchestra had found their form and performed admirably, especially Mme. Calvi (despite the aforementioned difficulty). As might be expected, the selections from *Pagliacci* were highly praised, but now the critics found a number of good things to say about Leoncavallo's other compositions. The *New York Evening Post* pronounced the *Ave Maria* as "the best thing Leoncavallo has written,"[39] while the reviewer from the *New York Daily Tribune* was impressed by the excerpts from *La Bohème*:

> The numbers from "La Bohème" which were sung suggested that the opera if given here in its entirety might rival in public favor Puccini's delightful version of the

[37] On the two versions of *La Bohème*—Leoncavallo's and Puccini's—see Allan W. Atlas, "Mimì's Death: Mourning in Puccini and Leoncavallo," *The Journal of Musicology* xiv/1 (Winter 1996): 52-79.
[38] "Leoncavallo's Concert," *New York Daily Tribune*, October 11, 1906 (Appendix, No. 43).
[39] "Music and Drama: Second Leoncavallo Concert," *New York Evening Post*, October 11, 1906 (Appendix, No. 40).

> same story. As it is, probably most of the audience went home humming or whistling "Mimì Pinson la più diletta."[40]

Even the orchestral *Suite Ancienne* was described as "particularly delicate and appealing."[41] The *New York Mail* referred to the dance movements as "agreeable trifles," but was slightly less enamored with *Viva l'America*:

> . . . there is no development, no originality, save in the song experiment of solemnly intoning "Yankee Doodle" in the brass, and in a minor key. And "Dixie" was surely never played so mildly as by these well-meaning foreigners. After all, no better proof could have been offered of the idiomatic Americanism in the stirring tune itself.[42]

As a conductor, Leoncavallo won the praise of nearly all the critics. Nevertheless, despite all the plaudits, the composer did not escape this performance completely unscathed, as the lengthy review in *The New York Sun* makes clear:

> Mr. Leoncavallo gave his second concert last night in Carnegie Hall. The pomp and pride and circumstance of the first concert were gone, gone the captains and the shouting. It was a slender and a decorous audience which faced the composer. Empty seats loomed like financial reefs in the broken sea of faces. There was no credivity in the house. A fatiferous laxity reigned in the tenuous air. Possibly Mr. Leoncavallo, who came hither in darkness, saw a great light. If he did not his vision is void of potency. The lesson was writ large so that he who read it might run.
>
> The programme of last night's obsequies comprised familiar numbers from "Pagliacci," some of the things heard Monday night and one or two other tidbits of funeral baked meats from the Leoncavallo pantry. The audience was kind, as audiences in this town always are. It matters little what music was played or sung last night. It even matters little how it was presented, though here might be ground for lamentations loud and long.
>
> Such a slaughter of the innocent is seldom witnessed. But this public applauds those who try to entertain it. If they fail, they are not assailed with audible manifestations of disapproval. When the performer presents a local assemblage a discomforting spectacle of inadequacy upon his head, even though it wears a crown of European laurel, New York launches the awful curse of silence and neglect.

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[40] "Leoncavallo's Concert," *New York Daily Tribune*, October 11, 1906 (Appendix, No. 43).

[41] "Leoncavallo's Second Concert at Carnegie Hall," newspaper unknown, October 11, 1906 (Appendix, No. 41); the source cannot be identified because the clipping that I consulted at the Lincoln Center Library of the Performing Arts was too closely cropped (see the Introduction to the Appendix).

[42] "Leoncavallo and American Tunes," *New York Mail*, October 11, 1906 (Appendix, No. 39).

> When will Europeans learn that what their unfortunate compatriots report to them, what they read in the critical discussions of artistic and inartistic doings and what once in a lustrum they read about these United States in their own newspapers do not consitute one vast web of falsehood? Let us suppose, for example, that Mr. Leoncavallo comes here under contract to American managers and that they assure him that his name alone will suffice to attract Americans to his concerts. Let us suppose that acting under such advice he comes with a company of singers who would not be tolerated in Leghorn or Pisa and an orchestra which cannot count two in a bar, even with the aid of a conductor. What sound excuse has he? Has he not heard what happened to Mascagni? Has he never heard what kind of a company sings to New Yorkers regularly throughout their opera season? If not, why not?
>
> Yet it is unquestionable that when Mr. Leoncavallo has gone home a sadder and wiser man some other European will cross the western ocean to try to foot the benighted Yankees. Mr. Leoncavallo has come here with honorable intentions, no doubt. He desires greatly that we should hear the operas which Europe has heard and passed by. But he ought to have known that the method which he chose for the introduction was foredoomed to failure. The operatic concert is futile when it is at its best and in these Leoncavallo entertainments it is at its worst. Some of the singing last night was amusing, some of it was painful. The orchestra, which forged its way through Monday night's programme at least tolerably, was hollow and crude in tone and played with the military precision of a drove of cattle.
>
> The composer stood alone, a dignified figure in the concert, pathetic because of his dignity. He at least comported himself like an artist. Mr. Conried may give a performance of "Pagliacci" in his honor. That would be altogether fitting. But it is to be hoped that Mr. Leoncavallo will not conduct it. Last night he showed that he was a past master at cutting the heart out of his own music, which has red blood in it if nothing else.
>
> There will be more of these experiments upon a patient public, we presume. The past has taught Europe nothing. The future will be long in convincing it that America knows what is good and what is not in music and that it has its own quiet manner of disposing of unworthiness. It is a sad fate that meets the touring musician who invokes the dread silence of the New York public. "When he falls he falls like Lucifer, never to rise again."[43]

In some ways, the reviewer says more about himself than about the concert. Obviously, he was not a fan of Leoncavallo, for his reference to dread silence and merely polite applause flies in the face of all other accounts and their reports of the frenetic approval. Moreover, it is difficult not to notice his virulent anti-European stand. Indeed, he seems to be something of a crusader, determined to convince the public that New York knew better than—or at least as well as—the rest of the world. As such, he reflects the increasing sense of self-confidence that

[43] "The Leoncavallo Concert: Second Appearance Of The Italian Composer," *The New York Sun*, October 11, 1906 (Appendix, No. 36).

cultured America was continuing to express.

After their second Carnegie Hall concert, Leoncavallo and his troupe left New York for performances in Baltimore and Philadelphia. While they were gone, an article appeared in nearly all of the New York newspapers on October 12: Tito Ricordi of the eponymous publishing house (which saw Leoncavallo's publisher, Sonzogno, as its main rival in the field of Italian opera) stated that Leoncavallo's "Orchestra of La Scala" was a non-union group, and went on to claim that some of the members were not part of the La Scala orchestra.[44] Alarmed by this situation, Rudolph Aronson, who had organized the tour, quickly notified Leoncavallo, who wasted no time in delivering a response, which was summarized as follows in *Musical America*:

> In a recent communication to Rudolph Aronson, the impresario, the composer of "Pagliacci" emphatically denies Ricordi's statement regarding performers at La Scala, Milan, to the effect that they are simply engaged for the season, and that when the theatre is closed no one who has played there can claim to be a member of La Scala's orchestra.
>
> Signor Leoncavallo states that all the members of his orchestra now on tour in this country have played at La Scala, and, hence, the management has a perfect right to announce that fact to the public. The meritorious performances of the maestro's capable organization have won the warm commendation of many eminent music critics and attracted the patronage of the most prominent musicians. The tour is exciting much interest throughout the country, and the success thus far has been gratifying in high degree.[45]

The Baltimore concert on October 11, and the two Philadelphia performances on October 12 and 13 were well received. Regarding the performance in Baltimore, the *Musical Leader* commented specifically on Leoncavallo's merit as a conductor, noting "his entirely unassuming conduct, devoid of all mannerisms."[46] Meanwhile, news of the commotion about the status of

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[44] Baker, "Leoncavallo," 149.
[45] "Leoncavallo Replies To Ricordi's Letter," *Musical America*, November 3, 1906 (Appendix, No. 53).
[46] "Leoncavallo and La Scala Orchestra," *Musical Leader*, November 9, 1906 (Appendix, No. 55).

the La Scala musicians spread nationwide, eliciting charges that Leoncavallo was a fraud and that his instrumentalists were deficient and paid an average of only $2.20 per performance, almost five dollars less than the American Federation of Musicians scale. The negative publicity continued, remarking that the "real" La Scala orchestra was rehearsing in Milan.[47] Leoncavallo vehemently denied the charges, insisting that each player earned five to twelve dollars per concert, and defended them as fine artists from La Scala. He explained:

> A wrong impression exists that my organization is the only La Scala orchestra of Milan. There is no fixed La Scala orchestra, as there is a symphony orchestra in Boston. In Italy today there are probably more than 200 professors who have at one time or another been members of the La Scala orchestra. When the directors are changed annually they naturally introduce into their orchestra their favorite musicians, who are better enabled to render their compositions. For instance, when I was director of the orchestra, I had among its members musicians whom I believe were better fitted to play my compositions, and it is the same with all other directors.[48]

Undaunted, Leoncavallo and his company returned to New York for their third and final Carnegie Hall concert on Sunday evening, October 14, 1906. Excerpts from *Der Roland von Berlin* made up the first part of the program, while the second half featured selections from *La Bohème*, *Pagliacci*, and *Chatterton*, the *Viva l'America* march, and *Ave Maria*, this time sung by the mezzo-soprano Mme. Ferrabini instead of Mme. Calvi. A considerable crowd assembled for this performance, once again largely comprised of Italian New Yorkers. Not only was this concert a huge success with the audience, but the critics were more favorable than before. The next day's headline of the *New York Telegraph* read "'ROLAND OF BERLIN' THIS TIME: Leoncavallo Pleases Another Carnegie Hall Audience," and went on to speak very highly of the singers.[49] Despite the questions surrounding the orchestra's "La Scala" tag, *Musical America*

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[47] Baker, "Leoncavallo," 131-32.
[48] Baker, "Leoncavallo," 150.
[49] "'Roland of Berlin' This Time: Leoncavallo Pleases Another Carnegie Hall Audience," *New York Telegraph*, October 15, 1906 (Appendix, No. 45).

spoke about the ensemble's improvement, the merit of the singers, and the overwhelming approval of the public:

> The third and last of the series of concerts given in New York by Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo and his Italian singers and orchestra took place in Carnegie Hall on Sunday evening, before an audience whose responsive enthusiasm equalled that of the two previous events.
>
> From an artistic point of view it was the most successful concert of the three. The singers had become better accustomed to the acoustics of the hall, and the orchestra had its full quota of players, those members who did not arrive in time for the first concert and whose absence seriously hampered the composer-conductor in obtaining desired effects on that occasion, being in their places.
>
> The first part of the programme consisted of selections from "Rolando di Berlino," the much discussed opera which Leoncavallo was commissioned by the Kaiser to write much to the chagrin of the German composers. In *Alda's* aria Mme. Rizzini again charmed her hearers by the brilliant timbre of her voice, her fine vocalization and her well-poised style. She also joined Mr. Barbaini in a duet. Mr. Perya displayed a sweet and well-trained voice in *Henning's* ballad, and Mr. Bellatti was again heard to advantage in *Giovanni's* prayer. In the second half of the evening excerpts from "Bohème," "Pagliacci" and "Chatterton" were given, and the "Ave Maria" and "Viva l'America" were repeated, Mme. Rizzini again scoring with her aria from "Chatterton." Signor Leoncavallo's modesty and simple dignity won the respect of the audience from the outset, and he was repeatedly recalled throughout the evening.[50]

Another, albeit very different, review of the Carnegie Hall concerts was published in *Billboard* on December 1. While the journalist praised Leoncavallo's music, he focused on the fashions of the Italian divas:

> Possibly it will interest my women readers to know how her Italian sister dresses for a high class concert. If she imagines there was anything unusual in their appearances, she must undeceive herself, for in this respect Leoncavallo alone showed individuality in the general bagginess of his full dress togs, that was entirely foreign to our styles for men. Madame Rizzini looked quite Parisian in a black net built over white, heavily embroidered in black chenille; the low-cut bodice finished at the top with rich gold applique; there were short draped sleeves of the net over white and a girdle of black velvet. Madame Calvi wore a white silver spangled net made over white taffeta, decollete, short puffed sleeves and Empire girdle of white satin. Madame Ferrabini was also in a white net embroidered with silver in a leaf pattern, a two-piece gown, simple in outline. She has a beautifully cultivated voice of rich, pure quality, and her solos elicited much enthusiasm.[51]

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[50] "Leoncavallo Again Warmly Applauded," *Musical America*, October 20, 1906 (Appendix, No. 47).
[51] "Glimpses at Italian Opera," *Billboard*, December 1, 1906 (Appendix, No. 59).

Concerts in Other Cities

Although we noted above that Leoncavallo and his colleagues performed in Baltimore and Philadelphia, this was a mere three-day sidetrip. The real travelling began after the final Carnegie Hall concert, when Leoncavallo and the entire troupe embarked on a tour of the United States and parts of Canada, during which they presented forty-nine performances in Boston, Cincinnati, Toronto, Montreal, Detroit, Chicago, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Vancouver, Seattle, Spokane, Salt Lake City, and Denver.[52] The tour, advertised in several places as a "Leoncavallo Festival,"[53] also encompassed smaller cities with relatively large Italian populations: Troy and Utica, New York; Duluth, Minnesota; Fargo, North Dakota; Butte, Montana; Bellington, Washington; and Muncie, Indiana.[54]

While in Troy, New York, Leoncavallo was honored by the directors and students of the Salesiani Collegio Italo-Americano, with the event including a tour of the area. The concert at the Troy Opera House on October 19, 1906, inspired the following remarks by *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*:

> I giornali locali diedero ample e fedeli relazioni dell'indimenticabile serata; unanimi riconoscono le peregrine e soavi bellezze della musica originale, forte, ispirata e sciolsero inni di ammirazione al genio di Leoncavallo; lodorono poi senza ristrizioni l'inappuntabile esecuzione.[55]
>
> The local newspapers gave ample and faithful reviews of the unforgettable evening; unanimously they recognized the peculiar and gentle beauty of the original music, strong, inspired, and sang hymns of admiration to the genius of Leoncavallo; they praised the irreproachable execution without restriction.

On October 30, 1906, President Theodore Roosevelt received a copy of *Viva l'America*,

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[52] Baker, "Leoncavallo," 154-5.
[53] *The Victrola Book of the Opera,* 7th ed. (Camden, NJ: Victor Talking Machine Company, 1924), 446.
[54] Baker, "Leoncavallo," 154-5.
[55] "Leoncavallo a Troy," *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, October 20, 1906, 2 (Appendix, No. 49).

which Leoncavallo dedicated to him. *Musical America* reported the occasion on November 3:

> President Roosevelt has received from Rudolph Aronson a specially prepared copy of Leoncavallo's "Viva L'America," a march which was dedicated to him by the composer. The outside cover, in silk, bears an embossed design by John Frew. The music is etched on heavy vellum. Mr. Aronson, who just twelve years ago presented to Johann Strauss, the "waltz king," in Vienna, a gold and silver wreath as a gift from American musicians, yesterday presented this copy of Leoncavallo's work to President Roosevelt at the White House. The president said: "I am delighted that a composer of the position of Leoncavallo should do me this great honor and I shall forward him my letter of thanks."[56]

In all, Leoncavallo enjoyed a tremendous success and generally favorable reviews. The *Musical Courier* enthusiastically described the Chicago performances of November 3 and 4:

> It is very delightful, in these blase times, to see such enthusiasm as it was manifested at Leoncavallo's second concert Sunday before last in Orchestra Hall. That the Italian master had to play his program twice over was not alone a tribute to the excellence of his music, but it demonstrated that there are still left to us a great many people who take their artistic pleasures with considerable intensity. . . . [The audience] liked the music, and was not ashamed to show its liking. So it encored the whole concert. The program which was played and sung was, in part, the same as had been performed on the previous afternoon. The new numbers were made up of three excerpts from "Zazà," the intermezzo from "Chatterton," and some numbers from "La Bohème." Leoncavallo's music showed on this occasion, as it had before, how thoroughly the composer is imbued with the spirit of his race. Could any but an Italian have penned those tunes, which are not less emotional than melodious? And not a composer living has understood better than the composer of "Pagliacci" what is meant by vocal effect. Leoncavallo's methods are clearly those of all Italian dramatic writers. He has applied the newer mechanism of composition, but the essential matter which he has expressed is still that which had been uttered before Rossini and Donizetti and Bellini and Verdi and a host of lesser Italian writers. But it is an expression most charming and effective. It makes for melody, and melody is a very delightful thing. There is dramatic consistency, too, and a wealth of emotional intensity which is heightened by the masterly treatment of the orchestra. The singers from La Scala, who had appeared the preceding day, appeared again on Sunday. Mme. Ferrabini was heard to advantage in numbers from "Zazà" and "Bohème" and in a fine duet from the first named opera, which she sang with Signor Barbaini. Signor Bellatti who, on Saturday, had made a very good impression by his interpretation of the prologue to "Pagliacci," gave again much pleasure by his singing of an aria from "Zazà." Signor Barbaini repeated his success with the waltz from the same opera, as well as in some concerted numbers. Mme. Calvi was the soloist in the "Ave Maria," which also received its second performance, and which pleased the audience hugely.[57]

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[56] "President Receives Score," *Musical America*, November 3, 1906 (Appendix, No. 52).
[57] "Enthusiasm Over Leoncavallo," *Musical Courier*, November 21, 1906 (Appendix, No. 58).

The *Musical Leader* commented on Leoncavallo's great success in Milwaukee on November 5, 1906, as well as on the comments from the local critics:

> Leoncavallo, his band of singers and the La Scala Orchestra came to Milwaukee last Monday, gave their concert, acknowledged rounds of tremendous applause and departed to continue their triumphal tour. An audience that comfortably filled the theater delighted to honor the great composer and the vocalists who interpreted excerpts from his operas, and expressed itself not only in enthusiastic applause but in cheers and bravos, a demonstration very unusual in Milwaukee. Special tribute was paid to Mme. Ferrabini and Mr. Perya, the tenor, who was obliged to sing the "Rolando Ballato" three times before he was allowed to leave the stage. In fact nearly every vocal number on the programme had to be repeated. . . . the majority of the critics endorse the estimate of the audience and express ungrudgingly their sincere appreciation of the "glorious voices" of the Italian artists. "All the vocal numbers, from the familiar 'Prologue' to the 'Rolando Ballato,' were delightfully given. "Mr. Perya's delivery and interpretation were both superb." "Anything more natural, simple and exquisitely beautiful than Mme. Ferrabini's art is seldom heard"--to quote from one who in reviewing this concert was the most just, definite and satisfactory. . . . [Leoncavallo] has good reason to feel gratified with his reception in Milwaukee.[58]

While Leoncavallo and his company enjoyed accolades through most of the United States, there was a notable exception in Butte, Montana. Butte was included in the tour because of its large population of Italian miners, and Leoncavallo's managers felt compelled to book two performances in that small city on November 13 and 14. The earlier scandal about the orchestra had all but disappeared, and the orchestra now received rave reviews just about everywhere it played. However, the critics in Butte wrote almost solely about the inferiority of the instrumentalists, with such descriptions as "So-called La Scala Orchestra," "Cheap Musicians," and "Band of Fiddlers."[59] To add insult to injury, one of Leoncavallo's managers was mugged by thieves just before leaving Butte, which incident made headlines in several papers. As reported by the *Spokane Review*:

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[58] "Milwaukee Critics on Leoncavallo," *Musical Leader*, November 10, 1906 (Appendix, No. 56).
[59] Baker, "Leoncavallo," 152.

> Wearing a soiled collar, ringless, diamondless and clad in a mud spattered suit, J. Saunders Gordon, the usually immaculate manager of the Leoncavallo Opera company, which plays here November 18 and 19, appeared at the Spokane theater yesterday afternoon. He had arrived suddenly from Butte. While in Butte, Mr. Gordon was robbed of a valise containing all his papers, company routings, two diamond rings and a diamond scarf pin valued at $500, besides a suit case containing numerous articles of wearing apparel and clean linen. Rain accounted for the mud on his raiment. The manager discovered his loss but a few moments before the train for Spokane departed, and as he was behind in his work, he notified the Butte police and left at once.[60]

After the Butte concerts, Leoncavallo and his musicians performed in twelve more cities, concluding in Muncie, Indiana, on December 6, 1906, where they received glowing reviews. The singers and instrumentalists left for Europe the next day, while Leoncavallo travelled to New York City for a week-long vacation.

Return to New York

Leoncavallo returned to New York City on Saturday, December 7, and spent a week dedicated to some well-deserved rest and relaxation. This did not deter the local newspapers from chronicling his activities. As *Il Progresso Italo-Americano* reported:

> Siamo' lieti di presentare nuovamente il nostro cordiale e sincero saluto al maestro Ruggero Leoncavallo, le quale è ritornato a New York. La sua tournèe artistica è stata addirittura in continuo trionfo.
>
> . . .è con immenso piacere che diamo il ben tornato al maestro Leoncavallo, augurandogli sempre nuovi e nuovi trionfi nella creazione possente del suo genio.[61]
>
> It is with pleasure that we give anew our cordial and sincere salute to Maestro Ruggero Leoncavallo, who has returned to New York. His artistic tour has been quite a continuous triumph.
>
> . . .and it is with immense pleasure that we welcome back Maestro Leoncavallo, and wish him always more and more triumphs for the powerful creation of his genius.

Oscar Hammerstein wanted Leoncavallo to conduct a special performance of *Pagliacci* at

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[60] "Opera Manager Minus Diamonds," *Spokane Review*, November 12, 1906 (Appendix, No. 57).
[61] "Leoncavallo a New York," *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, December 11, 1906 (Appendix, No. 60).

the Metropolitan Opera House during the composer's final week in New York, but the plans did not materialize. On December 12, Leoncavallo attended a performance of Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* at the Metropolitan Opera, starring Marcella Sembrich (1858-1935) and Enrico Caruso (1873-1921). A committee of prominent New York Italians planned an elaborate banquet in his honor for his last night in the city.[62] One Antonio Caridi took charge of the arrangements, but he ran into trouble in his attempt to secure a group of instrumentalists for the occasion. Caridi wanted to hire the orchestra from the Café Martin, a popular restaurant in New York, but its leader, a Signor Avitabili, turned down the offer. It turns out that Avitabili had taken part in a competition for original compositions in Milan a number of years earlier; he finished second to Leoncavallo, and was probably still smarting from the loss: "Leoncavallo has become a great musician, and I am obscure. To play at his feast would be magnaminous—very—but also humiliating." Caridi hastily organized an ensemble for the occasion.

The banquet took place on Friday, December 13, 1906, in the wine cellars of the Hotel Astor. One hundred guests assembled, including Arturo Vigna, Ricardo Stracciari (a baritone from the Metropolitan Opera), Francesco Tocci, and G. Ciapparelli Viafora, a well-known Italian caricaturist. Leoncavallo arrived shortly after 8:00 p.m., escorted by Antonio Zucca, who served as master of ceremonies. The guests greeted him with a long and hearty ovation. Moments later, Caruso entered the room to equally enthusiastic applause. He graciously granted all requests for autographs, but politely declined to make a speech, explaining that he had to perform the next evening and needed to save his voice. The orchestra, under the direction of Giuseppe Mazza, former conductor of the La Scala orchestra, performed a selection from *Pagliacci*, after which the guests enjoyed a lavish dinner, highlighted by courses of fish and roast duck. Zucca and

[62] What follows is drawn from "Farewell Dinner to Leoncavallo," *Musical America*, December 22, 1906 (Appendix, No. 65).

others gave speeches in honor of Leoncavallo, all in Italian. The evening reached a high point of merriment when the attendees joined in a spirted cheer aimed at Maestro Vigna, shouting "Vi—Vi–gna—i–i–i!" An interpreter explained this to the reporter from *Musical America*: "That is a kind of Americanized Italian college yell . . . with the joke in the 'i–i–i,' for that is the sound we make to stir up a jackass in Italy." The guest of honor himself made a speech, which was reported in a number of newspapers:

> I like America. I like American audiences. They have greeted me with so much enthusiasm, and have treated me with so much kindness, I will surely return next year, when I will have my own company of artists and my own orchestra to interpret my operas in operatic form.

Leoncavallo sailed back to Europe the next day. He had every reason to feel satisfied with the results of the tour, and was full of plans to capitalize on his fame in America. Unfortunately, Leoncavallo often miscalculated when it came to nurturing his plans to fruition. Despite his affection for New York and the rest of the United States, he would not return for seven years.

CHAPTER II. THE 1913 TOUR

Between the tours

After the 1906 North American tour, Leoncavallo returned to his villa in Brissago, Switzerland, and set to work on a number of projects, which were followed attentively in the American press, since Leoncavallo had promised to return to the United States within the year in order to present fully-staged performances of his operas. The first undertaking was *Camicia Rossa* (The Red Shirt), set during the time when Venice was under Austrian rule (1815-49). By the summer of 1907, word was out, advertising Leoncavallo's new opera. The plot, as described by the *Los Angeles Times*, seemed to have all the makings of a successful melodrama:

> . . .Two brothers, one of whom is in sympathy with Austria, while the other is an ardent Venetian patriot, are infatuated with the same girl. She loves the patriot, and makes no secret of her preference. Vowing vengeance, the rejected brother denounces his brother to the police as a Garibaldian. His immediate arrest follows. The girl, expecting his prompt execution, and guessing his brother's crime, sends for the latter, and promises to be his bride if he can bring about the release of the prisoner. The brother eagerly agrees to testify in his favor. The day of the trial comes, and a gunshot is to tell her that the man on trial has been sentenced to death, while a trumpet call will announce his acquittal. The traitor-brother, having given his testimony, and feeling sure of the other's acquittal, hastens to the girl to claim her as his own. As he enters her apartments, a shot is heard. It proves afterward to have been accidental, but with a wild cry, she proclaims his treachery, and rushing toward him, stabs him. He dies just as the crowd enters, proclaiming her lover's release. The girl abandons herself to remorseful grief.
>
> Not a bad plot, as Italian opera stories go, and in dramatic values, if properly worked out, should be an equal of "Tosca." But hearing is believing, as far as Leoncavallo is concerned these days.[63]

At the same time, Leoncavallo was also composing two other operas, *Malbruk* and *Maià*. The former was a lighthearted affair based on an old Breton legend, while *Maià* was to be a grand opera involving a love triangle, set in southern France and taken from the book by the Parisian publisher, Paul de Choudens.[64]

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[63]Editorial, *Los Angele*26*Times*, August 12, 1907 (Appendix, No. 67).
[64] Paul de Choudens (1850-1925) wrote the libretto for Mascagni's *Amica*.

As it happens, Leoncavallo did not return to the United States in 1907. It had been fifteen years since the première of *Pagliacci*, and he felt pressured to produce a masterpiece. While his *La Bohème* and *Zazà* had been favorably received all over the world, neither of these operas had attained the overwhelming level of acclaim of *Pagliacci*. To add to the pressure, his chief rival, Puccini, was enjoying ever-increasing popularity with *Tosca* (1900) and *Madama Butterfly* (1904), as well as his own *La Bohème* (1896). Leoncavallo, then, worked with a fury, almost desparately, hoping that at least one of his new operas would capture the hearts of the public and restore his credibility as a major force. He did not stay silent during this time of hard work. As noted in *Musical America* on August 29, 1908, Leoncavallo complained about the state of musical training in Italy:

> Leoncavallo complains that the Italian conservatories are not doing their duty. There is in them too much worship of foreign gods, especially of Germans. The teachers make their pupils acquainted with Bach, Beethoven, Weber; they should, he declares, also familiarize them with Monteverdi, Durante, Piccini, Boccherini, Palestrina, Cimarosa, Scarlatti, Zingorelli, Martini and others who are equal to the foreigners. Did not some of the greatest German masters—Gluck, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn—sit on the benches of the Bologna school? Were not all the directors of the Paris Conservatoire, prior to the last century, Italians? Having thus shed a tear over the neglect of the old Italian masters, in a letter to the *Gazetta di Torino*, Leoncavallo comes to the sorrows of the living master. His own operas are sadly neglected in the Italian theatre (shame on them!). However, he hopes for better luck with the two operas he is now at work on—"Maja" [*sic*] and "Camicia Rossa." Leoncavallo apparently needs three things badly, according to Henry T. Finck, of the *Evening Post*—"the gift of creating original music, a sense of humor, and an apparatus for reducing the size of heads."[65]

Less than a month later, he bemoaned the lack of quality singers in Italy, telling the Rome correspondent from the same journal:

> My two new operas will not be first produced in Italy, neither will my 'Rolando' be given here. As to the latter opera, it requires three first-class voices—where should I find them in Italy, when the United States gobble up every singer of note in the kingdom? Besides, I doubt whether it would pay to produce my works here. Italian opera is in a

[65] "Leoncavallo Protests," *Musical America*, August 29, 1908 (Appendix, No. 69).

> critical condition in this country, no matter how well it succeeds in the rest of the world and particularly in the United States.[66]

Leoncavallo was quick to capitalize on the marketing possibilities of the gramophone. He was, in fact, the first artist to conduct and record a complete opera, when, in 1907, The Victor Talking Machine Company released complete recordings of *Pagliacci* and *Chatterton*.[67] Moreover, he also recorded a number of his original solo piano selections *(Flirt-Waltzer* was quite popular), while Caruso's recordings of "Vesti la giubba" (from *Pagliacci*) and the song *Mattinata* became best sellers. At the same time, he labored over his new operas, and publicity abounded. *The Nation* commented on the theme of *Malbruk*: "one gathers the impression that the new opera is of the merriest."[68] As for *Camicia Rossa*, its opening was planned for an opera festival at the Fine Arts Exposition in Rome.[69] Yet despite the excitement surrounding this particular project, Leoncavallo abandoned it, and initially refrained from speaking about the circumstances surrounding his decision. It was not until his New York visit in 1913 that he finally discussed *Camicia Rossa* once again:

> The 'Camicia Rossa' upon which I was engaged? That opera. . . I never completed. I was advised not to by many important persons. It dealt with the Irredentists, you see, and there was danger that it might arouse political feeling at an inopportune moment. Ah! I put that work aside quietly and say nothing more about it.[70]

Maià and *Malbruk*, on the other hand, premièred in Rome almost simultaneously. Pietro Mascagni conducted the first performance of *Maià* at the Teatro Costanzi on January 10, 1910,

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[66] "Leoncavallo Dissatisfied," *Musical America*, September 19, 1908 (Appendix, No. 70).
[67] While Leoncavallo conducted *Chatterton*, whether or not he conducted *Pagliacci* or merely supervised the recording sessions is unknown.
[68] Editorial, *The Nation*, September 18, 1909 (Appendix, No. 74).
[69] Editorial, *Musical America*, September 25, 1909 (Appendix, No. 75).
[70] Herbert F. Peyser, "Holding Up the Mirror to Leoncavallo," *Musical America*, October 25, 1913 (Appendix, No. 93).

and critics found the music colorful, commended the mixture of the veristic style with a Verdian approach, and were particularly enthusiastic about soprano Emma Carelli's portrayal of the heroine.[71] Just five days later, on January 15, *Malbruk* premièred at the Teatro Nazionale. Critics and public heartily applauded the new opera:

> Almost simultaneously with the production of his new grand opera, "Maia," Leoncavallo's long-awaited light opera, "Malbruk," was given a first hearing this week at the Teatro Nazionale. Leoncavallo calls his work a comic fantasy, its songs are pleasing, and, though the comedy is rather slight, there is plenty of fantasy. The production was a decisive success.[72]

And with *Malbruk* seemingly on its way to becoming a staple in the repertoire, the public was interested to know more about its genesis. *Musical America* carried the following account:

> A pretty story from Rome has been going the rounds of the press anent the genesis of Leoncavallo's new musical play, "Malbruk," which was received with much favor at its recent *première*. During his recent visit to Berlin he attended a party given by a manufacturer. Leoncavallo's companion at table [*sic*] was the pretty wife of a doctor, who was anxious to secure good waltzers for the dance which was to follow the dinner. Great was her surprise, however, when she discovered that the composer had not entered the ballroom. She went to the smoking-room and found him comfortably esconced in an armchair, enjoying a cigar.
>
> Asked if he was not going to dance, Leoncavallo pointed to his corpulent figure. The lady was disappointed.
>
> "Well, if you do not dance," she said, with something of a pout, "you might play a waltz and show that you can be put to some use."
>
> An idea seized the composer. He laid his cigar aside, and the next moment he had taken the place of the pianist. He struck up a waltz which he had never played before.
>
> The couples on the floor gave him inspiration. The waltz was followed by a polka. Leoncavallo sat at the piano for half an hour. When he rose the guests flocked 'round him and thanked him effusively. The master asked his host to find him a quiet corner and provide him with pencil and paper. Lighting another cigar, he wrote the melodies he had played.
>
> From that moment he decided to write a light opera, and a few days afterward he was hard at work on the music of "Malbruk."[73]

Shortly after the Rome premières of *Malbruk* and *Maià*, Leoncavallo came down with a

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[71] Daniele Rubboli, *Ridi, Pagliaccio!* (Lucca: Fazzi, 1985), 166.
[72] "New Leoncavallo Opera," *Musical America*, January 29, 1910. (See Appendix, No. 76)
[73] "How Inspiration Came to Leoncavallo," *Musical America*, February 19, 1910 (Appendix, No. 78).

somewhat serious lethargy which kept him away from his work for a number of weeks. Owing to his enormous size, not to mention a proclivity for smoking and drinking heavily, there was even a great deal of concern and speculation that Leoncavallo was terminally ill. Fortunately, though, things were not quite that dire, as the *Musical Courier* noted on February 16, 1910:

> The cabled rumors in the Sunday dailies to the effect that Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo is dying of heart disease should be received with extreme caution if not downright distrust. THE MUSICAL COURIER service in Italy has not reported up to date any such alarming news about the composer of "Pagliacci," and we therefore set down the publication as a canard for the consumption of the avid Sunday reader. Our local dailies think nothing at all of killing a composer or two on the Sabbath morn if other "news" be insufficient to fill the unnecessarily large number of pages.[74]

By the summer of the same year, Leoncavallo was back to work and planning further operas. One was *La Foscarina*, with a libretto by the Swiss writer Angelo Nessi. Notices announced Leoncavallo's hopes for a première at Genoa in the spring of 1911, to be performed by the Coramba Scognamiglio troupe.[75] Yet another opera was *Prometeo* (Prometheus), on a poem by Arturo Colautti. Publicity for *Prometeo* centered on a possible Rome première.[76] As it turns out, neither opera ever made it to the stage. As he often did, Leoncavallo made public his ideas even before he had begun working on a score. In fact, it is questionable whether or not he actually composed any parts of either of these two operas.

While Leoncavallo worked slavishly to accomplish his lofty goals, Puccini had just completed a new opera of his own, *La Fanciulla del West* (The Girl of the West). Based on a story by David Belasco, its world première was held at New York's Metropolitan Opera on December 10, 1910. Puccini attended the opening in what was his second trip to the United States. It was a decided triumph, the greatest of Puccini's career, and it must have disturbed

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[74] Editorial, *Musical Courier*, February 16, 1910 (Appendix, No. 77).
[75] "New Leoncavallo Opera," *Musical Courier*, September 3, 1910 (Appendix, No. 81).
[76] Editorial, *Musical Courier*, October 5, 1910 (Appendix, No. 82).

Leoncavallo, who was himself the first Italian composer to recognize the operatic potential of Belasco's dramas. In addition, while Leoncavallo was relatively satisfied with his New York reception in 1906, it was insignificant in comparison to Puccini's success. Nevertheless, Leoncavallo fared much better than had Mascagni during his first New York visit in 1902. Like Leoncavallo, Mascagni brought his own orchestra and singers to present his *Cavalleria Rusticana* (1890), *Guglielmo Ratcliff* (1895), *Zanetto* (1896), and *Iris* (1898). New York critics found Mascagni's artists to be lacking in quality, and had an even lower opinion of his operas.[77] By 1910, Leoncavallo and Puccini truly despised one another, and even Mascagni insulted Leoncavallo in a well-publicized comment that poked fun of his surname, noting that it was comprised of two wild animals, so that Leoncavallo was nothing more than a portly beast.[78]

On March 19, 1911, Leoncavallo's *Maià* had a clamorous success at the Berlin Royal Opera. The composer was called out for bows repeatedly by the standing-room only crowd, which was made up largely of Berlin's Italian colony and the international media. The press praised Leoncavallo's score, but found fault with the libretto:

> . . .the music, it should be stated at the outset, is vastly superior to the libretto. The Paris publisher, Paul de Chaudens [*sic*], wrote the book. Ordinarily it may be advantageous to have a millionaire for a co-worker, but it is apt to become harmful for a composer if he is thereby led into writing music for an inadequate libretto.
>
> . . .In such a libretto many a musical genius might have found his Waterloo. And the shortcomings of the book are all the more regrettable because Leoncavallo has illustrated in "Maia"—perhaps more than ever before—the merits of the Italian modern school. An intimate relationship seems to exist between the composer of "Maia" and Puccini, and above all the music is not only singable but frequently vocally effective. The parts of the heroine, the tenor *Renaud* and the baritone *Torias* are extraordinarily well characterized, and the ensembles polyphonically are cleverly arranged. Nor is melodic originality lacking. . . .Wherever human life and passions venture forth unrestrainedly the music at once a significant and always interesting character. The strongest factor in the opera is the instrumentation, which is full of color and tonal effectiveness.[79]

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[77] Alan Mallach, "The Mascagni Tour of 1902: An Italian Composer Confronts the American Musical World," *The Opera Quarterly* vii/4 (Winter 1990/91): 13-37.
[78] http://www.operaitaliana.net.

Maià was Leoncavallo's first opera for which he did not write the libretto himself. Interestingly enough, he often won discerning praise for his own libretti, even from critics who condemned his merits as a composer. In any event, both *Maià* and *Malbruk* enjoyed some success for a few years, and they were performed throughout Europe and Latin America before fading from the repertory.

During this prolific period (which also included a large quantity of songs and instrumental works), Leoncavallo wrote an operetta, *La Reginetta delle Rose* (The Rose Queen), which opened simultaneously in Rome and Naples on June 24, 1912. It was a pleasant comedy, with much of the music composed in the manner of Viennese waltzes. However, Leoncavallo was very excited about a more serious subject, *Zingari* (The Gypsies), with a story modelled after Alexander Pushkin's poem. It was premièred on September 16, 1912, at the Hippodrome in London, and critics were very enthusiastic, claiming that it was one of Leoncavallo's best works.[80] Though the London public was equally responsive at first, the Hippodrome performances of *Zingari* stopped quite abruptly after September 23, when it was paired with Albert de Courville's "American Ragtime Octette." Ragtime, still in its infancy, was new to Europe. With the Octette creating a sensation, Leoncavallo quickly withdrew *Zingari*, disdainfully describing the ragtime vaudeville act as an "exhibition."[81] And though *Zingari* created a stir in other European cities, Italian journalists were a bit reserved, considering it too close in conception to *Pagliacci*.[82]

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[79] O. P. Jacob, "'Maia' has Good Music, Poor Book," *Musical America*, April 8, 1911 (Appendix, No. 88).
[80] Rubboli, *Ridi, Pagliaccio!*, 174.
[81] Ian Whitcomb, *Irving Berlin and Ragtime America* (London: Limelight, 1988), 158-9.
[82] Rubboli, *Ridi, Pagliaccio!*, 174.

Two Days in New York

In October of 1913, Leoncavallo was once again in the United States. As noted above, when Leoncavallo left the United States at the end of his 1906 tour, he announced that he would return the following year to present his operas fully staged. And though it took Leoncavallo seven years, he did keep his promise. This time the bulk of the tour took place on the West Coast: six weeks in San Francisco, followed by a few performances in Los Angeles and Chicago. The San Francisco connection is particularly understandable, as the city had a large Italian population and was developing a real appreciation for opera. Moreover, Leoncavallo had been unable to visit San Francisco during his first tour, owing to the city's devastating earthquake that year.

The performances in California were negotiated through the Western Metropolitan Opera Company, with Leoncavallo conducting *Pagliacci*, *Zingari*, and *Zazà*, as well as various excerpts from his other operas. Unlike the previous tour, he did not bring his own singers and instrumentalists this time.

But we should back up to the brief sojourn in New York. Traveling alone, Leoncavallo set sail for New York on the *Oceanic*, and arrived there on October 16, 1913. He stayed for only two days, residing at the Hotel Astor, which had commemorated his 1906 visit by creating a special dish in his honor, "Noisette of Beef Leoncavallo."[83] In fact, he almost escaped New York unnoticed, as the lack of publicity was astonishing for an artist of his distinction. Nevertheless, he granted *Musical America*'s Herbert F. Peyser a lengthy interview. As usual, he was determined to make his voice heard, and discussed a vast assortment of topics. Peyser first spoke about Leoncavallo's physical stature, good-naturedness, and his personality:[84]

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[83] Salvatore Maria Fares, "I menu di Leoncavallo," *1. Festival Leoncavallo* (Brissago, Switzerland: Ente Turistico Brissago e Ronco, 1996), 30-1.

> Leoncavallo's rotundity makes him appear in his portraits taller than he actually is. His real height scarcely exceeds five feet five. In all other respects his pictures do him complete justice. His hair curiously suggests Nahan Franko's in its unequal commingling of black and white. His mustache rears itself at angles that make it seem a first cousin of the Kaiser's. Casual inspection will disclose the interesting fact that it is tricolored—black, white and reddish. Portly though Leoncavallo is he shuns chairs proportioned to his dimensions, and during his talk with a representative of MUSICAL AMERICA he maintained himself valiantly upon one that struck the observer as perilously small.
>
> Genial is the term that most appositely pertains to the personality of the expansive Ruggiero [*sic*]. He radiates good nature and *bonhommie*. On occasion he is almost naive, while satisfaction bubbles up within him, and illuminates his face with smiles when he meditates upon his achievements and the effect they have had on the popular mind. Whether or not one is disposed to esteem his works as highly as he himself values them it is impossible not to react in some fashion to the warmth of his good nature. And he adds volubility to his other assets of personality. His conversation (in a far better French than is usually at the command of an Italian) was a monologue delivered with due Italian effervescence and characteristic stress of emphasis. Though his train for the West left in two hours he had no objection in the world to talking about questions of art. He was happy, very happy, for had not a cable-gram from his dear wife Bertha, just reached him telling him of the success of his opera "Zingari" in Florence, a city that had never heard it before? The visitor was greeted with fluent cordialty.

Leoncavallo displayed his usual congenial demeanor as he spoke about his upcoming tour and his hopes for more American performances of his lesser-known operas (with more than a hint of jealousy toward Puccini):

> So happy am I to be here. . . that it grieves me to have to leave after six weeks or so. In San Francisco I shall conduct several of my operas—'Pagliacci,' 'Zingari,' 'Zaza.' Also 'Aida' for the unveiling of the Verdi monument. Ah! but I should like to stay longer and to see to the presentation of others of my works in America. It is really not fair that only one of them should be heard in so many places. Is it not a pity that there are opera houses over which a publisher exercises so powerful an influence that the operas of one particular composer are constantly exploited and those of another barred? Mr. Puccini's works are always heard. Naturally, I am not in the least objecting to this, for they are thoroughly worthy of that honor. But it is the idea of restraining others that I find unjust. My operas I am sure would be well received. Think of the successes I have enjoyed and the esteem I have been held in in so many music centers of Europe! Think of 'Zingari!' Think that the Emperor of Germany selected me above the innumerable German composers to write a work for his Royal Opera House! Think that, despite all the harsh criticism and ill-will with which it was met, 'Roland of Berlin' has already been sung between sixty and seventy times. In Paris there are numberless French composers clamoring for and receiving hearings. And what does the public prefer, what receives the

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[84] What follows is drawn from Herbert F. Peyser, "Holding Up the Mirror to Leoncavallo," *Musical America*, October 25, 1913, 3-4 (Appendix, No. 93).

> widest attention? Italian works, mine included. They love me and treat me like a god in Vienna. I was lionized at the opera there one evening when I was coming down the stairs after a performance of 'Lohengrin.' Does it not seem unfair in the face of all this, that only one of my ten operas can be given a hearing in this part of the world? Oh! I should so very much like to introduce the others myself. I should even like to stay here an write an American opera—base it on a good American play if I could find such a one. But were I to write an American work I should collaborate only with an American.

As noted earlier, Leoncavallo complained bitterly about the lack of good musical education as well as the dearth of great singers in Italy. Yet in this interview, he acted as a sort of ambassador and statesman for Italian music, comparing it favorably with that of the great German and Austrian composers:

> I have always been and I always shall remain Italian. Italy has been the teacher of the world in music and it still has much to impart. In the early days Germany, France and other nations have learned from my nation. Only in the course of time did they evolve characteristics of their own. Mozart came to Italy and studied. Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Mendelssohn—they and no end of others either lived in Italy at some time or other of their lives or else learned much directly from the Italians. What a glorious array of great teachers we have given to the world—a Palestrina, a Marcello, a Rossini, a Donizetti, a Bellini, a Verdi, to give you only a few. The first impulse has come from Italy; other nations had to experience it before they could proceed on their own way.

Leoncavallo then went on to voice his dissatisfaction with certain contemporary styles of music, particularly the expressionism of Richard Strauss and Debussy's impressionism. His argument with the latter composer is not hard to understand. Debussy was quite outspoken about his dislike of Leoncavallo's music, as he was about that of Puccini and Mascagni. Leoncavallo issued this rebuttal:

> Now, Strauss and Debussy will not last, because they are not natural, because they try to do things that will not appeal to the great body of people at large, but just to some technical specialists. They are not sincere and only what is written in complete sincerity succeeds. My 'Pagliacci' succeeded because I wrote it in a spirit of absolute sincerity. Those little men who imitate what others have originated are negligible quantities, artistically speaking. There are plenty of them in Italy to-day.
>
> The artist may consider himself triumphant when he has the public on his side. The public must reach up to him and he, in turn, reach down to it. No one who is truly great will be satisfied to write for a few exceptionally learned persons and consider it

> beneath his dignity to bid for the approval of the multitude. The composer has accomplished something great when he writes something that insinuates itself into the public ear and refuses to be dislodged from there. And therefore I hold it a greater and more difficult accomplishment to have written 'La Donna è Mobile' than to have composed 'Salomé.' Verdi's air is a greater piece of art than Strauss's opera. If people yawn on hearing a certain composition you can know it is bad art. Whatever tires one is such.
>
> The public is the final arbiter in all questions of art and the public is right. You will find that it has never really withheld its support in the case of the great masterpieces.

While there is more than just a shade of defensiveness in Leoncavallo's comments, he had reason to feel justified in stating his case. The public had always been on his side. *Chatterton* was received with great enthusiasm, as were *La Bohème, Zazà*, *Der Roland von Berlin*, *Maià*, *Malbruk*, and *Zingari*. Though the critics were not always kind to him, Leoncavallo never once suffered the humiliation of a public fiasco.

He then made some pointed remarks regarding his own artistic vision and his early hero, Wagner:

> I can treat operatically only such themes as are vital, natural, and true. It would not be possible, for instance, for me to write music for fishes that sing and Valkyries that fly through the air. I have never seen such things in life and so I should be at a loss when it came to treating them. But give me men who can laugh, men who can weep and I can laugh and weep with them. Such has always been my aim. Art should concern itself primarily with the truth. The artist must not tie himself down with theories. Wagner, man of genius that he was, laid down many theories which he purported to follow, but in the last analysis never did. He was unwilling, he averred, to write ensembles, concerted numbers, duets, and he claimed to have written 'endless melody,' works of which pieces were not susceptible of detachment and separate performance. Yet Wagner was constantly refuting himself in practice. When he gave concerts in the days of his struggles for recognition what sort of things did he give out of his own works—the 'Ride of the Valkyries,' the 'Waldweben,' the 'Siegfried Funeral March,' the 'Magic Fire Music.' All of them are numbers with a definite beginning and a perfectly well-defined ending. Take the wonderful last act of 'Götterdämmerung,' which makes it worth one's while to sit through the first two, and what have you but a string of detachable pieces—the 'Rhinemaiden's' Trio, the 'Narrative' of *Siegfried*, the 'Funeral March,' the finale! And even in 'Parsifal,' supposedly the broadest exemplification of his system, we find precisely the same thing.

Always the diplomat, Leoncavallo spoke with flattery about the status of music in the

United States. He seemed convinced of two things: that America would develop a national school of music, and that English would become a more viable language for opera.

> A nation must first be completely settled as to its material well-being before it thinks of artistic creation, and America has plenty of time before it. The clash of material interests will be like stones struck together—it will produce sparks and these figurative sparks will be artistic productivity. To contend that a musical genius cannot arise in America is ridiculous. A genius could suddenly appear in the midst of the Sahara. What should there be to hinder the arrival of one here? The conglomeration of races? Was not England once a mixture of races possessed of characteristic elements apparently irreconcilable? Yet did not England in the course of time produce a Shakespeare and a Byron?

The following portion of the interview is humorous, as Leoncavallo compares "proper" English to the accents of the Americans:

> Italian is unquestionably the most favorable language for singing. English is more difficult than French or German, but it is none the less possible. The only thing that troubles me is that people over here speak English so differently from the way I was taught to pronounce it. I cannot understand those who try to talk to me in this country and they, in their turn, are not able to understand me. If I tell a taxi driver I want to go to the Hippodrome he doesn't seem to know what I'm talking about. Then, when I show him the name in writing, he says it in a curious guttural way (the composer gave an imitation of the sound at this juncture). If I say I want to go to the Savoy Hotel the same thing happens. I cannot grasp the fundamental principles of your enunciation over here. Still, as you people are able to understand each other when you speak there's nothing to hinder mutual comprehension in singing, I should think.

Two hours after completing the interview, Leoncavallo was on a train headed for San Francisco. He had set foot in New York for the last time.

The 1913 Concerts: San Francisco and Chicago

Leoncavallo arrived in San Francisco on October 21, 1913, and checked into the St. Francis Hotel. As the first performance was the next evening, he proceeded immediately to the rehearsal. The first half of the program consisted of *Pagliacci*, with the second half devoted to the overture to *Der Roland von Berlin* and excerpts from *Maià*.

The evening began on an ominous note, as the cover of the printed programs announced:

"Pagliacci, by Puccini."[85] But it would be the only blemish during an otherwise triumphant evening for Leoncavallo. As he arrived at the Tivoli Theatre, the orchestra burst forth with the Italian national anthem, and the capacity crowd gave Leoncavallo a prolonged, standing ovation. After the first act of *Pagliacci*, the cheers of the audience became so frenzied that Leoncavallo had the orchestra play his *Viva l'America*. The effect was pandemonium, and the crowd rewarded Leoncavallo with exhilarating enthusiasm. This program was repeated three more times, before *Pagliacci* was paired in two more performances with its familiar partner, *Cavalleria Rusticana*.[86]

Leoncavallo introduced *Zingari* on October 30, with soprano Carmen Melis as Fleana, tenor Umberto Chiodo as Radu, and baritone Luigi Montesanto as Tamar. The American première provided yet another triumph for Leoncavallo; the *San Francisco Chronicle* proclaimed *Zingari* as superior to *Pagliacci*,[87] and there were five performances in all.

San Francisco celebrated yet another landmark the day after *Zingari's* debut. The United States now had plans for construction of its first coast-to-coast thoroughfare for automobiles: the Lincoln Highway. As the western end of this great route, the city of San Francisco held an inauguration ceremony at the Valencia Theatre. On October 31, 1913, *The San Francisco Examiner* announced Leoncavallo's part in the dedication:

> The committee has been promised the presence of Leoncavallo, the great composer who is now visiting the city, author of "Pagliacci" and "Zingari," and the Municipal Band will render, as a special feature, Leoncavallo's "The United States Forever." [Viva l'America.][88]

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[85] George Hall, "Leoncavallo in America," *Opera* 36 (1985): 158.
[86] Leoncavallo did not conduct *Cavalleria Rusticana* in these performances.
[87] Hall, "Leoncavallo in America," 159.
[88] Stuart Gayness, "Public To See Dedication of Great Highway," *San Francisco Examiner*, October 31, 1913 (Appendix, No. 94).

With the success of *Zingari* now established, Leoncavallo prepared for his last three performances at the Tivoli Theatre. In the eyes and ears of the San Francisco public, he could do no wrong. Leoncavallo had attained the status of a hero. *Zazà*, which had received its American première at the Tivoli Theatre in 1903,[89] was presented on November 13, and the success of this new performance exceeded all expectations. The cast featured the singers from *Zingari*, as well as the mezzo-soprano Fanny Anitua, as Anaïde, Zazà's mother. As the *San Francisco Chronicle* put it, "the stupendousness of *Zazà* could not be forecast even in a musical mind."[90] Leoncavallo remained for the Tivoli Theatre's final gala, which featured Act III of *Zazà*, after which the company traveled to Los Angeles for a series of performances that also received a great deal of praise.

On November 25, 1913, Leoncavallo left the West Coast and headed for Chicago to conduct a performance of *Zingari*. He was provided with a wonderful cast of singers, including the famous baritone, Titta Ruffo. *Zingari* shared a double-bill with *Pagliacci* and, to Leoncavallo's delight, both audience and critics were overwhelmingly enthusiastic. The *Chicago Tribune* described *Zingari* as being even richer in melodic content than *Pagliacci*,[91] and its success was so complete that the company announced a second performance, to take the place of Verdi's *Rigoletto* on December 23. In this hilariously witty interview, Edward Moore recalled the première of *Zingari*:

> The music of *Zingari* was melodious, uncomplex, warm, dramatic, everything a score should be, but it was never given again. Perhaps the story had something to do with it, for in the work the injured tenor lured the erring soprano and baritone into a barn, locked them in, and set fire to the building. The thought of broiled prima donna and toasted baritone was a little too much for a public inured though it might have been to many sorts and varieties of unusual operatic deaths.
>
> But the audience that night made a festival of it anyway. To an accompaniment of blistering palms, no curtain fell without recalling composer and singers before it at least ten times and sometimes more. Leoncavallo scarcely had time to change into dry clothing, for he fairly steamed with perspiratory energy while at the baton. At one time and another, however, he found time to bestow kisses on Miss White, who was in *Zingari*,

[89] *The Victrola Book of the Opera,* 7th ed. (Camden, NJ: Victor Talking Machine Company, 1924), 446.
[90] Hall, "Leoncavallo in America," 160.
[91] Hall, "Leoncavallo in America," 160-1.

> upon [Titta] Ruffo, and finally upon the stage director of the company, Fernand Almanz. The last was the most impressive of all. The sight of two tightly waistcoated but well-rounded facades rolling up on each other so that two pairs of leonine mustaches might meet in osculation was a spectacle seldom to equaled and never to be forgotten."[92]

In fact, the Lyric Opera of Chicago was initially so excited by *Zingari* that they negotatied with Leoncavallo to première his "new" opera, *Ave Maria* (not to be confused with the vocal composition heard throughout the 1906 tour), for the next season. Leoncavallo had spoken of this opera in his New York interview for *Musical America*:

> Now I'm about to begin a new [opera], 'Ave Maria.' The libretto is Illica's—anything more beautiful I have never read. I have only had it for a month, though, and have not yet started work on it. Ah! but when it *is* done—![93]

After the Chicago performances, Leoncavallo wasted no time in sailing back to Italy. He returned extremely satisfied with this second sojourn to America. Like Puccini, he had truly won the hearts of the American public, and he was eager to finish his new *Ave Maria* for the upcoming season in Chicago. As it turns out, the opera was never completed, likely owing to circumstances related to World War I, and Leoncavallo spent most of the last five years of his life at home. The onset of the World War affected him both physically and emotionally. His obesity grew out of control, he drank heavily, and he gambled away much of his fortune. He did complete one opera during his later years, *Goffredo Mameli*, premièred at the Teatro Carlo Felice in Genoa on April 27, 1916. Starring the noted soprano Eugenia Burzio (1882-1922), *Goffredo Mameli* received a clamorous ovation, and went on to open in eight other cities, always with Burzio and under Leoncavallo's direction. The public heartily applauded the new opera: one audience was "in a state of collapse."[94] Nevertheless, the war intervened and further

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[92] Edward C. Moore, *Forty Years of Opera in Chicago* (New York: H. Liveright, 1930), 131.
[93] Peyser, "Holding Up the Mirror to Leoncavallo," 3 (Appendix, No. 93).
[94] http://www.mrichter.com.

performances of *Goffredo Mameli* came to a halt. In fact, the score was never published.

The events of the war took a toll on Leoncavallo's psychological state, practically causing a nervous breakdown. The 1917 Battle of Caporetto, he bemoaned, "almost cost me my life."[95] During these troubled years, Leoncavallo wrote a number of tuneful but frivolous operettas, though he claimed to be at work on a serious opera, *Tormenta*, based on a Sardinian drama. "It will be my masterpiece,"[96] he announced; but, as so often happened, the idea fizzled out before it took hold.

Leoncavallo died of heart failure in Montecatini, on August 9, 1919. Hundreds attended his funeral to pay their respects, including his long-time rivals, Mascagni and Puccini. Unfortunately, he died without ever having written his "American opera." And yet Leoncavallo and America would be linked together one more time: his last opera, *Edipo Re* (Oedipus Rex), received its world première (posthumously) in Chicago on December 13, 1920.

[95] John W. Klein, "Ruggiero Leoncavallo (1858-1919)," *Opera* 9 (1958): 234.
[96] Klein, "Ruggiero Leoncavallo," 234.

CHAPTER III. *PAGLIACCI*

Some Background

In 1877, at the age of twenty, and while still a student at the Università di Bologna, Leoncavallo wrote his first opera, *Chatterton*, based on the play by Alfred de Vigny (1797-1863). The production was underwritten by one Count Albicini, a friend of Leoncavallo, who donated a large sum of money to persuade a local impresario to produce the opera at the Teatro del Corso in Bologna. The impresario turned out to be a swindler: he publicized the première of *Chatterton*, but used Albicini's money to launch a production of Gounod's *Faust*, after which he left town and was never heard from again.[97] Plans for the opening of *Chatterton* were shelved indeterminately. Deflated, Leoncavallo finished his studies that year and returned home to Naples.[98]

Nevertheless, Leoncavallo went on with other plans. After touring as a concert pianist in Egypt and Holland, he made his way to Paris, where he gave piano lessons, worked with singers, and performed in café-concerts. It was then that he began to work on the libretto of *I Medici*, the first opera of his proposed trilogy, *Crepusculum*, featuring great figures of the Italian Renaissance. It was also at this time that he met with his friend, the celebrated baritone Victor Maurel (1848-1923), who persuaded him to sell his few belongings, move from Paris to Milan, and meet Giulio Ricordi (1840-1912), the well-known music publisher, who, on the basis of the *Medici* libretto, offered Leoncavallo a fee and contract, allowing him one year to complete the opera and a promise to mount its first production.

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[97] Daniele Rubboli, *Ridi, Pagliaccio!* (Lucca: Fazzi, 1985), 28-9.

[98] *Chatterton* finally received its première nearly twenty years later, on March 10, 1896, at the Teatro Nazionale in Rome. It was a huge hit with the audience (twenty-seven curtain calls), and critics received the opera with favor. After nearly a decade of successful performances throughout Europe, *Chatterton* faded from the repertory.

Now financially independent, Leoncavallo worked tirelessly and managed to finish *I Medici* within the allotted year. Unfortunately, Ricordi reneged on his promise to produce the opera, as Leoncavallo himself explained in a 1902 interview:

> But, alas, although the opera was ready at the end of the year, M. Ricordi was by no means ready to produce it! And I waited thus in vain for three years, during which I recommenced at Milan the melancholy task of teaching, which I hoped I might never have to resume![99]

Although Italy had long been the premier producer of opera, by 1880 the future seemed uncertain. Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901), the hero of nineteenth-century Italian opera, was assumed to have reached the end of his illustrious career,[100] and although Arrigo Boito (1842-1918) scored some success with *Mefistofele* in 1875—as did Amilcare Ponchielli (1834-1886) the following year with *La Gioconda*—there seemed to be no genuine heir apparent to Verdi's legacy. The answer initially seemed to come with *Cavalleria Rusticana*, an opera by the young Pietro Mascagni (1863-1945) premièred at Rome's Teatro Costanzi on May 17, 1890, a result of Mascagni's having won a contest for one-act operas sponsored by the Milanese publisher Edoardo Sonzogno (1836-1920).[101] Conducted by Leopoldo Mugnone (1858-1941), the

cast featured the husband-wife team of Gemma Bellincioni (1864-1950) and Roberto Stagno (1840-1897), Italy's most beloved opera stars at the time; and despite a half-filled theatre, its triumph was immediate. News of Mascagni's work made headlines, and sparked the beginning of a new genre of opera, *verismo*, which, however, Leoncavallo claimed could be traced back to

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[99] Ruggero Leoncavallo, "How I Wrote 'Pagliacci'," *North American Review* (November 1902), (Appendix, No. 9).

[100] Verdi's *Aïda* premièred in 1871, and it was assumed that it would be his last opera; his last two operas, *Otello* and *Falstaff*, were first heard in 1887 and 1893, respectively.

[101] Another entrant that year was the nineteen year-old Umberto Giordano, who submitted his opera *Marina*. While the judges were impressed, they did not choose Giordano as a finalist.

Bellini:

> Donizetti and Verdi had not been able to make the slightest concession to the taste of the time. Bellini, more courageous than either, at the outset of his career did what the great Rossini dared in his last work only, and absolutely ignored the affectations and mannerisms of a school that did not adapt itself to his genius. Writing only as he thought and felt, he really created what we call "Verismo."
>
> . . .Thus he wrote, and thus he could but write; for one can feel an emotion that is not sincere as little as he can experience a conviction of what he does not believe.
>
> To this school of what I call "Verismo" I have the honor to belong. It is the same "Verismo" which you recognize in the great statues of "Laocoön" and the "Capitoline Venus," in the "Madonna of the Chair," and in the "Fates,"—"Verismo," truth without alloy or corruption.[102]

In any event, Mascagni's spectacular success and sudden fame inspired Leoncavallo to set to work on a similar operatic venture, and *Pagliacci*[103] was soon born. Although he based the opera on an event that had recently taken place in Calabria, he was accused of having plagiarized the work from Catulle Mendes's novel, "La Femme des tabarins," a charge that was dismissed, as Leoncavallo reported:

> When this work was translated, M. Mendes, seeing that it bore some resemblance to his *"Femme de Tabarins,"* honestly believed that I had borrowed the subject of my work from him, and he even took steps towards bringing an action, which he frankly withdrew, with a letter published in the *Figaro*, after having found that there were other *"Tabarins"* written before his own. The truth is that I was completely ignorant of the work of this writer, whom I admire so much, and I had taken my plot from an event that really took place in Calabria and was brought before my father when he was holding the Court of Justice at Cosenza. And what is stranger still, as I have since learned, the protagonist of my work is still living, and having been released from prison, is now in the service of Baroness Sprovieri in Calabria. If the action had never come to trial, he would have been willing to come and give evidence in my favor. I regret that this did not happen, as we should have had a very dramatic scene during the evidence of poor Alessandro (the real name of my *Canio*) when he was relating his crime, his jealous fury and his sufferings![104]

The title "Pagliacci" has an interesting history of its own. As Phillip Hale points out:

> "Pagliacci" is the plural of Pagliaccio, which does not mean and never did mean

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[102] Ruggero Leoncavallo, "Vincenzo Bellini," in *The International Library of Music*, ed. J. Walker McSpadden (New York: The University Society, 1966), iv, 492-3.

[103] The opera is often mistakenly referred to as *I Pagliacci*.

[104] Leoncavallo, "How I Wrote 'Pagliacci'" (Appendix, No. 9).

> Punchinello. What is a Pagliaccio? A type long known to the Italians, and familiar to the French as Paillasse. The Pagliaccio visited Paris first in 1570. He was clothed in white and wore big buttons. Later, he wore a suit of bedtick, with white and blue checks, the coarse mattress cloth of the period. Hence his name. The word that meant straw was afterward used for mattress which was stuffed with straw and then for the buffoon, who wore the mattress cloth suit. In France the Paillasse, as I have said, was the same as Pagliaccio. Sometimes he wore a red checked suit, but the genuine one was known by the colors, white and blue. He wore blue stockings, short breeches puffing out a la blouse, a belted blouse and a black, close-fitting cap. This buffoon was seen at shows of strolling mountebanks. He stood outside the booth and by his jests and antics and grimaces strove to attract the attention of the people, and he told them of the wonders performed by acrobats within, of the freaks exhibited. Many of his jests are preserved. They are often in dialogue with the proprietor and are generally of vile indecency. The lowest of the strollers, he was abused by them. The Italian Pagliaccio is a species of clown, and Punchinello was never a mere buffoon. The Punch of the puppet-show is a bastard descendant of the latter, but the original type is still seen in Naples, where he wears a white costume and a black mask. The original type was not necessarily humpbacked. Punchinello is a shrewd fellow, intellectual, yet in touch with the people, cynical; not hesitating at murder if he can make by it; at the same time a local satirist, a dealer in gags and quips. Pagliacci is perhaps best translated by 'clowns'; but the latter word must not be taken in its restricted circus sense. These strolling clowns are pantomimists, singers, comedians.[105]

Disappointed with Giulio Ricordi's lack of action in connection with *I Medici*, Leoncavallo presented the libretto and score of *Pagliacci* to Mascagni's publisher, Sonzogno, who agreed to mount Leoncavallo's new opera, and *Pagliacci* received its world première on May 21, 1892, at the Teatro dal Verme in Milan, with the young conductor Arturo Toscanini at the helm. Tenor Fiorello Giraud (1870-1928) sang the role of Canio; Adelina Stehle (1860-1945), soprano, was Nedda; Victor Maurel sang Tonio; and Mario Ancona (1860-1931), baritone, was Silvio. Despite a nearly disastrous moment in which a nervous donkey almost fell into the orchestra pit,[106] the success of *Pagliacci* was overwhelming, and Leoncavallo became a star overnight.

Reviewing the first Viennese performance of *Pagliacci* later in 1892, even the often

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[105] Henry Edward Krehbiel, "*A Second Book of Operas*," (New York: Macmillan, 1917), 114-115.
[106] Roland Vernon, "Pagliacci, Leoncavallo, Milan 1934"; see the notes that accompany the recording on Nimbus Records, NI 7843/44 (1993).

sharp-tongued Eduard Hanslick was quite favorable:

> Leoncavallo's music reveals a strong, hot-blooded talent, a thoughtful mind and a skilled hand. His melodic invention can scarcely by praised for its richness and originality. In each of Mascagni's operas there shoot forth individual, surprising sparks of genius such as are not present in *I Pagliacci*. On the other hand, the style of this work is more unified than *Cavalleria* and compared with [Mascagni's] *I Rantzau* and *L'amico Fritz* makes a more satisfying overall impression.[107]

Although *Pagliacci* was composed as a one-act opera and has almost always been performed as such, Sonzogno published it in two acts, no doubt based on the tumultuous applause that usually followed "Vesti la giubba," and probably with Leoncavallo's consent. Thus Act I concludes just after the intermezzo following Canio's popular aria.

Cavalleria Rusticana and *Pagliacci* caused such a stir throughout the world, that their pairing in performances was inevitable. Roland Vernon described the phenomenon of the two operas as such:

> *Cavalleria* and its partner, *Pagliacci*, have as their core the most naked and recognisable of human motivations: lust, revenge, fear and hate. Both works are characterised throughout by a tight suppression of these emotions, which leads to both operas ending with a climactic explosion, a loss of rational control, and an inevitable resolution through violence. Moreover, it is a primitive, earthy violence which is portrayed, punctuated with screams and short, sharp yells, far removed from the lyrically languorous death-throws of bel canto heroes. If this is all that is required to classify an opera as verismo, then these two works must be seen as classics of the genre.[108]

Finally, it was during the ensuing hubbub following *Pagliacci*'s triumphant world première that a rumor made its way into a number of publications. It was reported that Leoncavallo had composed *Pagliacci* for the competition that Mascagni won with *Cavalleria Rusticana*, but that *Pagliacci* had been disqualified for having two acts, rather than the one for

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[107] Quoted in Matteo Sansone, "The 'Verismo' of Ruggero Leoncavallo: A Source Study of 'Pagliacci'," *Music and Letters*, 70 (1989), 360-1.
[108] Vernon, "Pagliacci."

which the contest called. This story, which circulated for a number of years, was entirely false. As Leoncavallo wrote:

> After the success of "Cavaleria" [*sic*], by Mascagni, I lost all patience, and I shut myself up in sheer desperation, resloved to make a last struggle. In five months I wrote the words and the music of "Pagliacci," which was acquired by M. Sonzogno, after he had only read the libretto, and which Maurel admired so much that he insisted on producing it at Milan on May 17th, 1892.[109] The success of this piece, as is known, was as striking as that of "Cavaleria," [*sic*] and its fame spread like wildfire.[110]

The American Première in New York

Just a little more than a year after its world première in Milan, *Pagliacci* was performed for the first time in the United States, presented by Gustav Hinrichs (1850-1942) and his Philadelphia-based opera company at New York's Grand Opera House on June 15, 1893. With Hinrichs conducting, the cast consisted of Agostino Montegriffo as Canio; Selma Koert-Kronold as Nedda; baritone Giuseppe Campanari as Tonio; tenor Mangioni de Pasquale as Beppe; and baritone Perry Averill as Silvio. The orchestra was small, and worked under a severe time constraint, as the instrumental parts arrived just a few days before the première. Critics noted the flawed production, but were impressed by the artistic merit of Leoncavallo's work:

> Mr. Hinrichs's orchestra is not the smoothest. The chorus has an unusually considerable and picturesque part in "I Pagliacci," and Mr. Hinrichs's chorus in numbers and tunefulness hardly reaches the very moderate ability that the most lenient auditor asks . . . . For the scenery, so much vaunted at the performance of "I Pagliacci" in London, and obviously most essential to its full effect, there was no apology.
>
> . . . And of this music heard so imperfectly what may we fairly say? Its one purpose is to vivify the dramatic significance of the text to its smallest detail, and from first to last it has a measure of dramatic power, not broad and sweeping and transporting, yet moving and convincing. More still, and quite unlike that of "Cavalleria Rusticana" it is full of the telling ironic contrast that the action of the opera continually invites. Only at the end of the first act is there any burst of passion, any potent climax. It is evener music than Mascagni's, made in more scholarly and refined fashion and with far more

[109] This date is incorrect. As noted above, the *Pagliacci* première was on May 21, 1892.
[110] Leoncavallo, "How I Wrote 'Pagliacci'," (Appendix, No. 9).

suggestion with strength in reserve.[111]

Reginald De Koven (1859-1920), himself a respected composer and the music critic for the *Chicago Evening Post*, referred to *Pagliacci* as "most interesting and effective. . . a most fitting companion piece to 'Cavalleria Rusticana,'" and went on to comment:

> The chorus and orchestra were fair; the mise en scene and costumes had evidently seen much previous service. All in all, one is inclined to doubt whether "I Pagliacci" will achieve the immediate popular success obtained by "Cavalleria Rusticana," but there can be no question as to its enduring artistic value and interest.[112]

The Italian-American newspaper, *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, reported on the quality of the singers:

> La Selma Koert Kronold fu una "Nedda" buonissima come cantante, ma esagerata nell'azione drammatica.—Montegriffo ("Canio") non possiede mezzi vocali e scenici per questa tragica parte—ma tuttavia ebbe momenti felici e al finale del 1º atto...
>
> Mangioni De Pasquali—buono nella piccola parte d'Arlecchino—applaudito nella serenata...
>
> Discreta Perry Averill nella parte di Silvio.
>
> Selma Koert Kronold was a very good "Nedda" as a singer, but exaggerated the dramatic action—Montegriffo ("Canio") does not possess the vocal means and drama for this tragic part—but nevertheless had happy moments at the end of Act I...
>
> Mangioni De Pasquali—fine in the small part of Harlequin—was applauded for his serenade...
>
> Perry Averill discreetly played the part of Silvio.[113]

A few days after the New York performance of *Pagliacci*, the Hinrichs Opera Company travelled back to Philadelphia, and presented the work at that city's Grand Opera House on June 18, 1893. The event was an overwhelming triumph, as noted in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*:

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[111] Author and Newspaper Unknown, "Music and Drama. A New Opera; 'I Pagliacci' Performed in New York," June 19, 1893 (Appendix, No. 3).

[112] Reginald De Koven, "'I Pagliacci' Produced," *The Chicago Evening Post*, June 16, 1893 (Appendix, No. 1).

[113] "La Prima del 'Pagliacci' in New York," *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, June 16, 1893, 1 (Appendix, No. 2).

> "I Pagliacci," an opera in subject and treatment strongly resembling "Cavalleria Rusticana," but in most respects superior to Mascagni's famous work, was the attraction which completely tested the capacity of the Grand Opera House last evening in Philadelphia . . .
>
> After a first hearing of "I Pagliacci," even with the drawback of a smaller orchestra than is called for repe by the score, this story becomes altogether creditable. Last evening the work evoked the enthusiasm of the very large and, to a great extent, musically well-informed audience. The applause was frequent and prolonged. Mr. Hinrichs very properly refused to allow any but one encore, and even that should not have been allowed on account of the tense interest and quick action of the opera, but at the close of the performance the participants had their reward, as the principals and Mr. Hinrichs were repeatedly called out and cheered.
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> . . . [Leoncavallo] is an unsurpassed master of orchestral scoring and development, and it requires all the art, experience and resources of the conductor to give a proper interpretation to the melodies and their rapidly changing phrases.[114]

The Metropolitan Opera Première

Pagliacci was performed at the Metropolitan Opera House for the first time on December 11, 1893, paired as a double-bill with Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*. The production, conducted by Luigi Mancinelli (1848-1921) and directed by Armand Castlemary (1834-1897), featured an all-star cast: tenor Fernando De Lucia (1860-1925) as Canio; Nellie Melba (1861-1931) as Nedda; Mario Ancona (1860-1931)—who sang Silvio at the world première in Italy—as Tonio; Pedro Guetary, tenor, as Beppe; and Victor De Gromzeski, baritone, as Silvio.[115] Leoncavallo's work was successful enough to warrant ten performances at the Met that season. W. J. Henderson of *The New York Sun* commented on the quality of the singers at the première:

> The new singers heard in the work [Pagliacci] were Signor de Lucia, tenor, and Signor Ancona, baritone. Both of them achieved great success with the audience, and were compelled to go through the absurd performance of repeating soliloquies.
>
> Signor de Lucia is another tenor with a 'White' voice, which he uses with an exagerated [*sic*] open method. His strength lies in his acting and the emotional force which he puts into his singing. He is certainly an earnest artist, and his work last night, considering the limitations of his voice and vocal method, was expressive and full of

[114] "Leoncavallo's Brilliant Opera 'I Pagliacci' Makes a Big Success at the Grand Opera House," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 27, 1893 (Appendix, No. 4).

[115] The cast for *Orfeo ed Euridice* was Sofia Scalchi (Orfeo), Virginia Colombati (Euridice), and Mathilde Bauermeister (Amor). Enrico Bevignani was the conductor.

> effect.
>
> Signor Ancona has a light baritone voice of good compass and carrying power, but of rather reedy quality. He sings with a good deal of feeling and with no little breadth of style. It must be said that, althought [*sic*] the role of Tonio has been better done in New York, Signor Ancona gave every promise of being the most useful in the company.
>
> Mme. Melba was the Nedda. The part is far from being favorable to the display of her best qualities as a singer. She is a lyric, not a dramatic, soprano, and Nedda is a role that requires for its proper interpretation a singer who is a most accomplished actress, with a range extending from comedy to tragedy. The ballatella in the first act is the only number in which Mme. Melba was at her best.[116]

Regarding the same performance, *Il Progresso Italo-Americano* noted the fine interpretation of *Orfeo ed Euridice*, and went on to discuss *Pagliacci*:

. . .che furono tutto un trionfo per l'autore, pel direttore, per gli esecutore; trionfo completo e, sopratutto, trionfo sincere e merita.[117]	. . .it was a triumph for the author, for the director, for the executors; a complete triumph, and above all, a triumph sincere and deserved.

Far more interesting, however, was the Met's first pairing of *Pagliacci* with *Cavalleria Rusticana* on December 22, 1893. The *Pagliacci* cast remained the same, while the *Cavalleria* singers included soprano Emma Calvè (1858-1942) as Santuzza; tenor Francesco Vignas[118] (1863-1937) as Turiddu; baritone Eugène Dufriche as Alfio; mezzo-soprano Olimpia Guercia as Lola; and soprano Mathilde Bauermeister (1849-1926) as Mamma Lucia. Enrico Bevignani (1841-1903) conducted the Mascagni opera. Melba and Calvé were two of opera's most acclaimed stars of the day, and the critics and public were eager to compare the two singers on the same evening. Unfortunately, Madame Melba suffered from hoarseness during this performance, so much so that the management made an apology after the orchestral intermezzo, but she sang the part of Nedda as best she could under the circumstances. *The New York Times* reported the following:

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[116] http://66.187.153.86/archives/frame.htm.
[117] "I 'Pagliacci' alla Metropolitan Opera House," *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, 1 (Appendix, No. 5).
[118] Born Francisco Viñas, in Barcelona, Spain.

> The Metropolitan Opera House was crowded against [*sic*] last night, when what is known as a "double bill" was given.
>
> . . . Mme. Melba was in poor voice, the result of her recent indisposition. An apology was made to the audience in her behalf at the end of the first act. In view of this, it would be unfair to make any comment on her performance. Signor de Lucia is at his best in the role of Canio. He acts it with a fine intelligence and with a wonderful variety of expression. His singing, too, while not free from vocal faults, is of a strong dramatic character. He aroused a great deal of enthusiasm last night. Signor Ancona repeated his good performance of Tonio, and had to repeat the prologue as usual.
>
> In "Cavalleria Rusticana" Mme. Calvi's [*sic*] strong impersonation of Santuzza was again the most interesting feature. . . .The effect of bringing the two operas together in one night was good.[119]

Another New York critic (newspaper unknown) commented on the same performance:

> Unfortunately Mme. Melba's indisposition from hoarseness, for which an apology was made before the second Pagliacci act, cast something of a damper on the evening's pleasure.
>
> Rather than disappoint the audience, however, the lady with the silvery voice consented to appear. Nothing surely could have been kinder or more considerate, and the artist is deserving of both the public and management's recognition. So absolute a mistress of the vocal art, however, is Mme. Melba that only those who had heard her on former occasions could have noticed a change in the singer's powers. Mme. Melba really sings better when she is ill than others do when they are in the most robust of health.[120]

The Metropolitan's double-bill of *Pagliacci* and *Cavalleria Rusticana* was an unqualified success with audience and critics, although the unknown journalist just cited commented, "Indeed I could never for a moment understand why people protested in favor of Leoncavallo's work." Cheers after Canio's "Vesti la giubba" became so frenetic that Maestro Mancinelli had no choice but to repeat the scene. Critical reception centered on a comparison of the two operas. For the most part, reviewers gave the edge to Mascagni's work, but could not deny the musical and dramatic impact of *Pagliacci*:

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[119] "Two Short Operas Sung; 'Pagliacci' and 'Cavalleria Rusticana' Delight a Large Audience," *The New York Times*, December 23, 1893 (Appendix, No. 7).

[120] Author and Newspaper Unknown, "Opera's Striking Double Bill," New York, December 23, 1893 (Appendix, No. 6).

> To my thinking it simply represents the acme of cleverness in operatic composition. It is full of the modern spirit, to be sure; it is exciting enough both in a musical and dramatic sense, it is well written and well made . . .[121]

The first Metropolitan Opera performances featured *Pagliacci* in the first half of the program, *Cavalleria* in the second. This arrangement was later reversed and remains the standard order in opera houses throughout the world to this day. We should note, though, that *Pagliacci* has sometimes been coupled with other operas as well, especially in more recent years. Puccini's *Suor Angelica* and *Il Tabarro* (themselves part of a trilogy of one-acters) and Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel* have also been effective partners for *Pagliacci*.

Several years later, Leoncavallo took part in a seemingly harmless prank that nevertheless came back to haunt him. A number of newspapers, including the *Detroit News-Tribune,* described this lighthearted episode:

> Leoncavallo recounts an amusing incident that befell him some time ago in a theatre in Manchester, England, where he occupied a stall one evening to hear the performance of his "Pagliacci." At the end, a stranger, sitting next to him kept exclaiming enthusiastically, "What a perfect masterpiece!" Leoncavallo, imagining himself utterly unknown in the audience, began to play the critic of his own work, and chimed in ironically, "A masterpiece? I don't in the least agree with you. I'm a musician myself, so know what I'm talking about. The fact is, this opera is a worthless piece, and brimful of imitations and plagiarisms. For instance, the Cavatina is filched bodily from Berlioz, the duet in the first act is all Gounod, while the finale is a sorry copy of one you will find in Verdi." Next morning Leoncavallo drove to the railway station and bought a paper. Comfortably seating himself in the train, he opened it and was astonished to find the following headlines: "Signor Leoncavallo's Opinions on 'Pagliacci.' Declaration of Plagiarism, Confession of a Composer Bereft of All Originality." "Evidently," Leoncavallo now says, "my neighbor was a journalist who had dogged me, but to this day I have cold shivers every time I recall the incident."[122]

In 1936, Gabriel Wells of New York purchased the original manuscript of *Pagliacci*, obtaining it from the son of Leoncavallo's publisher. The *New York Herald Tribune* announced

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[121] "Opera's Striking Double Bill" (Appendix, No. 6).
[122] "One on Leoncavallo," *Detroit News-Tribune*, May 29, 1910 (Appendix, No. 80).

the transaction:

> Gabriel Wells, of 145 West Fifty-seventh Street, dealer in rare books and manuscripts, announced yesterday that he had bought the original autograph manuscript of Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo's famous grand opera, "Pagliacci." The sale was completed on Saturday, he said.
>
> The manuscript, which is now at Mr. Wells's office, is written entirely in the composer's hand, on 179 large folio sheets of heavy ruled music paper, with violet ink. It is bound in an imperial folio volume, with cloth back and marbled board sides, and the edges entirely uncut. It bears Leoncavallo's signature in five places. It is complete and perfect, the only repair being a mended corner of pages 293 and 294, which does not affect the text.
>
> It consists of a Title-page; Prologue, with a copyright authentication, 39 pages; Intermezzo, following page 206, 12 unnumbered pages (3 blank); Text, including the libretti and score, 304 pages, plus one page with the copyright authentication.
>
> The front cover bears the printed label of the publisher of the score: "Stabilimento dell' Editore Edoardo Sonzogno in Milano. Musica del Maestro R. Leoncavallo. Grande Partitura (Autografo).[123]

To this day, *Pagliacci* has remained a staple of opera in New York. Its popularity is in no imminent danger of waning, either there or anywhere else in the world.

[123] "A N.Y. Collector Buys Original Ms. of 'Pagliacci'," *New York Herald-Tribune*, April 9, 1936 (Appendix, No. 98). The manuscript of *Pagliacci* is now at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.

CHAPTER IV. OTHER OPERAS IN NEW YORK: *LA BOHÈME*, *ZAZÀ*, AND *EDIPO RE*

La Bohème

Some background

Shortly after the enormous success of *Pagliacci* in 1892, Leoncavallo had the idea of writing a libretto based on Henri Murger's *Scènes de la Vie de Bohème.* He met in a café with his good friend Puccini, where they discussed collaborating on the opera, with Puccini as composer. After outlining some basic ideas, Puccini decided he was not interested in the project, and so Leoncavallo, realizing the operatic potential of Murger's story, decided to write the opera himself.[124] Leoncavallo had very high scruples when it came to choosing his subjects, as shown in this undated letter to Massenet (probably written in the early 1900's):

> My dear Master and Friend,
>
> Some amazing news has been circulating in the Italian newspapers. They announce that Puccini is about to set to music *Cyrano de Bergerac*!
>
> I must confess to you that two years ago I had the idea of securing this play for myself; however my friends in Paris informed me that other composers, in particular you, had made an effort to get *Cyrano*, and that Rostand had replied rather cavalierly *that his verses contained enough music already*.
>
> Consequently I have not dared to ask for the play. Nevertheless, in the meantime, when I was Paris for a performance of *La Bohème*, I spoke with Coquelin about this matter, and he confirmed that Rostand is absolutely opposed to having *Cyrano* set to music. I believe that Puccini has launched this news and is endeavoring to get the play; but it is not true that *he* succeeded in doing so, for it would be absurd to refuse it **to you** in order to give it *to him! ! !*
>
> If you could give me some information about this matter, I should be very grateful to you.
>
> A thousand good wishes for the New Year.
>
> Your sincere admirer,
> R. Leoncavallo[125]

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[124] Surprisingly enough, the usually astute Boito had renounced *Scenes de la Vie de Bohème* as a "banal theme."

[125] Arthur Holde, "A Little-known Letter by Berlioz and Unpublished Letters by Cherubini, Leoncavallo and Hugo Wolf," *The Musical Quarterly*, 37 (1951), 350-1.

What ensued between Leoncavallo and Puccini with respect to *La Bohème* is well known. Puccini chose to write the opera on his own, Leoncavallo was incensed, and both composers worked simultaneously toward their respective premières. News of the "competition" spread throughout Europe, inspiring this rather snide comment by Debussy:

> Has anybody noticed their [Italian composers'] curious need to borrow French subjects of already established fame? . . . . MM. Puccini and Leoncavallo are both setting *La Vie de Bohème* to music. It is not my place to pass judgment on the literary merit of these two works, but they do represent a period that was particularly sentimental in France, and they could certainly do without being tarted up in music.[126]

Puccini's *La Bohème* premiered on February 1, 1896, at the Teatro Regio in Turin, with Arturo Toscanini conducting. The audience was unenthusiastic, and the notices of the critics read like obituaries, dismissing the work as "empty and puerile," and citing a lack of progress in comparison with his previous opera, *Manon Lescaut*.[127] It was received tepidly at its Rome première as well. Leoncavallo's *La Bohème* was first presented at the Teatro La Fenice in Venice on May 6, 1897, with Rosina Storchio (1876-1945) as Mimì;[128] Lison Frandin (1854-1911) as Musette; and Umberto Beduschi as Marcello, conducted by Alessandro Pome (1853-1934). It enjoyed an outstanding triumph, and Leoncavallo felt vindicated by his apparent victory over Puccini, and especially for proving himself once again after the sensational reception of *Pagliacci*. Enrico Caruso, then just at the beginning of his career, was contracted by Sonzogno for the part of Marcello at the Teatro Carlo Felice in Genoa. At first the tenor was disappointed: he had not heard Leoncavallo's *La Bohème*, but loved the character of Rodolfo in Puccini's work. At any rate, he learned and performed Leoncavallo's Marcello, and was

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[126] François Lesure, *Debussy on Music* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1971), 119.
[127] Stanley Jackson, *Caruso* (New York: Stein and Day, 1972), 35-6.
[128] Rosina Storchio sang the title role in Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* at its disastrous world première at La Scala, Milan, on February 17, 1904.

eventually won over by it (Leoncavallo reverses Puccini's tenor/Rodolfo and baritone/Marcello). Caruso went on to sing the role several times (in both Genoa and Milan) with such passion and finesse that the composer once dashed on stage and kissed him.[129]

A particularly interesting incident occurred during the Vienna Opera's premiere of *La Bohème* in February 1898. Gustav Mahler (1860-1911) was the conductor, and was not pleased to have inherited this task from Wilhelm Jahn (1834-1900), the previous maestro. Leoncavallo heard about Mahler's unenthusiastic view of *La Bohème,* and this sparked a feud between the two composers long before rehearsals even got started.[130] Nevertheless, Leoncavallo's version was quite successful in Vienna (although critics found fault with the first two acts), and received six performances.

Despite the initial acceptance of Leoncavallo's *La Bohème,* it was quickly overshadowed by Puccini's opera, and eventually faded from the repertory. In an effort to differentiate it from its more successful rival opera, Leoncavallo revised his work in 1913 with a new title, *Mimì Pinson,* and this version was introduced at the Teatro Massimo in Palermo (one of the few Sicilian premieres of any opera).[131] To the composer's dismay, it received a mere four performances. Since that time, Leoncavallo's *La Bohème* has been performed only sporadically, but has sparked recent interest.

The American première in New York

Although Americans had heard selected arias from Leoncavallo's *La Bohème* during his 1906 tour, the complete opera—rather incredibly—was not heard in the United States until

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[129] Jackson, *Caruso,* 55.
[130] On the Mahler-Leoncavallo feud, see Henry-Louis de La Grange, *Mahler* (New York: Doubleday, 1973), 467-70.
[131] Spike Hughes, *Great Opera Houses* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1956), 139.

January 31, 1960, when it was performed in concert version by the Opera Guide Theatre Company at Columbia University's McMillin Theatre (with Pasquale Rubino conducting two pianists in place of an orchestra) as a benefit for the endowment fund of Columbia's Casa Italiana. The audience included such distinguished artists as Licia Albanese (b. 1913), Giovanni Martinelli (1885-1969), Stella Roman (1904-1992), and Salvatore Baccaloni (1899-1969). On the other hand the cast of singers were a mix of professionals and amateurs, and there were some ragged edges throughout the performance. Nevertheless, the opera made a favorable impression. As Ross Parmenter commented in *The New York Times* the following day:

> It should not be its last [performance]. As one might expect from a work by the composer of "Pagliacci," it brims with melodies. Its high spirits are genuine. The libretto, written by the composer himself, is a good one. And even though it, too, draws from Murger's novel, it differs sufficiently from the rival opera by Puccini.
>
> . . . Familiarity with the Puccini work added to the interest of last night's performance. At first one had the odd feeling that it lacked its first act, for it opens at the Cafe Momus. But then one realized such an act was not necessary here. Mimi and Rodolfo are not the chief lovers. Musette and Marcello are.
>
> . . . This shift of focus makes all the difference. The opera does not have the sad sweet sentiment of the Mimi-Rodolfo affair. Instead, it has the more cynical light-heartedness of Marcello and Musette, even though Marcello is made a little more romantic by being made a tenor. Only in the last act —the death of Mimi—do the two plots coincide.
>
> . . . With only two pianos in place of an orchestra and a company not wholly professional, the production only gave a rough idea of the work. But it was vivid enough to arouse gratitude. And some of the singers, especially Jerome Lo Monaco, the tenor who sang Marcello; Domenic Simeone, the bass-baritone who sang Schaunard, and Keith Cota, who doubled as Colline and Viscount Paolo, had sonorously impressive voices.[132]

The performance generated enough interest to inspire a second hearing on October 22, 1960, again at Columbia University, mainly with the same musicians. Only eleven years later would New York hear Leoncavallo's *La Bohème* again. On March 31, 1971, the Metropolitan Opera Studio collaborated with the National Orchestral Association for a concert version with orchestra at Carnegie Hall.[133] Leon Barzin conducted the performance; Carole Farley, soprano,

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[132] Ross Parmenter, "Another 'Bohème' Makes U. S. Debut": *The New York Times*, February 1, 1960 (Appendix, No. 99).

sang the role of Mimì; Melvin Brown, tenor, was Marcello; Theresa Treadwell-Carroll, mezzo-soprano, was Musette; and Brent Ellis, baritone, was Rodolfo. *The New York Times* noted the following the next day:

> Leoncavallo's "La Bohème"? A misprint, surely. But no; as opera students know from books and even from records, Puccini's version of Parisian garret life, circa 1837, is not the only one. Still, who knows the Leoncavallo first hand, as a staged work? Until the Metropolitan Opera Studio and the National Orchestral Association collaborated on a concert presentation on Tuesday night at Carnegie Hall, there seemed to be no record of even a concert performance here with orchestra.
>
> . . . "La Bohème" went from tune to tune in a simple-minded but meltingly lyric way. One heard some Verdi, some Boito, A Massenet-like canzonetta—Bach even managed to insinuate himself, in the first-act Cafe Momus scene. But with an affecting duet for Mimi and Musette in Act III, the score turned suddenly darker and more poignant.
>
> . . . All in all, a most interesting night, and one that must have led many listeners to wonder why there is not room for two "La Bohèmes" in this world.[134]

Yet another concert version of the opera followed on January 22, 1984, this one presented by the Mondo Lirico Opera Company and the Bronx Arts Ensemble at Alice Tully Hall. Thomas Booth conducted the performance,[135] which was reviewed by Bernard Holland of *The New York Times* on January 24:

> Sunday's performance, a concert version by the newborn Mondo Lirico Opera Company, perhaps served as a valid complaint against the neglect of the Leoncavallo opera, but in no way did it make us forget Puccini.
>
> . . . Both operas are based on Henry Murger's book "Scenes of Bohemian Life," and most of the characters and some of the plot are shared by the two operas. Leoncavallo's is in four acts and the distribution of voices differs from Puccini's. Rodolfo is a baritone, and it is Marcello, a tenore, who assumes the juiciest music. Mimi is again a soprano, but Musette, who takes a larger major role in the Leoncavallo version, is a mezzo-soprano. Some of the music is very lovely. One comes away remembering the rippling orchestral music of Act II, the music of Mimi and Musette in Act III and Rodolfo's strong moments at the end.
>
> . . . There was a big audience at Tully Hall to hear it all, and it was an enthusiastic

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[133] Leoncavallo's opera was preceded by Beethoven's Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 61, with Joseph Fuchs as soloist.

[134] Doral Henahan, "At Carnegie Hall, That Other 'Bohème'," *The New York Times*, April 1, 1971 (Appendix, No. 102).

[135] The cast included Elaine Malbin (Mimì); Natasha Lutov (Musette); Mario Fusco (Marcello); Abe Polakoff (Rodolfo); and Domenico Simeone (Schaunard).

one.[136]

Only on March 26, 1977, did the New York Grand Opera (with Vincent DeSelva conducting) present New York's first fully staged version of the opera. Recently, though, it has gained international attention, with productions by the English National Opera in 2000, Vienna's Klangbogen Festival in 2002, and the Prague Opera in 2003 (the first performance there since 1898), while the New York Grand Opera presented it once again in 2003.

Zazà

Some background

With the relative success of *La Bohème* behind him, Leoncavallo set out on his next project. The dramas of the contemporary French playwrights were all the rage at the time, and the young Italian opera composers were quick to seize the opportunity to set these works to music with the hopes of capitalizing on the latest fashion of the day. These plays were often written for specific great actresses such as Sarah Bernhardt (1844-1923) and Gabrielle Réjane (1856-1920), and while critics disdained the artistic merits of the works, public approval was sensational, and the plays gave rise to such operas as Puccini's *Tosca*, Cilea's *Adriana Lecouvreur*, and Giordano's *Fedora*.

Leoncavallo recognized the dramatic possibilities in a play by Pierre Berton and Charles Simon, *Zazà*, which premièred in 1898. The tale was nothing more than a crude little love story, but the production was a triumph thanks to Gabrielle Réjane, who became known as "the actress who makes bad plays good."[137] Berton and Simon's work proved immensely popular throughout

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[136] Bernard Holland, "Opera: Other 'Bohème'," *The New York Times*, January 24, 1984 (Appendix, No. 103).

[137] Robert Connolly, "Leoncavallo's Zazà," 1; see the notes that accompany the recording on MRF-176-S (1978).

Europe and the United States. Adapted for the American stage by David Belasco (1853-1931) in 1899, it made its way to New York that year.

Leoncavallo's *Zazà* was premiered at the Teatro Lirico in Milan, on November 10, 1900, with Arturo Toscanini conducting a cast with Rosina Storchio, soprano, as Zazà; Edoardo Garbin (1866-1943), tenor, as Milio Dufresne; Mario Sammarco (1867-1930), baritone, as Cascart; and Clorinda Pini-Corsi, mezzo-soprano, as Anaïde. Critics applauded Leoncavallo's effort, and the opera quickly made its way to virtually all the major European opera houses, its success seemingly assured. Even Gabriel Faurè (1845-1924), one of the most vociferous opponents of the young Italian composers, could not hide his admiration for *Zazà*:

> The success of *Zazà* . . . from the pen of Leoncavallo himself—is now recognized throughout the world by more than 500 performances.
>
> . . . As a character of the play expresses: 'art, my friend, is what makes laughter'. Here is what explains the brilliant career of *Zazà*. The happy, comical, vibrating music of *Zazà* satisfies, as a matter of fact, this important part of the audience which longs to be entertained, over all.
>
> The atmosphere created by Maestro Leoncavallo confirms once again that the verismo school (truth) is especially propitious toward funny scenes, humorous, fanciful dialogues . . . the smart, playful scherzos, rhythms of the lively and slow waltzes, light melodies—and indeed, choral sections, hitting of sticks, clinking of glasses, fugal parodies—these comic musical effects pleasantly graze the score of *Zazà*.
>
> . . . The interpreters of *Zazà* were excellent. They performed with the appropriate verve and high spirits that were needed. [138]

Zazà in North America

Zazà soon made its way to the United States: its American première took place at the Tivoli Opera House in San Francisco on November 27, 1903. On January 10, 1913, it was introduced at His Majesty's Theater in Montreal (this performance preceded Leoncavallo's 1913 American tour by several months), and, owing to its popularity with the general public, eventually made its way into the cinema with two films (both titled *Zazà*): a silent movie

[138] Gabriel Faurè, "Leoncavallo," *Opinions Musicales* (Paris: Rieder, 1930), 65.

starring Gloria Swanson (1897-1983) in 1923, and another, in 1939, with Claudette Colbert (1903-1996).[139]

New York première at Metropolitan Opera

On January 16, 1920 (five months after Leoncavallo's death), the Metropolitan Opera presented *Zazà*, with the legendary Geraldine Farrar (1882-1967) in the title role, and with tenor Giulio Crimi (1885-1939) as Dufresne; Pasquale Amato (1878-1942), baritone, as Cascart; and Kathleen Howard (1873-1956), mezzo-soprano, as Anaïde. Notwithstanding all of Farrar's previous accomplishments—she was a favorite of both Puccini and Leoncavallo (she sang the role of Eva at the world première of Leoncavallo's *Der Roland von Berlin* in 1904)—*Zazà* turned out to be her greatest success; it was also a huge triumph for the Metropolitan. While the New York critics were hesitant to praise the artistic merits of *Zazà*, they all agreed that the work was quite theatrically effective. Richard Aldrich of the *The New York Times* wrote:

> The part is very well adapted to [Farrar's] powers . . . but more important still is the way it suits the extremes of her temperamental qualities as an actress, the gayety [*sic*] and recklessness of the singer in her element in the unbridled freedom of the coulisses, the amorous passion, the oppression of grief in the later scenes, in all of which she gives a forcible and sympathetic portrayal.[140]

The critic from *The New York Sun*, W. J. Henderson, also commented on the Met première of *Zazà*:

> [*Zazà*] has a record of failure. It may have been the eagle eye of Mr. Gatti-Casazza, but more likely was that of the eminent Mr. Lou Tellegen, which perceived in it the possibilities to be expanded into realities by the charm of Geraldine Farrar. But no matter how the opera came to be chosen for production at the Metropolitan, the fact was clear last evening that the magic kiss of Miss Farrar had awakened it from a long sleep.
>
> . . .But not till last evening did Miss Farrar emerge into the glare of the footlights as the real siren. Never before did she reach the abandon of the creature of

[139] Connolly, "Leoncavallo's Zazà," 2.
[140] Cited after Connolly, "Leoncavallo's Zazà," 3.

> absolutely uncontrolled passion. In the opera of Leoncavallo she has found her opportunity.
>
> . . . Zazà's sentimentalizing in the first scene about her bulbous mother makes the first appeal to Mr. Leoncavallo's lyric muse, which, however, finds something more important in the rapturous provision of Dufresne of his facile descent into the arms of Zazà. The second act affords less opportunity for the spreading of the wings of song of which Mendelssohn wrote so tenderly, but in the third there is room, and to spare. In politely agitated cantilena Dufresne apostrophizes his desk, which is littered like his heart. Later comes the well-remembered scene between Zazà and the child. Ah, the child! What would the emotional drama be without the precocious juvenile actress? Well, there was but one solution, to let the child speak its lines while the orchestra played suppressed sob music in a sort of suffocated whisper.
>
> In the fourth act Leoncavallo almost reached the heart of the situation in his setting of the passionate outbreak of the faithful but neglected Cascart, an opportunity of which Mr. Amato made apt use and with which he stirred his hearers. The duet between Dufresne and Zazà is written by a practiced hand, but for the matter of that one can say the same of the entire score. There is even a love theme-such a dear acquaintance-which wends its way from scene to scene and sighs its mellifulous [*sic*] life away over the corpse of exhausted passion.[141]

It was especially during Farrar's reign as Zazà that the phenomenon known as the "Gerryflappers" became most prominent. The "Gerryflappers" were a group of teenage girls who frequented Farrar's performances, screaming and cheering loudly at all of her entrances and arias. Farrar's portrayal of Zazà created somewhat of a scandal, especially as she dressed and undressed on stage, inciting the feverish excitement of the "Gerryflappers." Greg Sandow discussed the "Gerryflappers" in a recent internet article:

> Farrar had teenaged girl fans who came to be called "Gerryflappers," and [who would] flock to the Met to see her perform. When she retired from the Met, these fans unfurled banners, cheered, wept, and followed Farrar's "flower-laden, open limousine" up Broadway.
>
> . . . Was this good for classical music? Absolutely. Intellectuals—or, more simply, people listening to Stravinsky and Schoenberg—probably didn't care for Farrar and her Gerryflappers. But the existence of such things meant, once more, that classical music was important to our culture, and that intellectuals were listening to its intellectual repertoire, instead of mostly ignoring it . . .[142]

The box-office success of *Zazà* at the Metropolitan Opera exceeded all expectations, so

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[141] http://66.187.153.86/archives/frame.htm.

[142] http://www.artsjournal.com/sandow/2006/07/popular_classical_music.html.

much so that it was repeated during the 1921-22 season to sold-out audiences, again with Farrar as the heroine. As usual with Leoncavallo's works, critics were hesitant to praise the musical values of *Zazà*, but could not deny its public appeal:

> There was a repetition of the season's so far most popular novelty at the Metropolitan last night. It is easy to understand the vogue of "Zaza" and for the pessimistically minded to appreciate that music matters little—especially in opera. "Zaza" has too many tricks of the trade–and most of them feminine–to fail of at least a couple of years of success.
>
> Leoncavallo's score to the old Parisian play was more cordially received here than even in its home country. The composer always complained of having no one suitable to sing, and principally act, the title role. . . . But after his sad experiences with America the immediate welcome given "Zaza" might have warmed his old Pagliaccian heart to a kindlier memory of things cis-Atlantic.
>
> The play of "Zaza" lends all its little piquancies, shrewd vulgarities, sobs and snickers to the opera. If the music be coarse of texture, slobbering of melody, it is an excellent reflection of the play. Theatrics stalk about in foolish fleshlings, and the same theme which Tchekov handled so magnificently in a short story of only a few pages is pulled out into lengths of taffy and flavored with little *Toto* (which, as all soldiers know, means something else again!). "Zaza" rules the year—but such is the kingdom of opera.[143]

Farrar herself had great fun singing Zazà. It was, in fact, this opera in which she made her final appearance at the Metropolitan Opera in 1922 (she performed it again on the West Coast a few years later). Yet with all the success that *Zazà* enjoyed in the early 1920s, it has never again been given at the Metropolitan.

Finally, though productions in the United States are sporadic, *Zazà* has made a favorable impact on American audiences and critics in recent years, as witness John Rockwell's *New York Times* review of a Cincinnati Opera performance in 1985:

> Leoncavallo had a melodic gift, and his orchestrations had color and invention. Better still, he was in easy command of a post-Wagnerian style that flowed fluently between recitative and aria. There are discrete "numbers," but they arise naturally from the conversational ebb and flow; indeed, most of the score consists of just such a crisscross of conversation, with no ballets, little purely instrumental music and just one offstage women's chorus.
>
> What dates this opera - and what would probably still make it succeed, in the right circumstances - is its melodrama.
>
> . . . "Zazà" is the story of a music-hall singer who loves a man she discovers to

[143] "'Zaza' at Metropolitan," *The New York Sun*, March 19, 1922 (Appendix, No. 97).

> be married, and whom she leaves. The drama is pure pulp, suffused with sentimentality and a bourgeois morality that, of course, the courtesan is seen ultimately to uphold more honorably than the gentleman.
>
> However, Leoncavallo was clever enough to provide scenes of real variety and range for his star - risque sensuality in the first act; ecstatic contentment in the second; tear-jerking corn in the third; rage, pathos and despair at the end. No wonder [Geraldine] Farrar doted on it. [144]

Zazà made its most recent New York appearance on November 12, 2005, at Alice Tully Hall, in a concert version featuring Aprile Millo in the title role. It marked the first New York performance in eighty-three years.

Edipo Re

Some background

Leoncavallo began work on his final opera, *Edipo Re*, shortly before his death in 1919. This time he did not write his own libretto, a task that went to Giovacchino Forzano (1884-1970), who adapted and translated Sophocles' text of *Oedipus Rex* (or *Oedipus Tyrannus*).[145] The title role was created specifically for Leoncavallo's friend, the great baritone Titta Ruffo (1877-1953). Surprisingly, Leoncavallo was the first composer ever to write an opera based on this mighty drama. At the end of his career, he appeared to have regained some of his youthful enthusiasm for grand subjects**.** As John Klein noted:

> Leoncavallo's last opera is surely the strangest of swan-songs on the part of a man who for years had pandered to vulgar tastes. Monotonous and declamatory it no doubt frequently is: yet it is also pathetically sincere and not without a touch of nobility. In fact, it is a relief to observe how far removed it is from such catchpenny titles as *Are you there?* or *Lend me your wife*.[146]

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[144] John Rockwell, "'Zazà' at Cincinnati Opera," *The New York Times*, April 19, 1985 (Appendix, No, 104).

[145] Forzano also wrote the libretti for Puccini's *Suor Angelica* and *Gianni Schicchi*, as well as Mascagni's *Lodoletta* and *Il Piccolo Marat*.

[146] John W. Klein, "Ruggiero Leoncavallo (1858-1919)," *Opera* 9 (1958): 235.

Leoncavallo died before finishing the work, and *Edipo Re* was completed by his pupil Giovanni Pennacchio. Ruffo assured Leoncavallo's widow, Berthe, that the one-act opera would be heard, and he made good on his promise by arranging two performances for the Chicago Opera Company and another in New York. Thus Chicago was the site of the only American world première, albeit a posthumous one, of a Leoncavallo opera. Sharing a double-bill with Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*, *Edipo Re* opened at the Auditorium in Chicago on December 13, 1920, with Ruffo as Edipo and soprano Dorothy Francis as Giocasta. The applause was more than generous, especially for Ruffo, and the performance was recounted the next day in the *Chicago Daily Tribune*:

> Yes, last evening Titta Ruffo, with his blood-stained face and red smeared hands, as he took his uncountable curtain calls and bowed with a little blind faltering to the storming applause, had made us believe that Leoncavallo had written a gory if at times a trifle conventional masterpiece.
>
> There is little space for detailed commentary on the musical score, but one remarkably built, orchestral climax should be mentioned—the one when Edipo and Gioasta [*sic*] flee shrieking, horror-stricken, and the chorus surges on the stage. Remarkable because of the unbelievable simplicity of the means employed to create an unforgettable moment of symphonic tension. It accomplished this tense, nerve lashed, melodramatic moment by merely sweeping into an almost trite hurly-burly which ended in a martial rhythm that dangerously neared the tawdry, which in turn slipped into the quiet hymn-like melody that precedes the dreary aria of the blinded king.
>
> But no matter how your brain says coldly, "Old stuff. That is thus, and so and so and thus," your nerves quiver and respond as much as if Leoncavallo had discovered some miraculous new combination of musical sounds. The inescapable dramatic effect is there.
>
> And after all, isn't that the important thing?[147]

The journalist went on to criticize Miss Francis's vocal quality, but praised the rest of the cast and especially the magnificent staging. Indeed, the success of *Edipo Re* in Chicago was strong enough to warrant a previously unplanned third performance at the Auditorium.

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[147] Ruth Miller, "Leoncavallo's Last Opera Receives Its World Premier Here," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 21, 1920, 21 (Appendix, No. 95).

The New York première

The New York première of *Edipo Re* was held at the Manhattan Opera House, on February 21, 1921.[148] Leoncavallo's opera shared the program with Camille Saint-Saëns' *Danse Macabre* and Ponchielli's "Dance of the Hours" (from *La Gioconda*), both arranged as ballets by Andreas Pavley and Serge Oukrainsky, who both danced in the productions.[149] A large audience assembled for the première, which was performed by the cast from the Chicago Opera Company, and conducted by Gino Marinuzzi (1882-1945). Richard Aldrich of *The New York Times* reviewed it on February 22:

> The music with which Leoncavallo has attempted to interpret [Sophocles' tragedy] is by turns commonplace, bombastic, rhetorical and freely amiable. He has tried in vain to mold his phrases on a large scale: to lift himself above the "pleasing" level that is so familiar to opera-goers of this day. He uses an arioso style for the voices that occasionally takes on a more melodic mold.
>
> In the orchestra the composer's impotence to express his subject is clearly shown. There is not much of matter nor of style, and the orchestration itself rarely rises above the commonplace. There is a singular lack in this music of the baleful atmosphere, of the vague premonition of doom that envelops the opera, of definite characterization of the personages, of potent exposition of the emotional crises. At the very climax the music says perhaps least.
>
> No wonder the opera is considered as almost a personal bequest to Mr. Ruffo. There is hardly an opera that is more a "one man" opera than this. Oedipus is constantly on the stage and sings about as much as all the other characters put together. The music lies in the best ranges of Mr. Ruffo's voice and he sang it last evening with unceasing and unmodulated power.[150]

Many seemed to have forgotten about Leoncavallo. Even *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*

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[148] The Manhattan Opera House, at 311 West 34th Street, was built in 1906, and became something of a rival to the Metropolitan Opera House. Oscar Hammerstein I was the mastermind behind the 3,100-seat venue, designed by architects J. B. McElfatrick & Son. Its opening night featured Bellini's *I Puritani*, with tenor Alessandro Bonci (1879-1940), Caruso's chief rival, singing the demanding role of Arturo. Otto Kahn and the Metropolitan Opera eventually bought out Hammerstein in 1911, and the theatre was used for a variety of musical productions, including Broadway shows. The venue still stands today as the Manhattan Center, which mainly houses a number of corporate functions.

[149] Martin Meyer, *The Met: One Hundred Years of Grand Opera in New York* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983), 50.

[150] Richard Aldrich, "Leoncavallo's Edipo Re," *The New York Times*, February 22, 1921, 19 (Appendix, No. 96).

(which had been so enthusiastic about his visit in 1906) largely ignored the New York première of *Edipo Re*. Though the newspaper printed a small announcement preceding the début (along with the rest of the operas at the Manhattan Opera House), there was no review or article afterward. The opera was not destined for popularity. Although Ruffo, who scored a personal triumph as Edipo in New York with critics and public alike, fought hard for additional performances of the opera—and his efforts were strong enough for the Metropolitan Opera to consider mounting a new production in 1929—the plans fell through (as did a similar idea for a 1931 performance at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires), and *Edipo Re* fell into oblivion. Not until October 13, 1939, did it receive its Italian première on an EIAR broadcast.[151] Another nineteen years would pass before the opera was resurrected by the Scuola di Arte Scenica dell'Accademia Chigiana in September 1958, as part of a celebration honoring the centennial of Leoncavallo's birth.[152] (The confusion surrounding his birthdate still existed at that time.) After a handful of performances in Switzerland, Germany, and Czechoslovakia in the 1960s, *Edipo Re* was heard once again in Italy, at the Teatro San Carlo in Naples on May 23, 1970 (Leoncavallo's actual birthday), with Armando La Rosa Parodi conducting. The cast included Giulio Fioravanti (1922-1999) as Edipo, Luisa Malagrida (b. 1923) as Giocasta, and Luigi Infantino (1921-1990) as Creonte, and the performance was recorded and issued along with *Zingari* (from a 1975 live production in Turin). Though present-day performances of *Edipo Re* are rare, the opera recently shared a double-bill with Dallapiccola's *Il Prigionero* at the Teatro Regio in Turin on May 15, 2002, with Renato Bruson in the title role. Juliet Giraldi wrote about the event in *Opera Now*:

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[151]http://books.google.com/books?id=En3QYRnApqMC&pg=PA94&lpg=PA94&dq=edipo+re+teatro+san+carlo+1958&source=web&ots=4wIHkhAfzm&sig=WOgzhLw4eEcufh4NPu5pxpVCXUg#PPA94,M1.

[152] The exact date of this production (incorrectly advertised at the time as the Italian première of *Edipo Re*) in September 1958 is unknown.

In the Turin production [Fabio] Sparvoli had preferred a traditional setting in ancient Thebes, using a descending ceiling and a reddening sky to represent the climax of the tragedy. Alessandra Torella had created some striking costumes, especially those of Giocasta and her handmaidens. Renato Bruson brought all his expertise to the title role, which was new to him, and he was supported by the very pleasant tenor of Ezio di Cesare (the gaoler in *Il prigionero*) as Creonte.

Forzano has cleverly reduced the text of Sophocles to libretto, while the poetic moments have been exploited by Leoncavallo to produce some lovely music: Edipo's aria 'Remingo andar, da Tebe in bando' and Giocasta's answer, 'Svaniranno dall'alma le negri nubi alfine' come to mind. Some of the accompanying orchestral passages are very effective: the agitated cellos in 'Per notti e notti insonni e tormentate', the harps and sweet violins accompanying the arrival of the queen, the solo cello that underlines the words of the blinded king . . . But Edipo's adieu to his daughters, 'Miei poveri fiori', ends the opera on a cloying note.[153]

[153] Juliet Giraldi, "Prisoners of Fate," *Opera Now* (September/October 2002): 90 (Appendix, No. 105).

CONCLUSION

The notices regarding Leoncavallo's sojourns to the United States lend credence to the idea that he was more than a one-opera composer. Certainly, he faced stiff competition from his contemporaries, but a number of his works (other than *Pagliacci*) have enjoyed critical success, especially *La Bohème*, *Zazà,* and *Zingari.* Nevertheless, posterity has not been kind to Leoncavallo, and his lesser-known operas have not maintained a hold in the repertory. Perhaps his major fault lies in the inability to achieve a truly individual style. The scope of Leoncavallo's output is almost ridiculously diverse, and his decision to compose operettas was an outright mistake; as Klein observed, "both Puccini and Mascagni had written operettas, but they were wise enough to realize that their talent did not lie in that direction; whereas Leoncavallo sank ever deeper into the mire of frivolity—one of the most abject surrenders in the history of music."[154]

Leoncavallo's destiny was, if not completely tragic, tremendously baffling. He embarked on his career as an innocent and amiable young man with extraordinarily grand goals, but as the years progressed he became bitter over his failure to attain the prominence he so desired. Klein astutely observed the following:

> . . . curiously [Leoncavallo] reminds one of Branwell Brontë, resolved to die standing after having so frequently betrayed his ideals. . . His was, however, a split personality, for during his whole life he hovered disconcertingly between the pretentiously noble and utterly frivolous. . . while *Pagliacci*, regardless of critical disapprobation, lives on with unabated vigor, its disillusioned creator has gradually sunk into what practically amounts to oblivion.[155]

Ashbrook notes that "Leoncavallo lacked the artistic vision and creative power to cope

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[154] John W. Klein, "Ruggiero Leoncavallo (1858-1919)," *Opera* 9 (1958): 233-4.
[155] Klein, "Ruggiero Leoncavallo," 236.

with a period of rapid transition in opera."[156] This last statement is arguable. Artistic vision was precisely what Leoncavallo possessed in spades: certainly he began his career with loftier ambitions than any other Italian operatic composer of his generation. But naive and intensely emotional, he lacked the ability to capitalize on his many strengths and compete aggressively and diplomatically in a competitive market.

Still, there has been a recent resurgence of interest in some of his lesser-known operas. As noted earlier, there have been acclaimed New York performances of *La Bohème* and *Zazà*. In Europe, the newly opened Museo Leoncavallo in Brissago, Switzerland (where the composer lived for many years) has presented *Der Roland von Berlin*, as well as concerts of his instrumental music. A new recording of *Zingari*, under the direction of Giovan Battista Varoli, was issued in 1999,[157] while in 2002, Silvano Frontalini produced a complete recording of *Chatterton*.[158] Perhaps then, Leoncavallo's legacy—to which, we might say, New York contributed as much as any locale in the world—is not forgotten after all.

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[156] William Ashbrook, "Ruggero Leoncavallo." *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell (London: Macmillan, 2001), xiv, 672-4.
[157] Kicco Classic (KCD054).
[158] Bon Giovanni (GB 2372/73-2).

APPENDIX

Introduction

Most of the newspaper and magazine clippings used here come from three vertical files labeled "Ruggero Leoncavallo" at the New York Public Library's Lincoln Center Library of the Performing Arts. They were probably collected (at least initially) by Rudolph Aronson, the New York-based impresario who was responsible for the negotiations of Leoncavallo's 1906 tour of the United States and Canada. Still other articles were newly found by sorting through newspaper archives and journals. Sources include the *New York Herald-Tribune*, *New York Mail*, *The New York Sun*, *The New York Times*, *New York World*, *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, *Brooklyn Eagle*, *Musical America*, *Musical Courier*, *Musical Leader*, *The Nation*, *Billboard*, *London Leader*, *The Illustrated London News*, *The Chicago Evening Post*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, and the *North American Review*.

Since most of the articles in the Lincoln Center Leoncavallo files were cut out and pasted onto sheets of paper, the majority do not have page numbers. In some cases, even the name of the newspaper is lacking. This appendix reproduces the 105 articles about Leoncavallo's two American sojourns in their entirety—or, at least, all of what has been preserved, as some of the clippings are tattered and/or incomplete. Most of the notices, especially the early ones, are anonymous; I provide the name of the author when it appears. Finally, the articles are inconsistent in their use of accent marks in the likes of Bohème, Mimì, and Zazà. I have reproduced them as they appear in the sources. In addition, all material in square brackets is editorial.

Documents

1. Reginald De Koven, *The Chicago Evening Post*, June 16, 1893. "'I Pagliacci' Produced; Leon Cavello's [*sic*] Quaint Opera Possesses Much Artistic Value; Comedy and Tragedy Walk Hand and Hand Through It; The work produced in England as Punchinello, with "Cavilleria [*sic*] Rusticana"; May Form a Starting Point for a Modern Operatic School–Musically Strong; It Was Well Received–Campanari and Montegriffo Sing Well."

"I Pagliacci"—"The Clown"—known in the London version by Mr. Weatherly as "Punchinello," Leoncavallo's much-discussed opera or melodrama, was produced last night for the first time in America at the Grand Opera House by the Hinrichs Opera Company with the following cast:

Nedda.....	Selma Koert Kronold
Canio.....	Aug. Montegriffo
Tonio.....	Giuseppe Campanari
Peppe [*sic*].....	M. De Pasquali
Silvio.....	Perry Averill

Conductor: Gustav Hinrichs.

All in all, "I Pagliacci" is the most interesting and effective [. . .] and is a most fitting companion piece to "Cavalleria Rusticana."

[. . .] and interesting an operatic novelty. The chorus and orchestra were fair; the mise en scene and costumes had evidently seen much previous service. All in all, one is inclined to doubt whether "I Pagliacci" will achieve the immediate popular success obtained by "Cavalleria Rusticana," but there can be no question as to its enduring artistic value and interest.

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2. *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, June 16, 1893. "La Prima del "Pagliacci" in New York," p. 1.

La Musica Italiana ha ieri a sera, alla Grand Opera House [23 a Strada e 8ª Avenue] ottenuto un nuovo, indiscutibile trionfo.

Ci limitiamo ora alla cronsca [*sic*] della serata.

Se l'opera ha avuto, un successo trionfale per l'autore, perchè drammatice, effettiva, piena di vita, ricca di colorito intenso, l'escuzione non fo certo quella che avremmo sugurato al Mº Leoncavallo per l'andata in iscona del suo lavoro in America.

Le continue finezze, I delicati coloriti orchestrali, le caracteristiche dei momenti palcologici del dramma non si ottengone con due prove di orchestra con masso buono, ma deficenti di numero. Tuttavia il Mº Hinrichs ha fatto miracoli e—eccettuato l'esagerato accelerare di tutti I tempi—ha addimostrato che sa bene il conto suo.

La Selma Koert Kronold fu una "Nedda" buonissima come cantante, ma esagerata nell'azione drammatica.—Montegriffo ("Canio") non possiede mezzi vocali e scenici per questa tragica parte—ma tuttavia ebbe momenti felici e al finale del 1º atto fu chiamato—prima solo, poi cogli altri,—ripetuamente al proscenio fra applausi caloroeissimi.

Campanari (Tonio),—eccellente nel prologo—ci permetta gli diciamo che il duetto con Nedda va cantato sul serio: non è Tonio, lo scemo della pantomima in quel momento, ma un uomo vero che ama e odio terribilmente.

Mangioni De Pasquali—buono nella piccola parte d'Arlecchino—applaudito nella serenata, quantunque il tempo fosse dal direttore molto accelerato.

Discreta Perry Averill nella parte di Silvio.

La messa in iscena meno che mediocre, ma decentemente possibile.

Il pubblico affollatissimo, con una grande rappresentanza della colonia italiana, fra cui tutti maestri di musica.

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3. Author and Newspaper Unknown, June 19, 1893. "Music and Drama. A New Opera; 'I Pagliacci' Performed in New York—Its Text and Its Music—Leoncavallo and Mascagni."

[Regular Correspondence of the Transcript.]

NEW YORK, June 18.

Mr. Gustav Hinrichs, whose company for a month past has been singing the older Italian operas in New York in tolerable fashion at low prices and with much "popular" success, ended his engagement at the Grand Opera House last week, with three performances of Leoncavallo's "I Pagliacci," for the first time in America. In 1891 and again in 1892 Mr. Hinrisch's [*sic*] company at Philadelphia had been the first in this country to give Mascagni's "Cavalleria Rusticana" and "L'Amico Fritz," and his ambition to make a third "record," so to say, with an equally heralded opera that has travelled as swiftly and successfully from Italy over Central and Western Europe, even unto the tradition-loving British Isles was laudable enough. Unfortunately the performance ill-fulfilled the purpose. The orchestral parts came late from Europe, and in the score of "Trovatore" or of "Lucia" Mr. Hinrichs's orchestra is not the smoothest. The chorus has an unusually consideable and picturesque part in "I Pagliacci," and Mr. Hinrichs's chorus in numbers and tunefulness hardly reaches the very moderate ability that the most lenient auditor asks. At the last moment Mrs. Koert-Kronold replaced Mrs. Tavary in the one woman's part in the new opera, and the four men concerned, ezcept Mr. Campanari, who sang the fool's part with praiseworthy skill and intelligence, were disposed to make a boisterous vigor cover divers vocal and dramatic shortcomings. For the scenery, so much vaunted at the performance of "I Pagliacci" in London, and obviously most essential to its full effect, there was no apology. Suffice it, then, to say, for the record's sake, since in the next year we shall probably hear much of Leoncavallo and his opera, that the first performance occurred on June 15, that Mr. Montegriffo appeared as Canio, Mr. Campanari as Tonio, Mr. Di Pasquali as Beppe, Mr. Averill as Silvio, and Mrs. Koert-Kronold as Nedda, and that Mr. Hinrichs himself was the conductor. For, after all, he deserves full credit for his zeal. Opera to him is no mixture of commercial venture and fashionable diversion, and with all the shortcomings of his performance, he has at least suggested some of the presumed strength of "I Pagliacci." One is sure, none the less, that there is a great deal more in it.

Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo, according to the European journals that for a year past have been diligently heralding his work, is a Neapolitan of five-and-thirty, of humble origin like Mascagni, and enduring in youth only a less sterile poverty. Again like Mascagni, he has been a pupil of Amilcare Ponchielli, who, but vaguely known in America by rare performances of his "Gioconda," has had apparently a stronger influence than some suspect upon the music of these Italians. Arrigo Boito, too, has been Leoncavallo's friend and patron, and from him, perchance, the Neapolitan has caught something of the constructive skill that distinguishes his text. Obviously enough, Leoncavallo has been a diligent and retentive student of Bizet, of Gounod, of Wagner, and especially of the later music of Verdi, and he has assimilated well the fruits of his studies. There are many and strong resemblances between "I Pagliacci" and "Cavalleria Rusticana," yet a credible tale affirms that the former was written the earlier; and that, submitted in defiance of the conditions in Signor Sonzogno's competition, it failed in he prize that fell to Mascagni only because it was cast in two acts, instead of the required one. In fact, it requires scarcely more time for performance, and in any case, the two operas were written about contemporaneously; and the astute Sonzogno willingly purchased both. "I Pagliacci" was first given in Milan at Teatro delle [*sic*] Verme on May 21, 1892, and going thence, found increasing favor in all Italy, in Vienna and in Berlin, until, within a month, it has become the shining success of Sir Augustus Harris's annual opera season in London. Meantime Leoncavallo has another short opera in [. . .] antedating "I Pagliacci" and dealing with the hapless life of the English Chatterton, [...] busy with a trilogy in true Wagnerian fashion, that shall portray in music and verse such mighty men as Lorenzo de'Medici, Savonorola [. . .].

[. . .] passion of actual life and the passion that he and his company portray upon the stage are very different. Here again in the melodious music the ironic contrast suggested in the prelude grows clearer and stronger. The villagers in a winsome chorus, drift away to church, and a group of them with Carrio [*sic*] seeks the wine-shop. Nedda left alone and half-expecting her lover in a long cantabile passage, suavely, albeit tritely melodious, yet with a curious suggestion of restless, ceaseless motion, likens her love to the flight of a bird. As she waits Tonio surprises her and makes no concealment of his passion, and in his earnestness and her mocking contempt, Leoncavallo's seeming fondness for ironically contrasting music has ample and moving play. Tonio would kiss her; she replies with a cut of the whip, and as he turns away in vindictive anger, her accepted lover of the moment, Silvio, comes. The love duet that follows is perhaps disappointing. If it is the mere fickle liking of the courtesan, that Leoncavallo would tell in it, he may have succeeded well enough, but of the deep, keen passion that should thrill players and auditors there seemed, at least in Mr. Hinrich's performance little or none. There is dramatic strength, however, in plenty, in Canio's fierce denunciations, in Tonio's cynical comments, in Nedda's cold refusal to name to lover when her husband has surprised her, and in the closing scene of the first act wherein Canio, left alone, contrasts the foolery he must begin at once upon the stage, with the mad vindictive grief that possesses him, there is fine and moving dramatic force, even real passion in the music.

"Laugh now Pagliaccio, at death toward you creeping,
Laugh at your grief the worst your heart fears."

The prelude to the second act, the intermezzo, as it is called at least at orchestral concerts, is unpleasantly like that of "Cavalleria Rusticana," and of no greater musical worth. The villagers, with Silvio among them, stream gayly forward to the show, chaffing each other as they go, and bickering noisily over the choice of places in music satisfyingly "realistic." The little comedy begins with Beppe's pretty serenade, sung with the Harlequin himself invisible, to Nedda's waiting Columbine. The play patters on on to fittingly light and tinkling music until Canio comes. He cannot control himself; the wronged husband of the comedy becomes speedily the wronged husband that he is. The music is a chromatic whirl of vivid contrasts, now flowing smoothly and lightly forward as Nedda strives unconcerned to play her part, now quivering with Canio's reproaches, his demands for her lover's name his cries for vengeance, until at last as he stabs her and Silvio again and again with true Neapolitan ferocity, it breaks into discordant exclamation. Another element of contrast is the quick, nervous comment of the chorus now pressing about the stage half suspecting, half doubting the tragic reality of the little play. "The play is played out," cries Tonio to the hissing violins, there is a rush of horns and trumpets, and "I Pagliacci" is ended.

And of this music heard so imperfectly what may we fairly say? Its one purpose is to vivify the dramatic significance of the text to its smallest detail, and from first to last it has a measure of dramatic power, not broad and sweeping and tranporting, yet moving and convincing. More still, and quite unlike that of "Cavalleria Rusticana" it is full of the telling ironic contrast that the action of the opera continually invites. Only at the end of the first act is there any burst of passion, any potent climax. It is evener music than Mascagni's, made in more scholarly and refined fashion and with far more suggestion with strength in reserve. It is oftener declamatory than melodious, yet its melodies, for the most part based on short themes, are pleasing without especial charm or originality. Leoncavallo has surely heard and assimilated much music of other men. The superficial resemblances of "I Pagliacci" to "Cavalleria Rusticana" are plain enough in the mere telling of the story of the performance. Yet Leoncavallo's opera lacks something of the primitive force of its rival. It deals indeed with similar swiftness and directness with the raw passions of a raw life. It is as "realistic," if one likes the word. Yet Mascagni, as it seems to me, has [...] this life. Leoncavallo has only diligently [. . .] it. Yet for the future the Neapolitan [. . .] somehow to promise more. H.T.P.

4. *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 27, 1893. "Leoncavallo's Brilliant Opera 'I Pagliacci' Makes a Big Success at the Grand Opera House."

"I Pagliacci," an opera in subject and treatment strongly resembling "Cavalleria Rusticana," but in most respects superior to Mascagni's famous work, was the attraction which completely tested the capacity of the Grand Opera House last evening in Philadelphia [. . .] city in the United States to hear Leoncavallo's splendid composition, the original production in this country given in New York week before last by Mr. Hinrichs' company. Leoncavallo and Mascagni were fellow pupils of Ponchielli, and it is said that the former submitted his opera to Sonzogno, the music publisher of Milan, and was informed that he would obtain the prize, which his fellow pupil carried off, if he would arrange the work in one act according to the terms of the competition. This he refused to do, but but Mascagni complied with the conditions and was awarded the prize for "Cavalleria Rusticana."

After a first hearing of "I Pagliacci," even with the drawback of a smaller orchestra than is called for repe by the score, this story becomes altogether creditable. Last evening the work evoked the enthusiasm of the very large and, to a great extent, musically well-informed audience. The applause was frequent and prolonged. Mr. Hinrichs very properly refused to allow any but one encore, and even that should not have been allowed on account of the tense interest and quick action of the opera, but at the close of the performance the participants had their reward, as the principals and Mr. Hinrichs were repeatedly called out and cheered.

"I Pagliacci" ("The Mountebanks") is in two acts. There is a brief but characteristic prelude, which thoroughly reveal Leoncavallo's method. He is an unsurpassed master of orchestral scoring and development, and it requires all the art, experience and resources of the conductor to give a proper interpretation to the melodies and their rapidly changing phrases. Then "Tonio" (Signor Campanari), the assistant of "Canio," clown, pokes his head out of one side of the curtain, begs permission to enter, and coming forward explains the scheme of the opera. He announces that there is to be a prologue of which he is the representative, but that contrary to the ancient Grecian custom when the audience was told that the tears shed were false and they should not be frightened at the signs of the actors' sufferings, they should now look upon the performers as fervent human beings moving about in real life and not acting. Then rushing off the stage he shouts to his fellows behind the scenes, "Come on, let's begin." In response to the vigorous applause Mr. Hinrichs at this point allowed an encore, but the unity could have been preserved had the curtain [. . .] gone up.

The scene rises on a Calabrian village. To the right of the spectator is erected the booth of a company of mountebanks. Outside is heard a trumpet and drum, and attracted by the noise a company of peasants of both sexes throng the stage in festal attire. They are excited by the coming of the new show, and as "Canio" (Signor Montegriffo) and his wife "Nedda" (Mme. Koert-Kronold) enter in a cart drawn by a donkey, they hail the mountebanks. "Canio" tells them about the show, and finally leaving the donkey in charge of an assistant, accepts the invitation of some of the peasants to go and drink. The chorus forms in a procession by couples, and go off slowly singing in imitation of the vesper bells. "Nedda" is left alone and meditating she reveals the fact that she has a lover. Looking toward the sky she observes the birds, and in a very beautiful solo sings to them of her love. "Tonio" emerges from the booth, and hears her and believes that she has divined the fact that he is in love with her. He bewails his condition as a fool and sings in an outburst of passion which "Nedda" interrupts with scornful laughter, and treats his further expression of feeling with jibes. Then she treatens to call her husband, to which Tonio responds that she will not do so until he has kissed her. Upon this she seizes a whip and gives him a cut in the face. Tonio goes out threatening revenge.

In the meantime "Silvio" (Perry Averill) appears on a wall opposite the tent, and a love scene ending in the most beautiful solo takes place. Just as they are embracing each other, "Nedda" appears with "Canio" on the scene. "Silvio" rushes off and "Canio" follows, but fails to overtake him. Returning he threatens to kill his [. . .].

5. *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, December 13, 1893. "I 'Pagliacci' alla Metropolitan Opera House," p. 1.

Lunedi sera (11 corr.) Tutti I biglietti di parterra, e dei primi "balconies," come tutti I palchi erano stati venduti in precedenza; eppure alle 8, 1, 4—quando il sipario si alzò per l'Orfeo, appena una merà dei posti appariva occupata: e cosi andò per quasi tutta l'opera di Gluck, malgrado il "debutto" della signorina Colombati, una gentile, squisita, Euridice, ma la voce della quale non è molto adatta per l'immensa sala e malgrado pure che la signora Scalchi Lolli—da tanti anni favorita dal pubblico newyorchese—cantaree [*sic*] "Orfeo," per la prima volta in questa città e facesse del suo meglio per dar vita ad uno spartitio meravigliosamente bello, ma senzi poco divertente. Tuttavia alla grand'aria "Che farò senza Euridice," gli applausi del pubblico, che erasi man mano affellato, furono, abbastanza fragorosi.

La signorina Edea Santori piacque moltissimo danzando con grazia squsita e, insieme, con molta con forza ed agilità.

Il Mº Bevignani diresse colla rara accuratezza e sicurezza che ne sono precipua dote.

Quando il Mº Mancinelli sali sullo scanno fu salutato da un grande applauso a cui presero parte, col pubblico, tutti e professori d'orchestra e cori, in un ambiente per qualita e quantita, e disposizione degli ascoltatori, comincio la rapprentazione dei "Pagliacci," che furono tutto un trionfo per l'autore, pel [*sic*] direttore, per gli esecutori; trionfo completo e, sopratutto, trionfo sincere e merita.

Ferdinando [*sic*] De Lucia e Mario Ancona [. . .] Cantevano—per la prima volta—in New York furono tosto compresi per artisti in cui tutto e eminentemente [...] artistico, splendi:

Come Mario Ancona rende il "Prologo" non e suo ripetere [. . .].

Canio, declamazione interpretazione cero di Ancona un perfetto Tonio che dovette bissare, ma applauso entusiastici, la magnifica pagina. [. . .] dramma dei poeta musicista elettrizzando e la parole tutto quanto il teatro.

[. . .].

No lo seguiremo passo passo, ci baste dire che quando cantò il grande arioso finale di primo atto "Vesti la giubba," fu per la sala come uno scoppio di applausi, di quegli applausi, cui qualche volta sono trascinati anche questi americani per la virtu degli artisti italiani . . . . . .

E De Lucia fu sempre eguale a sè stesso fino alle terribili frasi del'ultimo atto.

Una Nedda, che non ha pecohe [*sic*] è Madama Melba: figura, stittudini personali, tutta la donna è adattatissima pel carratere appassionato della commediante traditrice, mentre la voce e lo stile del canto danno alla musica di Leoncavallo il maggior risalto: essa, pure, fu salutata continuemente da caldi applausi, e dovette ripetere l'aria del primo atto: anche nel diletto d'amore con Silvio, la Melba fu assai apprezzata, quantunque il Gromzeski non asendo [*sic*] ben sicuro della parte non l'essecondasse [*sic*] come avrebbe potuto, dati i buoni mezzi di dispone; cori non fu nel duetto con Tonio, perchè Ancora era completamente all'altezza nella compagne.

Dell'interpretazione generale perchè parlare? Essa era sifidata a Luigi Mancinelli, che aviscerò, per [. . .] dire, le più recondite bellezze dell'opera, ne rilevò le sfamature più delicate, vi mise tutta l'alta anima sua, trasfondendo negli esecutori un finissimo gusto e un senso squisitissimo dell'arte.

L'Herald, di ieri diceva che mal l'orchestra ha suonato tanto bene al Metropolitan, ed il "World,, la "Tribune,, il "Times,, sostenevano che questa fu la vera prima rappresentazione dei "Pagliacci,, in America!

6. Author and Newspaper Unknown, New York, December 23, 1893. "Opera's Striking Double Bill; Mme. Melba in 'Pagliacci,' followed by Mme. Calve in 'Cavalleria Rusticana'; An Apology for the Former; The Singing of Nedda, the Clown's Wife, Interfered with by a Slight Hoarseness; In the Horseshoe Round; Metropolitan Opera House."

I Pagliacci, opera in two acts, by Leoncavallo.
Nedda.....Mme. Melba
Tonio.....Sig. Ancona
Silvio.....Sig. Gromzosky
Peppe [*sic*].....Sig. Guetary
Canio.....Sig. De Lucia

Cavalleria Rusticana, opera in one act, by Mascagni.
Santuzza.....Mme. Calve
Lucia.....Mlle. Bauermeister
Lola.....Mlle. Guercia
Alfio.....M. Martapoura
Turiddu.....Sig. Vignas

Very interesting no doubt was it to behold on one and the same evening two such world famed artists as Mmes. Melba and Calve.

But imcomparably more interesting was it to see in juxtaposition those two works of the Italian school, which have created such a stir throughout the world the last few years.

It was "Cavalleria Rusticana" versus "I Pagliacci," [. . .] may be accepted as a criterion in preference to weak and spasmodic applause then Mascagni—to borrow a sporting phrase—won hands down.

Indeed I could never for a moment understand why people protested in favor of Leoncavallo's work.

To my thinking it simply represents the acme of cleverness in operatic composition. It is full of the modern spirit, to be sure; it is exciting enough both in a musical and dramatic sense, it is well written and well made, but compared with the spontaneous fire and melody which characterizes "Cavalleria" it is labored and unsatisfying. Neither Mascagni himself nor anybody else, I feel convinced, will ever duplicate this one act operatic mixture of hashish and mandragora.

Unfortunately Mme. Melba's indisposition from hoarseness, for which an apology was made before the second Pagliacci act, cast something of a damper on the evening's pleasure.

Rather than disappoint the audience, however, the lady with the silvery voice consented to appear. Nothing surely could have been kinder or more considerate, and the artist is deserving of both the public and management's recognition. So absolute a mistress of the vocal art, however, is Mme. Melba that only those who had heard her on former occasions could have noticed a change in the singer's powers. Mme. Melba really sings better when she is ill than others do when they are in the most robust of health.

Signor de Lucia repeated the success acheived upon his first appearance.

But why, in all conscience, did Signor Mancinelli encourage the singer to repeat the final scene of the first act? Signor de Lucia was not eager--nothing could have clearer--and the re-enactment of an entire scene is always in bad taste.

Fired by her success as Carmen Mme. Calve fairly outdid herself as Santuzza last evening. She was in the best of voice, and she exhibited throughout such sustained passion, such eloquent by-play, that the audience thought not for a moment that is was merely the counterfeit presentment of life they were witnessing.

After the scene with Alfio (the one that precedes the intermezzo) there was an outburst of applause that obliged Mme. Calve to appear three times before the opera was allowed to proceed. It was

the right kind of applause, too, everybody taking a hand, and [. . .] agony of that intermezzo being put off thereby for at least a few moments.

A splendid evening's entertainment, on the whole, which would be worth the repetition.

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7. *The New York Times*, December 23, 1893. "Two Short Operas Sung; 'Pagliacci' and 'Cavalleria Rusticana' Delight a Large Audience."

The Metropolitan Opera House was crowded against [*sic*] last night, when what is known as a "double bill" was given. The two operas presented were Leoncavallo's "Pagliacci" and Mascagni's "Cavalleria Rusticana." The cast in the first was the same as it was at the first performance. That of the second opera was also the same as at the first performance, except that Signor Martapoura replaced M. Dufiche as Alfio.

Mme. Melba was in poor voice, the result of her recent indisposition. An apology was made to the audience in her behalf at the end of the first act. In view of this, it would be unfair to make any comment on her performance. Signor de Lucia is at his best in the role of Canio. He acts it with a fine intelligence and with a wonderful variety of expression. His singing, too, while not free from vocal faults, is of a strong dramatic character. He aroused a great deal of enthusiasm last night. Signor Ancona repeated his good performance of Tonio, and had to repeat the prologue as usual.

In "Cavalleria Rusticana" Mme. Calvi's [*sic*] strong impersonation of Santuzza was again the most interesting feature. Signor Vignas was the Turiddu. Signor Martapoura the Alfio, Mlle. Guercia the Lola, and Mlle. Bauermeister the Lucia. Signor Mancinelli conducted "Pagliacci" and Signor Bevignani conducted "Cavalleria." The effect of bringing the two operas together in one night was good.

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8. *Musical Courier*, March 13, 1898. "Leoncavallo's 'Bohème' in the Court Opera."

By this time you may have heard of the exciting times the operatic world has been passing through here, and that Leoncavallo has proven himself rather a difficult man to please. Long ago there arose a dispute between himself and Mahler, upon which Leoncavallo left Vienna before the matter was settled, and the premiere of "Die Bohème" delayed a month or two. Then, when everything was once more set in motion, comes Leoncavallo again to Vienna, and according to reports orders all the artists to come for rehearsal at 9 o'clock in the morning, not appearing himself until two hours later, and finally came to open, not to say loud, discussion, with Mahler, the principal cause being that Leoncavallo wished Van Dyk to take the role of Marcell, but the latter not being quite ready, Dippel also having prepared the same part, Leoncavallo earnestly requested Mahler to postpone the performance again. This Mahler flatly refused to do, especially as Van Dyk and Dippel leave on their vacation after the middle of March. The next morning it was reported that Leoncavallo had left Vienna, and would not be present at the premiere. All sorts of rumors were afloat, both concerning the composer, Van Dyk and Saville, who had studied the part of Musette with the intention of singing at the premiere. The report that Leoncavallo had left was, however, soon corrected, but as Renard refused to sing with any but Marianne Brandt-Forster, Saville must perforce retire, and Van Dyk, siding with the latter, thereupon also refused to sing in any case, so that you will see through how much stormy weather the Bohème had to be piloted before she at last struck a smooth sea.

So much quarreling and discussion, however, aroused general interest and curiosity to see and hear the much talked of opera, the first performance of which in Vienna took place on Wednesday, February 23. Leoncavallo having rendered himself so unpopular has something to do, I fancy, with the ill-natured, somewhat satirical criticisms which appeared this morning and yesterday. Hanslick is so

violent that one mistrusts his tirade—for it is little short of that—and the *Fremdenblatt* or its music critic Speidel is equally short, indifferent and sardonic.

The public generally gave Leoncavallo to understand their support of the popular young director on the evening of the performance when Mahler took his place on the estrade by greeting him with loud cheers and applause. After the first act there were loud and persistent calls for Mahler mingled with the applause; he did not appear, but in his place Leoncavallo, who, misunderstanding the repeated calls and applause, looked a little bewildered, not to say downcast. The first act was the most warmly received, and the innumerable recalls seemed to guarantee the success of the première—indeed, the whole roused such a degree of enthusiasm that Hanslick grimly remarks that it is a question whether we should be glad that the public has so long accustomed itself to such "brutal music" as to really take pleasure in it. "Brutal" and "barbarian"—this is the manner in which our famous but rather savage critic characterizes the whole young school from Italy—viz., Mascagni, Leoncavallo and Puccini. There is something reactionary in such savagery, for we can already feel sure that the opera will be accepted for what it is worth, with hearty acclaim all over Europe, for it has features that are bound to please the light-minded public in search of diversion and any too heavy enjoyment, and I am inclined to think that nowhere expect in Vienna will it be taken so seri[. . .] there is more originality in Puccini's [. . .]. But Leoncavallo, while he is far less original (indeed, half of it sounds borrowed), is far more melodious, and there are songs and waltzes without number that are sure to captivate the popular ear. Then, in another acceptation of the term Puccini is "original" even to oddness, yet this opening scene is far more adapted to represent the poetic element in the life of the Bohème—which is truly a very pretty and tenderly conceived idea, both musically and dramatically. There, the drama begins in the small attic room of the poet Rudolph. The friends have all gone out of the cafe; Mimi knocks softly and timidly at the door, with a shy request that Rudolph light her candle, which a puff of wind has suddenly extinguished, leaving her in the dark corridor unable to find her way further. But Leoncavallo is in comparison quite at a disadvantage, for he introduces his characters to us in the the Cafe Momus with a long, wearisome talk between Schaunhard [*sic*], the musician, and the landlord, in which there is no necessity and less adaptation. We are already on the verge of impatience when Mimi and Musette, Marcell [*sic*] and Rudolph appear on to scene to relieve the dullness, and from this point the drama takes on more interest up to the close. But Leoncavallo gives the whole a very free treatment, and if in Puccini one misses all the piquant characteristics of Murger's sketches, in Leoncavallo's treatment the sketch itself has almost disappeared.

Schaunard is the one who keeps the play alive, and that not by any real humor--for, indeed, the music, unlike Puccini's, has not a humoristic feature--but by the drollest of parody and caricature exaggerated to exasperation, and I do not know where Hanslick's ears were if he did not hear any laughter in the house. I have never heard so much laughter in the Court Opera. Indeed, the scene reminded one of the lightest kind of farces in light "operetta" style, and I might have easily imagined myself to be in the Carl Theatre or the Theater an der Wien.

Italy's musical genius culminated in Verdi and Rossini—after that there evidently has been nothing to do but degenerate and to borrow—and this Leoncavallo has done either unconsciously or without conscience. "Where have we heard all this before?" constantly suggests itself to the mind. Still it is very clever borrowing in that it is generally a "taking" song or melody in 3-4 or 6-8 and apt to prove "catching" to the popular ear, while Puccini is so odd in his queer originality that to reproduce some of his queer twangs and combinations, not to speak of the consecutive fifths and his jargon of dissonances, is not the lightest of tasks. Hesch as Schaunard, with his wonderful singing and his splendid acting, especially the scene in the act where Musette, deserted by the angry Alexis (who has suported [*sic*] her) and in arrears for rent, finds all her furniture in the open court of the apartment house where she finally decides to receive her invited guests after the first surprise and horror at the situation subsides somewhat. Hesch, I was saying, redeems the whole opera and preserves it from otherwise almost certain disaster, for Renard is suited to the role of Musette as she first appears, and lost much by overdoing her part in the first two acts. But Hesch as the artist musician parodying the conductor, then the pianist and singer, and in the general bedlam which follows between the hilarious Bohemians and the infuriated tenants, who resort to

every means to compel their defiant guests to depart, Hesch, I say, outdoes himself, and the whole sense defies description happily for the reader.

In the two pathetic scenes which follow and the tragedy which closes the last act Leoncavello [*sic*], like Puccini, does not elude a certain pallid sentimentalism which denies convincing force both to the tragedy and the music. Hanslick discerns traces of Wagner in the scene before the last. If so, this is so feeble to have escaped my notice, and I have not, indeed could not, procure a score. Hesch, who never sang better; Renard, in the more emotional parts; Forster throughout, Dippel in splendid voice, and Reidl as Rudolph, who is hardly fairly dealt with by Leoncavallo, all did their parts, with Mahler's excellent direction, toward achieving a successful premiere, and without which Leoncavallo might not have so much cause to congratulate himself as he left Vienna.

I regret to say, however, that difficulties which here arose between Mahler and Van Dyk have resulted in the loss to Vienna of her pet tenor for so many years past, and, say what one may, it cannot be denied that Van Dyk is a great loss, because a consummate artist. I hear many comparisons drawn lately between Dippel and Van Dyk [. . .].

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9. Ruggero Leoncavallo, *North American Review*, November 1902. "How I Wrote 'Pagliacci.'"

I was born at Naples in March, 1858 [*sic*], my parents being the late Cavaliere Vincenzo Leoncavallo, President of the High Court of Justice, and Virginie d'Aurion, daughter of a celebrated Neapolitan painter, many of whose works are now in the Royal Palace at Naples. I studied first at Naples, where I entered the Conservatoire as a day scholar at the age of eight, and received my diploma when sixteen; my professors of composition were Serrao and de Piamcesi: a cantata was the work I wrote on leaving the Conservatoire. Afterwards, I went to Bologna to complete my literary studies at the University, under the direction of the great Italian poet, Corducci [*sic*]; and I received my diploma as doctor of letters at the age of twenty. I was not obliged to do any military service, as, at the time of conscription, my brother was in the army. So I began my peregrenations as a concert pianist in Egypt, where at that time I had an uncle, Leoncavallo Bey, who was the Director of the Press at the Foreign Office.

There I played at Court, and Mahmoud Hamdy, the brother of the Viceroy Tewfik, appointed me as as his private musician. I was driven out of Egypt by the war with the English, Mahmoud having sided with Arabi Pasha, who had promised officially to give me the appointment of head of the Egyptian military bands, wih a liberal salary. Instead of this fine promise being fulfilled, I was fortunate in saving my life after Tel-el-Kebir, by means of a twenty-four hours' ride in Arab costume to Ismailia. There I resumed European dress, but being penniless, I was obliged to give a concert at Port Said in the house of M. Desavary, representative of M. de Lesseps. The proceeds of this concert amounted to five or six hundred francs, with which I was enabled to take an English boat, the "Propitious." I recalled this episode to Her Most Gracious Majesty, Queen Victoria, when I had the honor and happiness of seeing her, a few years ago, at Nice. Arrived at Marseilles, I immediately took a train (not *de luxe!* nor, alas, express!) which brought me to Paris, where, in the depths of want, I forced to begin my career as an accompanist in cafe-concerts. I shall always remember one evening when I was engaged by a large wine merchant at Creil for eight francs, plus the amount of the fare there and back, and supper. When I was introduced into the concert-room (!), to my surprise I found no piano, but a small harmonium, and the *artistes* who sang had no music, but only those small leaflets that are sold for a sou in the streets, giving the melody only without accompaniment; this did not prevent the *artistes*, however, from asking, before they began: *"A tone and a half lower, please, Maitre!"* It seems that I did marvels in the way of accompaniment, for the next day all the small agencies of the suburban cafe-concerts were asking for *the little Italian who was so clever*, according to the recommendation of the *artistes* whom I had accompanied. Little by little, my reputation reached the *Eldorado*, when the then director, M. Renard, asked me to write some songs for his "stars." These songs were successful, and were paid for by Pere

Bathlot at the princely rate of twenty or thirty francs apiece, without counting my royalties, which used to rise to the giddy height of seventy to eighty centimes an evening.

Later on I quitted the sphere of cafe-concerts, and got singing pupils among the *artistes*, whose repertoire I used to work up for them. It was at this period that I had the Pleasure of making the acquaintance of M. Maurel and the Maestro Massenet, who from the first treated me with great kindness.

Having met with many kind people at Paris who did their best to help me and assist me towards the attainment of a higher position, I succeeded at last in making a good living. About that time I wrote a symphonic poem on Musset's *"Nuit de Mai,"* which is still unknown, although it was on the point of being performed by Colonne, who promised to introduce it. When on day in conversation with M. Maurel on the subject of my hopes for the future, I read him the poem of the *"Medicis,"* which I had just completed; this great artist was so struck by the magnitude of my self-imposed task and the quality of the poem, that he advised me, as an Italian, to go to Milan, where he was to take part in the first rehearsal of "Otello," promising me an introduction and recommendation to M. Ricordi.

Relying on the promise, I pawned the furniture of my little flat and went to Milan, where M. Maurel kept his word, and presented me and recmmended me to M. Ricordi, who finally gave me a commission to write the music for the libretto of the *"Medicis,"* which I had read to him, for the sum of 2,400 francs, payable in sums of 200 francs a month, thus obliging me to finish my opera in the course of a year. But, alas, although the opera was ready at the end of the year, M. Ricordi was by no means ready to produce it! And I waited thus in vain for three years, during which I recommenced at Milan the melancholy task of teaching, which I hoped I might never have to resume!

After the success of "Cavaleria" [*sic*], by Mascagni, I lost all patience, and I shut myself up in sheer desperation, resolved to make a last struggle. In five months I wrote the words and the music of "Pagliacci," which was acquired by M. Sonzogno, after he had only read the libretto, and which Maurel admired so much that he insisted on producing it at Milan on May 17th, 1892. The success of this piece, as is known, was as striking as that of "Cavaleria," [*sic*] and its fame spread like wildfire. When this work was translated, M. Mendes, seeing that it bore some resemblance to his *"Femme de Tabarins,"* honestly believed that I had borrowed the subject of my work from him, and he even took steps towards bringing an action, which he frankly withdrew, with a letter published in the *Figaro*, after having found that there were other *"Tabarins"* written before his own. The truth is that I was completely ignorant of the work of this writer, whom I admire so much, and I had taken my plot from an event that really took place in Calabria and was brought before my father when he was holding the Court of Justice at Cosenza. And what is stranger still, as I have since learned, the protagonist of my work is still living, and having been released from prison, is now in the service of Baroness Sprovieri in Calabria. If the action had never come to trial, he would have been willing to come and give evidence in my favor. I regret that this did not happen, as we should have had a very dramatic scene during the evidence of poor Alessandro (the real name of my *Canio*) when he was relating his crime, his jealous fury and his sufferings!

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10. *London Leader*, December 13, 1904. "Roland of Berlin; Extraordinary Interest Taken in Leoncavallo's New Opera."

From Our Own Correspondent.

BERLIN, Monday.

The extraordinary interest taken in the first production of Leoncavallo's "Der Roland von Berlin" at the Royal Opera House tomorrow is evidenced by the unusual efforts made to obtain tickets. Tickets for the Royal theatres cannot be ordered in advance; they can only be bought personally at the ticket office in the building, from half-past ten on Sunday morning, for all the pieces that are to be given in the ensuing week.

To be on the side over a hundred persons collected outside the doors of the Opera House by nine o'clock on Saturday evening, and there they stood, during the cold and darkness of the night, for 13 hours, with only such refreshments as they carried, in their pockets.

Unfortunately, when the doors were finally opened only the first few rows of the queue were successful, as most of the tickets had been reserved for special visitors from all parts of the world, local and foreign critics, &c.

One financier offered Signor Leoncavallo £150 if he would secure him a box for the occasion, but even the author is powerless to interfere in such a matter.

The happy few bought tickets were offered £3 each for them by dealers waiting outside.

INSPIRED BY THE KAISER.

Signor Leoncavallo informed the Berlin correspondent of the "New York Herald" that the opera was suggested by the Kaiser ten years ago, on the occasion of the composer's visit to Berlin to superintend the production at the Royal Opera of the "Medici." His Majesty presented him with Herr Alexis' novel entitiled "Roland von Berlin," and requested him to use it as the groundwork of an opera.

As Signor Leoncavallo does not understand German he had to have the book translated into Italian by his friend Signor Macchi, the well-known musical critic in Milan. As Signor Macchi is a busy man, it was two years before he completed the translation and Signor Leoncavallo was able to start on his libretto. Like Wagner, the Italian composer always writes the words of his operas.

The work was submitted to the Kaiser act by act. His Majesty suggested a number of changes, which were duly carried out. In regard to one, however, Signor Leoncavallo carried his point.

In the novel the hero and the heroine marry and "live happily ever after." This "denouement" is, in the novel, rendered possible by a number of episodes and incidents which are described at length. It is not possible, however, to introduce these in a short space of a single act. Signor Leoncavallo, therefore, preferred to give the drama a tragic ending. The hero is stabbed by a soldier and dies in the arms of his fiancee.

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11. *London Leader*, December 14, 1904. "Roland of Berlin; Leoncavallo's Opera Produced to a Distinguished Audience."

From Our Own Correspondent.

BERLIN, Tuesday.

Signor Leoncavallo's new opera, "Der Roland von Berlin," was given at the Royal Opera House this evening. The work is the outcome of a suggestion made to the composer by the Kaiser six years ago, and during the full-dress rehearsal yesterday his Majesty complimented himself and Leoncavallo by saying to the latter, "You see my idea was a good one."

The plot of the opera is laid in Berlin in the middle of the fifteenth century, and the characters are typical of the municipal life of that period.

It is many years since the production of a new opera has aroused such widespread and intense interest as culminated in tonight's performance, and the spectacle presented by the house was worthy of the occasion.

The Kaiser sat with the Crown Prince in a box in close proximity to the stage, while the royal box itself was resplendent with the brilliant dresses and uniforms of the distinguished ladies and gentlemen of the Court.

The audience included most of the notable persons of every section of public life in the capital, and musical authourities from every part of the world.

One ticket-agent said: "The finest people have begged me on their knees for a ticket," and a high official in the administration of the opera-house is responsible for a statement that, "princes are fighting for admission tickets."

The first act was extremely well received, and the composer had to come before the curtain several times. The applause after the other acts was not great, and though Leoncavallo was recalled at the close of the opera the work aroused no enthusiasm.

The Kaiser applauded vigorously after each act.

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12. *New York World*, December 14, 1904. "'Roland of Berlin' a Kaiser Triumph; Italian Composer Passed a Share of Applause Along to His Majesty; International Audience Applauded Production; In the Last Act the Kaiser's Ancestor Breaks Down the City Gates."

BERLIN, Dec. 13.—The stage of the Royal Opera-House was plied with wreaths of laurel as Ruggerio [*sic*] Leoncavallo was recalled for the last time tonight after the production of his "Der Roland von Berlin" (Roland of Berlin); Emperor William stood up in his box to applaud, and the brilliant international audience called "Bravo!" The critics, who were there from Paris, Rome, Vienna, London, St. Petersburg and all parts of Germany, think that Leoncavallo in this has equalled his best work.

Leoncavallo, in responding, said that His Majesty ought to have had at least a quarter of the applause, because his suggestions had been accepted in the construction of every scene.

The Emperor sat with his sister-in-law, Princess Leopold, and Crown Prince Frederick William. In another box were Prince Leopold, Prince Eitel Frederick and the Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha. All the great personages of the court, generals and Cabinet Ministers were there, and a few diplomats. Of the 1,446 seats in the house, 1,146 had been reserved by the Emperor. The opera was richly staged at the Emperor's private expense.

"I do not think many Germans know," said the Emperor at a dinner at Count von Buelow's a few evenings ago, in talking over the new production, "that I spent last year out of my private income $1,000,000 on operas and theatres."

The Emperor is commonly supposed to have spent $25,000 on this production.

The music, in the opinion of critics, is a skillful blending of the martial and the lyrical. The opera is full of songs which will be sung on the concert stage around the world within two or three months, especially the "Song of Longing," sung by Fraulein Destinn, as the Burgomaster's daughter, and the love duet sung by Fraulein Destinn and Herr Hoffmann, who has the principal hero's role.

In the last act, where Emperor William's ancestor, the Margrave Frederick, breaks in the city gates of Berlin and overthrows the statue of Roland, the emblem of municipal independence, the stage fills up with steel-clad horsemen, making a picture that, oddly enough, was not the Emperor's idea, but Leoncavallo's, who insisted on a grand tragic finale.

At the close of the performance, Emperor William received Sig. Leoncavallo and his wife in the royal box and conferred upon the composer the Crown Order of the Second Class.

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13. *Illußtrïrte Zeitung*, December 15, 1904. "Leoncavallo's 'Roland von Berlin,'" p. 908.

Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo, der durch seine "Pagliacci" mit einem Schlage auch in Deutschland ein gefeierter Opernkomponist geworden ist und mit seinem kraftvollen, eigenartigen Werke überall noch immer unverminderte Wirfung ausübt, war vor faßt einem Jahrzehnt, nach der Berliner Premiere seiner "Medici", vom Deutschen Kaiser aufgefordert worden, nach Willibald Alexis Roman "Der Roland von Berlin" eine Oper zu schaffen. Der Ausführung dieses ebenso ehrenvollen lochenden Auftrags stellten sich große Schwierigleiten entgegen. Der dem italienischen Komponisten unbekannte Roman mußte erst

in Italienische überjetzt werden, wozu Macchi, der bekannte Mailänder besonders auf dem Wagner-Gebiet tätige Musik-schrifteller, zwei Jahre Zeit brauchte.

Nach der Lektüre dieser Übersetung begann nun für den Komponisten ein eingehendes Studium der Zeit und der Bersönlichkeiten des Romans. Der nach diesem Studium der entworsene szenische Blan zur Oper wurde vom Kaiser in den Hauptzügen gebilligt; in einigen auf das Zeitkolorit bezülichen Einzelheiten wünschte Kaiser Wilhelm Ubänderungen, die dann bei der Ausarbeitung des Librettos natürlich Beruchsichtigung fanden. Und nun endlich konnte mit der Komposition begonnen werden, in die Leoncavallo, um tive aus Musikstüchen des seczehnten Jahrhunderts hineingezogen hat, wenn sie auch nach der Zeit des Roland entstanden sind, wie z. B. das Liebeslied des Fürsten Joachim Ernst von Unhalt und der Fuggerintanz.

Im wesentlichen folgt die Oper der Handlung des Romans, nur der Schluß ist geändert. Was Alexis, der Erzähler, sorgsam und langsam vorbeiten konnte, die endliche Bereinigung von Henning und Elsbeth, das wäre in der Bühnenökonomie der Oper allzu unvermittelt und unwahrscheinlich heraus-gekommen und hätte dem Finale das eindringlich Dramatische genommen. Leoncavallo schließt daher die Oper mit dem Einzug des Kurfürsten Friedrich II. in Berlin; Henning aber erleidet, während er durch das Tor in die Stadt eindringt, den Tod durch einen Schwertstreich. Diesen Einzug des Kursürsten gibt unsere Zeichnung von Werner Zehme (s. die Borderfeite) getreulich nach der Berliner Inszenierung wieder. Es ist eine glänzende Szene, wie denn überhaupt diese Oper Gelegenheit zu wirksamen und das Zeitkolorit getreulich wiedergebenden Bühnenbildern bietet. Gleich wenn sich nach der Ouvertüre der Borhang hebt, zeigt sich eine fesselnde Szenerie: der Blaß mit der Statue des Berliner Roland, links die Kirche, in der Mitte das Schloß. Und aus dem Schloßportal tritt, wie bei Willibald Alexis, maskiert und mit falschem Bart der Kurfürst, um unerfannt sich unter das Bolf zu mischen in dem fröhlichen bunten Karnevalstreiben, das sich nun auf der Bühne entwidelt. Die weitere Ausgestaltung geht dann mit Ausnahme des Finales die Wege des bekannten Alexis-Romans, nur haben die Szenen im Festfaal musikalischen Wirkung wegen einige Barianten erhalten. Zur Belebung des Opernbildes sind hier zwei Ballettszenen, eine Gavotte und ein Rigaudon, eingefügt, aber natürlich in Berbindung mit der Handlung; sie werden unter Gefangbegleitung getanzt.

Die lange und mit großer Spannung erwartete, durch die Gegenwart des Kaisers, durch Beranstaltung des *Théátre paré*, durch die Unwesenheit zahlreicher ausländischer Musikinteressenten besonders festliche Erstaufführung hat am 13. Dezember im Königlichen Opernhause stattgefunden. Über den Erfolg und vor allem über den künstlerischenund dramatischen Wert der neuen Leoncavallo-Schöpfung kann erst in nächster Kummer gespochen werden. Jedenfalls bedeutet schon allein um der sie begleitenden äußeren Umstände willen die Premiere von Leoncavallo's "Roland von Berlin" ein musikalisches Ereignis ersten Ranges.

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14. *The Illustrated London News*, January 7, 1905. Untitled, p. 8.

The opera which Signor Leoncavallo has composed to the Kaiser's demand deals with the struggles between the Brandenburg Elector, Friedrich II, and the turbulent twin-towns of Berlin and Kölln [*sic*]. The scene is laid in the year 1442, and opens during carnival-time, when the Elector, disguised, meets the talented Henning, a cloth-weaver's son, and enlists him as his advocate among the people to win him the supremacy of the contending townships. Through the story runs the romance of Henning and Elsbeth, the Burgomaster's daughter. The girl's father is to espouse her to a wealthy citizen, and gives a great festival in the Rathhaus to celebrate the betrothal. During this feast she is claimed by Henning. The Elector's soldiers seize the town and destroy the statue of Roland, the symbol of civic liberties. During the fighting Henning is killed by mistake, and the Elector, much moved, restores the Burgomaster's official chain to his daughter.

15. *Toledo Blade*, June 12, 1906. "First Time in America."

Rudolph Aronson, of New York, who is now in Paris, has made a contract with Ruggero Leoncavalla [*sic*] by the terms of which the latter's new opera, The Youth of Figaro, the words by Sardou and the music by Leoncavallo, will be initially produced in the United States. This, it is said, will be the first time that a grand opera by a European composer will have its first production in the United States.

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16. Author and Newspaper Unknown, undated. "Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo."

The composer of "Il [*sic*] Pagliacci" and other operas. He has just composed an Ave Maria, dedicated to Pope Pius X, and is now at work upon a new opera, "La Jeunesse de Figaro," which will have its first production in America.

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17. *Musical America*, July 14, 1906. "Leoncavallo, Composer, Who Will Tour America."

When Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo begins his American tour on October 8, in Carnegie Hall, New York city [*sic*], he will be assisted by the following artists: Prima donna soprani Signore Rizzini and Alma D'Alma; Mezzo soprani Esther Ferrabini; tenori, Augusto Berbaini and Nino Perya, and barytoni [*sic*] Virgino [*sic*] Bellati [*sic*] Raffaele de Ferrand [*sic*]. The assistant conductor and accompanist will be Edoardo Boccalari.

Leoncavallo's tour of America, while rather limited because of the lack of time, will yet be a most important feature of the coming musical season. The noted composer, whose fame in Europe is greater than ever, recently gave a concert at the San Carlo theatre in Lisbon before an audience which included the King and Queen of Portugal, the Duke and Duchess of Orleans and other members of the royal family. After he had finished conducting "Pagliacci," Leoncavallo was summoned before the curtain ten times, the King bestowing upon him the collar of "Commander of the Order of Santiago."

Leoncavallo's life was not always laid upon such easy lines and he has known genuine hardships, but because of his genius he has succeeded in attaining his present high rank. He was born in Naples on March 8, 1858, the son of the local magistrate. His musical studies began with the piano, which he learned first from a musician named Siri, and afterwards from Simonetti, a teacher of some repute in Naples. In due course, Leoncavallo was admitted to the Neapolitan Conservatory, where he became a pupil of Cesi, for the piano, of Ruta for harmony and of Rossi for composition. At the age of eighteen, he left the conservatory with a diploma of "Maestro" and began his first opera. The subject was the tragic story of Chatterton, the libretto being an adaptation of Alfred de Vigny's well-known drama. The young composer then went to Bologna, where he completed the opera and arranged for its production, but at the last moment the impresario decamped, leaving the unfortunate penniless.

In desperation, Leoncavallo was compelled to undertake any work that would keep him from starvation. He gave lessons in singing and piano playing, and even played accompaniments at concerts in various cafes. In the latter capacity, he traveled far, visiting England, France, Holland and Germany and going even as far as Cairo. After many years of travelling, he returned to Italy, and presented himself to the house of Ricordi, with the scenario of a vast trilogy dealing with the history of the Renaissance in Italy, for which he had already completed the libretto of the first section, "I Medici." The latter was accepted and in a year Leoncavallo had finished the music.

For three years he waited vainly in the hope of seeing his opera produced, and then betook himself in despair to the rival house of Sonzogno. Here he was well received and for this firm he wrote his two-act opera "Pagliacci," which was produced at the Teatro dal Verme, Milan, on May 21, 1892, with great success. Leoncavallo's name soon became famous throughout Italy, and on November 10,

1893, his "Medici," the first section of his Renaissance trilogy "Crepusculum," was produced at the Teatro dal Verme. The work, which deals with the Pazzi conspiracy and the murder of Giuliano de' Medici, was a failure; and the composer, discouraged by its unfavorable reception, has not completed, or at any rate never published, the remaining sections of the trilogy, "Savonorola" and "Cesare Borgia."

Leoncavallo's early opera "Chatterton," which was finally given at the Teatro Nazionale, Rome, on March 10, 1896, was only a trifle more successful than "I Medici," but "La Boheme" (Teatro della Fenice, Venice, May 6, 1897), an adaptation of Henri Murger's novel, was far more favorably received, although handicapped by inevitable comparisons with Puccini's opera on the same subject.

Leoncavallo's next opera, "Zaza," an adaptation of the well-known play by MM. Berton and Simon, was produced at the Teatro Lirico, Milan, on November 10, 1900, with success, and has subsequently been performed in Germany, Holland and Paris. "Der Roland," Leoncavallo's latest work, was written in a response to a commission of the German Emperor.

In operas of the type of "Zaza" and "Pagliacci" his strong feeling for theatrical effect serves Leoncavallo well. He is an expert musician; his orchestration is always clever and appropriate, and his mastery of modern polyphony is undeniable. As a librettist, he shows uncommon dramatic ability. Not only has he invariably written the libretti for his own operas, but like Boito he has inevitably placed his talent at the service of his friends, as is the case, for instance, of "Mario Wetter," an opera of the Portuguese composer, Augusto Machado.

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18. *Rochester Times*, September 5, 1906. "Raggio [*sic*] Leoncavallo."

[Photograph with caption.]

The distinguished Italian composer, who sails from Rome September 25, to visit the United States and Canada, professionally. He will give a series of concerts conducting orchestras playing his operas "Pagliacci" and "Medici."

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19. *Musical America*, September 15, 1906. "Leoncavallo's Plans Are Now Complete; His La Scala Orchestra Will Be Heard Only Once in New York; Hurried Tour of Nine Weeks Will Follow Appearance in Carnegie Hall; Musicians Are to Return to Milan in December."

Preparations are now complete for the American tour of Leoncavallo, accompanied by the orchestra from La Scala, Milan. They will be heard only once in New York city [*sic*], at Carnegie Hall in October, and then make a hurried tour of only nine weeks, as the musicians are due at La Scala in December.

Like Richard Wagner, Leoncavallo is his own librettist. The text of his great triology [*sic*] "I Medici," reveals that he is at once a poet and a composer, and the dramatic force of "Pagliacci" proves that its author would have made a name for himself as a dramatist, even had the gift of muiscal composition been denied him.

In addition to his creative gifts, Leoncavallo is an interpreter of no mean ability. In his younger days he was successful as a concert pianist, and his mastery of the great orchestra of La Scala, in Milan, has demonstrated what a great gift he possesses as a musical director.

Leoncavallo's mental and artistic inheritance on both sides is distinguished. His father, Cavaliere Vincenze Leoncavallo, was an Italian jurist, an received celebrity as president of the High Court of Justice. His mother, Virginie d'Aurion, was the daughter of a famous Neapolitan painter, many of whose canvases now hang in the royal palce in Leoncavallo's native city.

20. *New York Telegraph*, September 24, 1906. "Leoncavalla's [*sic*] Big Insurance."

Leoncavallo has been insured against accident and death by Cort & Kronberg, managers of his forthcoming American tour, to the extent of $100,000. The policy went into effect yesterday, when the Italian composer left Milan for Cherbourg, where he will board the Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse for New York tomorrow.

Upon a venture so large as a bringing of Leoncavallo and La Scala Orchestra to the United States the risk is very great. Before he sailed Leoncavallo was given $10,000 in hand, and round-trip tickets for the seventy-five musicians in the orchestra were purchased. Those cost $9,375.

By the terms of the policy the managers are to receive $2,000 for each concert that may be canceled through illness or accident to Leoncavallo. As fifty appearances are booked, if he should be incapacitated or die before the first concert Cort & Kronberg will receive $2,000 for each of the fifty bookings, or $100,000 total.

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21. *New York Telegram*, September 25, 1906. "Leoncavallo's Theory of Operatic Composition."

"I have desired to write a new kind of poem—new at any rate to the stage—the epic."

So speaks Leoncavallo, the Italian composer and poet, who is now crossing this country to conduct the orchestra from La Scala, Milan, during its brief tour of this country.

In the same vein Leoncavallo expresses his ambition as a composer.

"Having decided to write epic music, where shall one find the necessary inspiration? I want living subjects, with flesh and blood like myself, who shall feel and think like men and women, who shall suffer from the same passions that sway our own hearts and senses.

"To bring to life a whole epoch! To multiply the miracle of Lazurus and command the tombs to give up their dead. To seek for the philosophical link existing between events which seem unconnected but are in reality the logical production of one scheme of life and politics!' "All this tempts me, and I say to myself, 'So much the worse for you if the burden is too heavy for your back and if the ruins of the vast buildings crush you. But at least you will die honorably.'"

It is a big ambition but a worthy one for a man who desires to attain a position in Italian music as great as Verdi's.

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22. Author and Newspaper Unknown, New York , September 26, 1906. "Leoncavallo's Special Mission."

Leoncavallo has been appointed by the King of Italy personal representative of His Majesty at the Verdi Monument celebration here on Friday, October 12, and an imposing programme, in which Leoncavallo will be the most prominent figure, is being arranged. He will arrive in New York next Tuesday to begin his tour with the Scala Orchestra of Milan.

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23. *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, September 27, 1906. "Leoncavallo in America."

CHERBOURG, 26. — Proveniente di Brema, che ha lasciato ieri, è partitio oggi di qui, diretto a New York, il vapore "Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse," della North German Lloyd, con a bordo il celebre maestro Ruggero Leoncavallo.

Il maestro è atteso a New York martedi, 2 ottobre.

Il rimanente degli artisti e l'orchestra arriverrano a New York mercoledì, 3 ottobre, a bordo del vapore "Prinzess Irene."

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24. *Musical America*, September 29, 1906. "Insure For $100,000 on Leoncavallo Tour Managers Protect Themselves Against Any Possible Losses; Composer is Said to Have Received $10,000 and Round-Trip Tickets for the Seventy-five Musicians in His Orchestra."

Announcement has been made that an accident policy for $100,000 had been taken out to insure against if Leoncavallo, the Italian composer, should be unable to appear in concerts in this country. It was said that the policy went into effect Sunday, when Leoncavallo left Milan on his way to New York, but the name of the company that issued it was not given.

According to the story, the composer before he started received $10,000 and round-trip tickets, costing $9,375, for the seventy-five musicians in the orchestra from his managers.

By the terms of the accident policy the managers are to receive $2,000 for each concert that may be cancelled through illness or accident to Leoncavallo. He is booked for fifty appearances.

25. Author and Newspaper Unknown, St. Paul, MN, September 29, 1906. "Leoncavallo."

The famous Italian composer, who comes to St. Paul Nov. 9 for a concert at the People's church. He brings with him the orchestra from La Scala, Milan and Italian soloists. Leoncavallo is best known to local music lovers as the author of "I Pagliacci." He has composed several other notable operas, however, and from these a selection will be made for the grand concerts to be conducted by the composer.

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26. Author and Newspaper Unknown, undated. "Leoncavallo Here For Tour."

Leoncavallo arrived yesterday on the Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse. After sixteen months of incessant negotiations and almost insurmountable difficulties Rudolph Aronson finally succeeded in procuring a contract from Maestro Leoncavallo (the famous composer of "Pagliacci," "Zaza," "Chatterton," "Roland de [*sic*] Berlin," "Boheme," "I Medici," etc.) For a tournee of the United States and Canada, under the direction of John Cort and S. Kronberg.

Leoncavallo is, along with Puccini and Mascagni, recognized as one of the greatest of the new school of Italian composers.

Besides excerpts from "Zaza," "Pagliacci," "Roland von Berlin," and other operas, the Maestro will conduct at his first concert in America, at Carnegie Hall, New York, on Monday evening, October 8, his famous "Ave Maria," dedicated to Pope Pius X, and his new march, "Viva l'America," dedicated to President Roosevelt.

In addition to the orchestra of sixty-five from La Scala, Milan, the following lyric artists have been engaged for the Leoncavallo concerts: Mmes. Rizzini, Ferrabini and Marelli; MM. Barbaini, Perya, Bellati and de Ferran; Signor Solari, assistant conductor.

27. *New York Telegraph*, October 3, 1906. "Famous Composer In America; Leoncavallo While Here Will Seek Material for American Opera.*"*

(By the Associated Press.)

New York, Oct. 3.—With a new march called "Viva L'America" in his suitcase, composed in commemoration of his visit to this country, Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo, the composer of "I Pagliacci," "I Medici," and other operas; who is considered one of the greatest living writers of musical scores, arrived late yesterday afternoon on the Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse. A man of universal artistic renown and of an attractive personality, his coming is an event of great importance to the music-loving public.

The "Maestro," as he is known wherever Italian opera is heard, is to make a tour of the United States and Canada at the head of the Scala orchestra of Milan.

Sig. Leoncavallo is a democratic man, brimming over with good humor, and was lionized all the way over by the passengers. Speaking of his visit, he said:

"My visit to America has more significance than a mere tour. It is my purpose while here to get the material for at least one opera based on American life. I want to go to the theaters, to see the people and meet and talk with them, to learn their ideas and ideals and see if I write them into words and music. I have not studied so much of the American literature as I could wish, but believe after all that it will be better for me to learn at first hand by meeting the people."

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28. *New York Herald*, October 3, 1906. "Leoncavallo Here, Cries 'Magnifique!'"

[. . .] "Splendide! Magnifique! Perhaps I shall find a theme over here for an opera! I have been dreaming for years about coming to America [. . .]

The voyage was splendid. I regret that my wife did not come to a country that is so discerning. I know the Americans are extremely intelligent and that they appreciate good music. New York is almost as big as Milan from an Italian standpoint, and I shall feel at home, I know. Do you know I find the entrance to New York even more beautiful than the Bay of Naples or the approach to Constantinople? Those tall buildings in the distance, theyare grandiose.

New compositions? Well, I am to play here for the first time my *Ave Maria* composed for the aid of the earthquake sufferers at Calabria. Also a new march, *Vive* [*sic*] *Amerique*, which I have dedicated to President Roosevelt. It is built on the two melodies *Yankee Doodle* and *Dixie*. Other numbers will be excerpts from *Roland of Berlin* and from my opera *Zazà* which is now playing in the Teatro Lirico, in Milan. I am now working on my *Jeunesse de Figaro*, the first production of which I hope will be made in this country.

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29. *New York Globe*, October 5, 1906. "Leoncavallo and Realism."

Realism in opera is a phenomenon that has lately been presented to a world that has become pretty thoroughly convinced of the unrealism of opera. Wagner, who in most other respects revolutionized the musical drama, merely pushed to extremes the already existing tendency when he insisted that the only credible milieu for a serious opera should be a quasi-mythological past where one might accept as natural men and women who expressed themselves in speech instead of in song. The most recent opera composers, who have learned so much from Wagner, have in this respect reversed his practice. The convention of song instead of speech they are applying to stories of ordinary everyday life. We have seen here *La Bohème*, with its costumes of 1830; we are to see Giordano's *Fedora*, with Mr. Caruso in a claw-hammer coat. In Charpentier's *Louise*, which the powers that be seem determined we shall not see here, the characters partake of soup to a musical accompaniment (they are in a garret, not a

restaurant). In Leoncavallo's *Zaza*—but then we have all seen *Zaza*, to that the Italian master has added music.

"Realism to many people," said Leoncavallo yesterday, in explaining his attitude, "means the delineation of the lower classes—the rude Sicilian peasantry of *Cavalliera* [*sic*] *Rusticana*, the strolling players of *Pagliacci*. I believe in the realistic treatment of all operatic types, even in the characters of a historical opera, in *Roland of Berlin*, as well as in *Zaza*. Flaubert in literature applied the realistic method of historical romance in the case of his *Salammbo*. By treating ordinary contemporary subjects a composer may give his opera a definite bearing on the lives of the people."

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30. *New York Herald*, October 7, 1906.

Mr. Leoncavallo's personality is an interesting one, as he displayed it in a chat with a HERALD reporter shortly after his arrival last week. He owns a figure of immense proportions, and his "Jovian" head is carried on a very powerful neck. He speaks in a deep voice, deliberately, and with emphasis, and a deal of latent humor lurks in his eyes, allowing itself in the open now and then.

It was of his own work that he talked at first—his past and present successes, his plans for the immediate future, new scores under way and so on. From this he passed to some very interesting comments on the aims and characteristics of the modern Italian school of operatic composition, of which he, Puccini and Mascagni are the foremost representatives.

"I do not believe," said Mr. Leoncavallo, in response to a question, "that the Italian school will ever be more Germanized than it is at present. I do not think our present tendency is to forsake the natural course of development which our musical traditions, our language and out [*sic*] stage marked out for us. To Wagner all composers stand in debt, of course. He has added to the sum total of musical knowledge and we all profit by it. Moreover, I feel convinced that he carried his operatic form to the loftiest point attainable for it. He said the last word of the kind.

"But we Italians, despite Verdi's apparent example in "Falstaff," have no reason to slavishly imitate him. I believe our duty lies in another dierection. Our language must, after all, with our inherited notions of melody, guide us in the way we shall go. The German tongue suggest a style of musical declamation, the Italian one of broad, flowing phrases.

"Take our commonest form of salutation, "Bon [*sic*] giorno, signor," and compare its euphony with the German love declaration, "Ich liebe dich," and you see my point at once. No, we have a distinctive field to work in, we Italians, and we will be wise to keep within it."

Among his maturing scores Mr. Leoncavallo mentioned prominently a merry little opera he is writing called "La Jeunesse de Figaro." Of this two acts are already finished.

Negotiations are said to have been opened which may result in a presentation of either "Zaza" or one of the composer's other new operas at Mr. Hammerstein's Manhattan Opera House this winter.

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31. *New York Daily Tribune*, October 8, 1906. "Signor Leoncavallo's Concert."

It is not unlikely that some future historian of music in America, or some gossipy chronicler of local musical doings in the first decade of the twentieth century, will note the season of 1906-07 as that marked by a cutaneous eruption of foreign composers. The gentlemen have come to us before, a few of them in nimble pursuit of the dollar, which, when they are at home, they decry as the visible symbol of what the rude people of this continent called art. But there is to be an unwonted influx of them this season, and it was therefore quite in the line of propriety and the fitness of things that the first concert of the season should present one of the visitors. It took place last night in Carnegie Hall, and the distinguished guest was Leoncavallo, the composer of "Pagliacci." As such he has been known to

benighted Americans for a decade, and with this badge of distinction he is likely to be marked until a gracious muse leads him again to the fountains which he haunted in vain till [*sic*] 1892 and has sought to return to, also in vain, ever since. His concert last night, with vocal and instrumental forces brought from once prolific Italy, was plainly designed to broaden the knowledge of his audience; and it did, but it did not bring the conviction that the accusation of being a one-opera composer was ill founded. With an orchestra which did valorous deeds calculated to bring the name of La Scala which it is bearing into disrepute, and a company of singers which could only bring back memories of the operatic wrecks that have been stranded on our shores by winds blowing from Mexico and South America, he presented excerpts from his earliest as well as his latest works—from "Chatterton." which brought him his first grief, from "I Medici," which first taught him the vanity of trying to take a leaf out of the big gothic book of Wagner, from "Zaza," from "Pagliacci," which gave him large fame and some fortune, to "Rolando di Berlino," which the German Emperor commissioned, out of a vain desire to glorify his house and play a trump card in European politics at the same time. Yet when all was done the judicious listener went away from the concert room with his early suspision [*sic*] grown to a conviction that the genius of the visitor had thus far spent itself upon the one opera that introduced his name to us and has kept it in bright and grateful memory ever since.

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32. *The New York Times*, October 8, 1906. "One Beloved Opera."

Lots of Notabilities There.

The appearance of this far-famed gentleman at the conductor's desk last night was the signal for an appropriate welcome.

Truth to tell, the boxes in the huge hall were not positively packed, while there were far too many gaps in other sections.

Ma che! The galleries were well-filled and there was little or no standing room unoccupied.

Official Italy was represented in the character of Count Massiglia, the Consul-General. In other [*sic*] box on the same tier sat Cavaliere Enrico Conried. Among the other celebrities in the audience may be mentioned Cavaliere Arturo Vigna, Commendatore Tito Ricordi, Commendatore Dr. Gialetti, son of the Italian Premier; Mr. Oscar Hammerstein and Mr. Victor Herbert.

Not a One-Opera Maestro.

Viewed from the back of the audience, and as a conductor, the maestro reminds one forcibly of Arturo Vigna.

The two men have the same short and burly stature, the same gestures of the hands, the same poise of the head, the same solemn and imperious attitudes.

But it was less Leoncavallo the conductor than Leoncavallo the composer that we had gone out to see, hear and digest last night.

Sad and exasperating as it must seem to the Italians of Italy, to the Italians of New York, and alas! to Americans generally, the maestro had till now been known only as the composer of "Pagliacci." One purpose of his present pilgrimage is, doubtless, to convince us that he is not, as we have fancied him, a genius with only one masterpiece to his credit. We learned (if we were ignorant of the fact before) that he has composed several operas, of much interest, and, judging by the selections interpreted by the orchestra and soloists of La Scala who have accompanied him to America, also of some beauty.

One Beloved Opera.

And yet—and yet—even after, as before, hearing those selections from "Zaza," "I Medici," "Chatterton" and Rolando di Berlino," I am sure that it is for his setting to passionate music the passionate story of the wronged mountebank in "Pagliacci" he will be best loved here.

As the maestro hinted to me yesterday evening, when I had the honor of chatting with him about music, strange as it may seem to admirers of his operas, he has always been profoundly impressed, if not much influenced, by the example of Wagner. In his "Chatterton," the earliest of his works—written when he was a student at Bologna—there are traces of the reverence which he still pays to he [*sic*] great Richard. The "Chatterton" intermezzo, interpreted last night, is marked by considerable poetic sentiment, and, while less original than his later compositions, has interest.

Full of Dramatic Expression.

His "Zaza," one of the most recent achievements, was represented in the programme by no fewer than four excerpts, it is marked by many of the faults and virtues which seem to be characteristic of modern musical realism in Italy, whether, like Leoncavallo, Cilea (whose "Adrienne [. . .] are Milanese and pupils of Ponchielli, or like Leoncavallo Cila [*sic*] (whose "Adriana Lecouvreur" we are to hear this season at Metropolitan), or Giordano (the creator of "Andrea Chenier" and "Fedora"), they are Southerners.

Among these characteristics are an intensity in dramatic expression that at times exceeds its legitimate limits; a wealth of passon [*sic*], the charm of a new kind of melody, most real, though too long drawn out, and a tendency to most wearisome declamation. Among them, too, is a strange morbidity, or musical pessimism.

There is passion, of a kind demanded by the subject, in the duo from Leoncavallo's "Zaza," which was sung with more emotional earnestness than [. . .]

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33. *The New York Sun*, October 8, 1906. "Music and Drama; A Leoncavallo Concert."

Before the end of the season, New Yorkers will have had an opportunity to hear the three composers who represent the "veristic" school of modern Italian opera—Mascagni, Puccini, and Leoncavallo. Mascagni crossed the ocean a few years ago and had reason to repent it. Puccini will visit us during the opera season, when he will no doubt be the recipient of great ovations at the Metropolitan Opera House. As for Leoncavallo, he made his American debut last night, and while Carnegie Hall was not crowded, those who were present applauded him with a passionate intensity that must have made him think—as the weather doubtless did this morning—that he was in his own beloved Italy.

The concert was of a kind that is more popular in other cities than in the metropolis, consisting as it did chiefly of extracts from operas, and all by one man—Leoncavallo. There was, of course, the inevitable prologue from his one successful opera, "I Pagliacci"; and there were excerpts from "Zaza," "Chatterton," "I Medici," and "Rolando di Berlino," besides an "Ave Maria" and a new march on national themes - "Viva l'America," dedicated to President Roosevelt. The numbers were sung by Mmes. Rizzini, Calvi, Ferrabini, MM. Barbaini, Perya, Bellatti, De Ferran, Macchi. None of these calls for individual criticism. Together, they made a great deal of noise - not as much, however, as the audience, which redemanded everything on the programme. The orchestra was announced as that of La Scala, in Milan. If it was, then we can only say that we have a much better orchestra at our Metropolitan than the Italians have at their best opera house.

Like Mascagni and several other composers, Leoncavallo is a one-opera man. His "I Pagliacci" has had, for a number of years, almost as much success as Mascagni's "Cavalleria Rusticana," which inspired it. It never deserved a hundredth part of this success, much of which was due to its coarse libretto and the fact that it appeared at a time when all the world was crazy over the (now neglected) Mascagni and his "verism"—alias vulgarism. His other operatic attempts were failures, although in the case of one of them he had the advantage of having as press agent and collaborator the German Kaiser, who spent $24,000 on staging "Roland von Berlin," filled the house at its first performance with invited guests, and personally led the clacque [*sic*]. The excerpts from this opera played and sung last night made

it clear why, in spite of its sensational triumph in Berlin, it was not adopted by the opera managers all over Europe who went to that city to hear it. The music [. . .].

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34. *New York Herald*, October 8, 1906. "Mr. Leoncavallo's Great Welcome; Composer Greeted with Enthusiasm as He Led His Orchestra in Carnegie Hall."

Mr. Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo, Italian composer, known the musical world over by his opera, "I Pagliacci," made his first appearance before an American audience in Carnegie Hall last night as conductor at a concert devoted to his own compositions.

With an orchestra and a company of operatic singers, both brought from Italy for the purpose, he presented a series of excerpts from his operas, chiefly from operas as yet unheard in this country.

Mr. Leoncavallo's "I Pagliacci" made a remarkable stir some years ago. Its success has been phenomenal. It has become a permanent asset in operatic repertoires and bits of its music are household possessions. Last night's opportunity to make its composer's acquaintance in the flesh seemed an occassion "worth while," as it attracted an immense audience.

The results can be summed up in two statements. The first of these is that Mr. Leoncavallo was given a vociferous welcome, and his music, his conducting, his orchestra and his artists applauded to the echo by an audience composed largely of his own countrymen.

The second is that from a musical point of view the whole entertainment was one to make the judicious grieve—in plain English, a dismal failure.

Apparently Mr. Leoncavallo has been misinformed by his managers of the state of musical cultivation in New York. At any rate, judged by local standards, his orchestra last night and his singers were far below the concert standard insisted upon by this city.

Under such circumstances it would be unfair to pass judgment on the merit of the compositions presented, which were excerpts from "Zaza," "Medici," "Chatterton" and "Rolando di Berlino."

Mr. Leoncavallo conducted with evident knowledge of routine and some grace. It would be pleasant to New York's opera loving public, who greatly admire Mr. Leoncavallo as a composer, to learn that his first appearance here and that of his company were great artistic successes. But unfortunately the occasion had no such aggreeable result, generous as was his welcome and lenient as was his friendly audience.

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35. *Brooklyn Eagle*, October 9, 1906. "Leoncavallo Heard in New York; His Music Heard at Carnegie Hall by Enthusiastic Compatriots."

Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo, the Italian composer, made his bow to an American audience at Carnegie Hall last night. Most of the Americans assembled for the occasion were born in Italy, and their attitide toward their guest was that of unfaltering enthusiasm. They demanded that the bill be repeated, piecemeal; they lavished flowers—somebody did, at least—on the leader and his singers; yet, Oh! the composer brings about 50 musicians, advertised as the orchestra from La Scala, and six or eight singers. All of these artists are of hot temperament; in their eagerness they rise above considerations of key. The shrieking, bleating and squalling of the concerted numbers were reminiscent of the worst days of the miscellaneous concert, but the bravos, flowers and handshakings were doubtless intended to temper that fact. The orchestra is not so bad a company, and when it shall have rehearsed for a bit it will give a good accountof itself, but most of the singers have seen their best days, and it is feared that they were not very good ones. Their method is vicious, they use the tremolo constantly, and that invariably untunes a voice. Mr. Barbaini, the tenor, who clings to an opera hat and opera manners, has a tone as piercing as a trumpet, but it is unmusical, and the whole programme lacked softened and contrasting numbers. Like Mascagni,

his countryman, Leoncavallo is known as a one-opera composer. Last night he proved by his selections from "Chatterton," "Zaza," "Medici," and "Rolando di Berlino" that he had written several other works, but he also disclosed such a striking and strident likeness in all of them that "Pagliacci" may still stand as conspectus of the series. The prologue to that opera, by the by, was sung last night by Mr. Bellatti, and was nearly the best thing on the bill, though an "Ave Maria" deserved respectful consideration. Mr. Leoncavallo is a heavy, dark, placid, unaffected man, who looks quite as much a German as an Italian, and in his music he has essayed an apparently hopeless crossing of the Italian melodic with the German harmonic school. It is to be regretted that he plays nothing but his own music own this tour, for a proper missionary enterprise would be that of informing us of the present state of his art in Italy. We know that more new operas are produced there than in any other part of the world, yet we are doomed to ignorance as of their worth.

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36. *The New York Sun*, October 11. 1906. "The Leoncavallo Concert; Second Appearance of the Italian Composer; 'Pagliacci' Furnishes Some Numbers for the Programme—The Public Declines to Be Enthusiastic—Another Lesson for Deluded Europeans—Small Crowd."

Mr. Leoncavallo gave his second concert last night in Carnegie Hall. The pomp and pride and circumstance of the first concert were gone, gone the captains and the shouting. It was a slender and a decorous audience which faced the composer. Empty seats loomed like financial reefs in the broken sea of faces. There was no credivity in the house. A fatiferous laxity reigned in the tenuous air. Possibly Mr. Leoncavallo, who came hither in darkness, saw a great light. If he did not his vision is void of potency. The lesson was writ large so that he who read it might run.

The programme of last night's obsequies comprised familiar numbers from "Pagliacci," some of the things heard Monday night and one or two other tidbits of funeral baked meats from the Leoncavallo pantry. The audience was kind, as audiences in this town always are. It matters little what music was played or sung last night. It even matters little how it was presented, though here might be ground for lamentations loud and long.

Such a slaughter of the innocent is seldom witnessed. But this public applauds those who try to entertain it. If they fail, they are not assailed with audible manifestations of disapproval. When the performer presents a local assemblage a discomforting spectacle of inadequacy, upon his head, even though it wears a crown of European laurel, New York launches the awful curse of silence and neglect.

When will Europeans learn that what their unfortunate compatriots report to them, what they read in the critical discussions of artistic and inartistic doings and what once in a lustrum they read about these United States in their own newspapers do not consitute one vast web of falsehood? Let us suppose, for example, that Mr. Leoncavallo comes here under contract to American managers and that they assure him that his name alone will suffice to attract American to his concerts. Let us suppose that acting under such advice he comes with a company of singers who would not be tolerated in Leghorn or Pisa and an orchestra which cannot count two in a bar, even with the aid of a conductor. What sound excuse has he? Has he not heard what happened to Mascagni? Has he never heard what kind of a company sings to New Yorkers regularly throughout their opera season? If not, why not?

Yet it is unquestionable that when Mr. Leoncavallo has gone home a sadder and wiser man some other European will cross the western ocean to try to foot the benighted Yankees. Mr. Leoncavallo has come here with honorable intentions, no doubt. He desires greatly that we should hear the operas which Europe has heard and passed by. But he ought to have known that the method which he chose for the introduction was foredoomed to failure. The operatic concert is futile when it is at its best and in these Leoncavallo entertainments it is at its worst. Some of the singing last night was amusing, some of it was painful. The orchestra, which forged its way through Monday night's programme at least tolerably, was hollow and crude in tone and played with the military precision of a drove of cattle.

The composer stood alone, a dignified figure in the concert, pathetic because of his dignity. He at least comported himself like an artist. Mr. Conried may give a performance of "Pagliacci" in his honor. That would be altogether fitting. But it is to be hoped that Mr. Leoncavallo will not conduct it. Last night he showed that he was a past master at cutting the heart out of his own music, which has red blood in it if nothing else.

There will be more of these experiments upon a patient public, we presume. The past has taught Europe nothing. The future will be long in convincing it that America knows what is good and what is not in music and that it has its own quiet manner of disposing of unworthiness. It is a sad fate that meets the touring musician who invokes the dread silence of the New York public. "When he falls he falls like Lucifer, never to rise again."

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37. Author and Newspaper Unknown, New York, October 11, 1906. "More From Leoncavallo; Second Concert is Excitedly Applauded."

Leoncavallo gave his second concert last night in Carnegie Hall. There was a fair audience, and the Italian element greeted the various excerpts from Leoncavallo's operas with excited applause. The three women who sang, Mmes. Ferrabini, Rizzini and Calvi, added to the favorable impression they made on Monday night.

Leoncavallo's conducting is dignified, musicianly and effective, insofar as it can be with the unco-ordinated material at his disposal.

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38. *The Nation*, October 11, 1906.

Three weeks earlier than last year, the musical season in New York was opened on October 8, at Carnegie Hall, with an operatic concert by Ruggiero Leoncavallo, one of the three composers who created the "veristic" school—works written with a dagger dipped in blood. There were eight Italian singers and an orchestra announced as that of Italy's leading opera house, La Scala of Milan, which proved to be quite inferior to that of our Metropolitan Opera House. The programme included a march, "Viva l'America," dedicated to President Roosevelt, an "Ave Maria," dedicated to the Pope, and excerpts from five of Leoncavallo's operas—"Chatterton," "Zaza," "I Medici," "Rolando di Berlino," and, of course, "I Pagliacci," the only one of his operas which has enjoyed a success. For critical hearers the interest of the occasion centered largely on the selection—the overture and a duo—from "Rolando di Berlino," the opera which Leoncavallo composed at the request and with the aid of the German Emperor. If we may judge by the specimens of the music we heard on Monday, "Rolando" is pretentious stuff, adroitly written, like most of Leoncavallo's music, to bring out vocal effects, but barren of melodic or harmonic ideas. The concert as a whole was painfully monotonous, all the offerings being mere *Kapellmeistermusik*, such as almost any musician might write by the yard. The most individual offering was the Ave Maria, which was written for the benefit of the earthquake sufferers in Calabria.

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39. *New York Mail*, October 11, 1906. "Leoncavallo and American Tunes; Italian Composer's March Shows Little Grasp of Our National Spirit in Music."

If Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo could have heard "Dixie" and "Yankee Doodle" sung and played by Americans before he wrote his new march, "Vive [*sic*] l'America," the Italian composer would have gained some useful information about the national temperament.

The march, "respectfully dedicated to President Roosevelt," was a feature of the second Leoncavallo concert at Carnegie Hall last night. It consists wholly of these two tunes, plus a little ornamentation—there is no development, no originality, save in the song experiment of solemnly intoning "Yankee Doodle" in the brass, and in a minor key. And "Dixie" was surely never played so mildly as by these well-meaning foreigners. After all, no better proof could have been offered of the idiomatic Americanism in the stirring tune itself.

Besides the march, and excerpts from "Pagliacci" and his other operas, Leoncavallo played last night a "Suite Ancienne," of four old dances. They proved agreeable trifles. Of the singers, Mme. Calvi again showed herself the most creditable.

An audience of moderate size heard two performances of nearly everything on the list.

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40. *The New York Evening Post*, October 11, 1906. "Music and Drama; Second Leoncavallo Concert."

The second of the Leoncavallo concerts was given last night at Carnegie Hall, with the same singers and orchestra as the first and with the composer conducting. There were six excerpts from "I Pagliacci"—one more than the programme promised—all performed with more vigor than grace. There were also selections from "Zaza," "Rolando di Berlino," and "La Bohème," and the "Ave Maria." The orchestral numbers were the American march, and a "Suite ancienne," which came nearer a smooth performance than anything the orchestra has done yet. The last concert will be Sunday night, the first half of the program being devoted to "Rolando di Berlino."

As the "Ave Maria" seems to be the best thing Leoncavallo has written, it may be appropriate to reprint here the letter he wrote to the Pope begging permission to dedicate it to him—which was granted. The letter appeared in the *Osservatore Romano* shortly after the terrible earthquake last year.

O holy father, the cry of distress from the remotest end of our beautiful peninsula which has stirred the whole world, has awakened in my Christian soul a still deeper and more painful echo. With Calabria down there, the terribly mutilated, are associated my sweetest recollections of my parents, and my happy days of childhood. In the shadow of those mountains I grew up, in those Alpine valleys I dreamed my first songs. The first ray of fame, which God's goodness granted me, is connected in thought with that hospitable region of which I consider myself a son. Thus I feel it at this moment my duty to do more than others. Inspired by the deep religious feeling which has always animated me, I resolved to compose a Prayer to the holy Virgin Mary, to have it printed at my expense, and to give one-half of the proceeds to the sufferers in Calabria, the other half for the adornment of the Cathedral of the Madonna della Sera in Montalto Uffugo. Holy father! If I could get prefixed to this song a few lines from the Father of Christendom, granting the lowliest of his children the honor of accepting the dedication of the Ave Maria and commending its sale to the faithful, I should be able, with the mighty assistance of your holiness and the believers, to bestow the noblest, the most Catholic, the most useful charity.

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41. Author and Newspaper Unknown, October 11, 1906. "Leoncavallo's Second Concert at Carnegie Hall."

During one of the pauses in Leoncavallo's second New York concert last night at Carnegie Hall two of the composer's fellow countrymen tried to tell each other how old "Pagliacci" was.

There seemed to be some doubt in the mind of the fervid Italian gentlemen whether the opera was ten or fifteen years old. Finally they decided that either age was very young for an opera, and that this particular one was a very lusty infant.

"Pagliacci" formed the major part of the performnce last night. In addition to the five solo numbers from the opera, a duo was added, sung by Mme. Calvé and Mr. De Ferran. And though the

audience which listened was a small one, its appreciation was as hearty as that of a crowded house at the Metropolitan, with Caruso as Canio.

The programme was so popular in character that it seems a pity Mr. Leoncavallo held it back until his second appearance. Had his first concert been more popular, his audience at the second would have been larger.

The opening number of the second part, a Suite Ancienne with four movements, was particularly delicate and appealing. The smoothness of the orchestra at this point went far to prove that the band has recovered from the inevitable nervousness of a first appearance last Monday.

Selections from "Rolando di Berlino," "Zaza" and "La Bohème" made up the selections, which concluded with the new "Ave Maria," sung again by Mme. Calvé, who renewed the aggreeble impression she made on Monday. Mr. Leoncavallo again demonstrated his suavity as a conductor, and singers and players were again greeted by an enthusiasm which showed that the greater portion of the audience were fellow countrymen of the composer and the singers from La Scala.

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42. *New York Herald*, October 11, 1906. "Mr. Leoncavallo Conducts Again; His Orchestra Heard Once More in Carnegie Hall Under Composer's Baton."

Opportunity to improve the acquaintance begun with Mr. Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo on Monday evening was offered in Carnegie Hall last night when the Italian composer, with his orchestra and company of singers, gave a second concert. It was not a large audience which assembled to take advantage of the opportunity, but in proportion to its size it was quite as enthusiastic as was Monday's gathering, applauding everything and insisting on double measure right through the programme.

There was nothing in the performance from a musical point of view to modify the estimate of Mr. Leoncavallo's forces which was made at their recent debut here. The orchestra's playing was again very ragged and the work of the singers, at its best, indifferent.

Excerpts from "I Pagliacci" made up the larger part of the programme, which contained also a quartet from "Rolando di Berlino," a duo from "Zaza," two short numbers from "La Bohème" (Mr. Leoncavallo's opera of that name, not Puccini's); a Suite Ancienne for orchestra, a march, "Viva l'America," dedicated to President Roosevelt, and an "Ave Maria," dedicated to Pope Pius X.

It is, of course, always difficult to pass judgment on the merits of operatic music when heard without accessories in the concert room, but it is undeniable that the excerpts from Mr. Leoncavallo's later operas suffered severely last night by close comparison with the vital bubbling "Pagliacci" music which had preceded them. The orchestral suite proved a very slim waisted composition.

The most acceptable singing of the evening was that done by Mme. Calve in Nedda's song to birds. Unfortunately, however, Mme. Calve lost herself in repeating the number and it took the conductor to help her back into the ensemble again.

Other artists were Mmes. Rizzini and Ferrabini and Messrs. Barbaini, Bellati, de Ferran and Perya.

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43. *New York Daily Tribune*, October 11, 1906. "Leoncavallo's Concert."

There is reason to regret that Mr. Leoncavallo chose to devote half of his second New York concert to excerpts from "Pagliacci." It is not that the opera lacks merit, but because its merit is already recognized. For years it has stood high, both here and elsewhere, in popularity and frequency of performance. Its fame, indeed, has travelled the length and the breadth of the land. Thanks to Mr. Savage, "Pagliacci" has penetrated even to Spokane and Seattle. The prologue, meantime, is as familiar as a household word. Nor has any role in the opera failed a worthy interpreter.

The fact that at one time or another in the last twelve or thirteen years Melba, Sembrich, de Lucia, Caruso, Campanari, Scotti, and Reiss have been associated with "Pagliacci" at the Metropolitan speaks for the superlative excellence of the singing. Nothing, therefore, could be gained by mangling the work for concert performance at Carnegie Hall last night, and much valuable time was lost—time in which the audience might have been making the acquaintance of unfamiliar music by Mr. Leoncavallo, especially more of his "Bohème," which arouses such natural and legitimate curiosity.

The numbers from "La Bohème" which were sung suggested that the opera if given here in its entirety might rival in public favor Puccini's delightful version of the same story. As it is, probably most of the audience went home humming or whistling "Mimi Pinson la piu diletta." A "Suite Ancienne," however, had the usual fate of absolute music by an Italian composer. It is a pretty enough version of pseudo-antique, but undeniably trivial.

The entertaining informality of the stage proceedings, which occasioned some quiet amusement Monday night , was even more in evidence last night, shorn as the occasion was of the huge wreaths, massive floral tributes, and other trappings of a quasi-official greeting. But unintended drollery reached its acme when in the middle of a solo an emissary bearing a single slim bunch of roses jogged resolutely down the main aisle and as resolutely stood behind the conductor's desk, his right hand upraised with the bouquet. There was a ripple of merriment that did not omit the singer. Luckily a kindly hand from the front row tapped the emissary on the shoulder and steered him safely to a seat. The song over, the singer had her roses. Here, as at other trying moments, Mr. Leoncavallo bore himself with unassuming dignity.

The programme for the next concert on Sunday evening devotes one section to excerpts from "Roland of Berlin."

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44. *Musical America*, October 13, 1906. "Leoncavallo Concert Opens New York's Musical Season; Enthusiastic Audience Greets Composer of "Pagliacci" at His Initial Appearance in This Country."

The above photograph was taken expressly for MUSICAL AMERICA on the arrival of the *Kaiser Wilhelm die Grosse* in New York last week. Grouped about Signor Leoncavallo, who held in his hand a bouquet of roses presented to him as he stepped off the boat, are the members of the deputation of Verdi Memorial Committee that met him, inclusing Charles Barsotti, editor of "Il Progresso Italo-Americano," Dr. M. Del Vecchio, James Togna, Dante del Papa Giacomo Quintano. [. . .]

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45. *New York Telegraph*, October 15, 1906. "'Roland of Berlin' This Time; Leoncavallo Pleases Another Carnegie Hall Audience."

Leoncavallo was heard again last night at Carnegie Hall by a large and demonstrative audience, consisting to a great extent of his countrymen. The first part of his programme was devoted exclusively to his 'Roland of Berlin' music, and the artists Bellatti, who has a temperamental voice; Rizzini, who assumes an air of delightful nonchalance, and Mme. Calvi did little more than emphasize the impression as to their artistic abilities which they made last Monday night.

The "Ave Maria," this time sung by Madame Ferrabini, a singer of considerable dramatic power and richness of voice, as usual went well with the audience.

46. *Musical Courier*, October 17, 1906. "Leoncavallo and Other Latinisms."

Leoncavallo is an Italian of the Italians. He was a student at the distinguished Naples Conservatory, a pupil of Cesi (who was a pupil of Thalberg) and in counterpoint a pupil of a school renowned for its scholarly achievements.

The fiber of a man is not discovered in the interview, because he is guarded and protected while undergoing the process, but when the subject is off his guard, the interviewer can by taking a very mean advantage of his naivete get at the whole soul of the artist. Hence, knowing the innocence of the Latin nature, the present interviewer, taking advantage of the distinguished visitor, pumped him, and secured a point of vantage utterly unsuspected by the innocent victim.

We of the United States hardly appreciate the profound nature of an Italian of the scholarly kind. We are metaphysical, logical and Voltarian in our views, but the warm and sciatic nature, full-blooded and dramatic in its impulsive activity, we do not understand.

We are affected with a Puritan conception of the theory of art as applied not only to music but to all efforts of artistic expression—hence the decision of the Pope to force exclusive chant music upon us.

Every religious power fears the ultimate emancipation of the individual mind as a corollary of its own insistence, and therefore the Roman, as well as any other Church, expects even the arts to become enslaved to its own propaganda; and the Church is right. No Church can exist if it admits the individual freedom; how can a mind have the right to assert itself, expecting the Church to live with its freedom?

Leoncavallo is an individual protest, not against the Church, not against any organized social or other system, but against the bondage of the intelligence, and no one can escape this impression who properly hears the prologue of the "Pagliacci," a protest against organized form, against hereditary influence, against accepted institutions. It is new in its character, new in its utterance, new in its material force.

The fact that Leoncavallo is now in this country means that we are in contact with the modern Italian spirit of music and that we are experiencing directly its results of immediate touch and contact. Modern Italian music is dramatic, and dramatic in the histrionic sense; that is, dramatic as a stage effect. Shakespeare insisted on the defining the difference between the literary dramatic and the histrionic dramatic, and the Italian composer utilizes the material of the drama for musical effects on that very basis.

Leoncavallo is a man of forty-seven, in the full bloom of thought and action, and inspired by a tradition which many of us fail to comprehend. We fail sometimes to appreciate the life of an Italian musical thought because we are so completely dominated by the Teutonic spirit that we fail to feel the power of the Italian phrase, even a phrase as it were. Very naturally this insistence upon a prejudicial sentiment must find its equivalent in the loss of intelligence, yet, at the same time, the Italian local situation is to a great extent responsible for this and for the ignorance prevailing here on the subject of Italian music.

Italian music is subject to a most powerful monopoly, and such a monopoly as we in our monopolistic country can fully appreciate. The houses of Ricordi, a great and impressive publishing insitution, and Sonzogno, its rival, virtually own the output of Italian genius, and control the edition of any and every work submitted. If we are under the control of rebates, if we are under the control of railway rates, if we are under the control of monopolies in many phases of economical life, but if we still own our own artistic souls and are still free to write, knowing that some one [*sic*] will at least consider our subject, we must sympathize with those whose art is subject to control.

In Italy, if one should write a symphony or an opera, one is limited to the decision of two publishers, who decide whether the work is worthy or unworthy without even hearing it. In other words, music, the language of utterance, is subject to the decision of those who do not desire to listen unless they are interested pecuniarily.

Profits of the Art.

Very naturally there is an axiom that forbids money and art to be identified, but in order to defeat its own hierarchy it seems as if art and money are most closely identified. Not like in Germany, where it

is said that "Dreck und Kunst" go together, but in Italy, where there is a harmonious decision to recognize the effect, the dollar, because the dollar is as much now in Italy as the pound is in France.

Leoncavallo did not know this sinister rule of economics, neither did any of his confreres; they simply worked, and in their work they disclosed a problem, the problem of the modern opera. And this modern opera became a productive industry, just as oil, cattle, railroads and mines became productive industries in this country. The world accepted the operas of modern Italy, and poured its stipend into the treasury of a few firms. Music, out of Italy, has always been an incentive to personal gain, and the very nature of its conduct became productive. The copyrights of "Cavalleria Rusticana" 6,000,000 francs have been garnished; out of Leoncavallo's "Pagliacci" the Sonzogno firm has received 4,000,000 francs, and without a statement to its composer, who must accept the decision on profits without a murmur!

Probably this very fact, the profit on publishing, animated the compositorial circle; the fact that the piano and vocal score running up to 450,000 copies without reserve of the "Pagliacci" was sufficient to create a new supply of works. But this supply did not work out its own demand; simply because one cannot order genius. The 450,000 copies of the piano and vocal score belong to Leoncavallo, but the pecuniary profit went to Ricordi, and under such conditions, entirely apart of Ricordi, genius not only does not flourish; it dies. In Italy the composer, supposing him to be the librettist, as in the case with Leoncavallo, receives thirty per cent of the net income of the performances and nothing whatever of the publishing income. A publisher like Ricordi may sell 1,000,000 copies of an aria and profit $100,000 from the publishing, and yet the composer gets nothing; and he has no chance to go to another publisher, because if he stays with Ricordi, Sonzogno will not entertain him, and if he goes to Sonzogno, Ricordi will not listen to him. Thus the monopoly in Italy is completed.

The Publishing Force.

It is a question resting entirely with the proofreader of the publisher. Probably that question is also at the bottom of the success of the American composer. Within the history of the publishing business there is centered the fate of many composers. One can publish innumerable songs and symphonies by paying for them, but in Italy one cannot even pay for them unless the publishers accept the work, and it is a traditional fact that the publisher is the least able or capable to prophesy the fate of a composition.

Of course it was of no value, in the interviews which the present writer has secured with Leoncavallo since his arrival here, to secure from him his present view of musical conditions in America, for the man was fresh from the ship, and did not know his bearings here. But his views of conditions in Italy are certainly more interesting, to say to the least, than any transitory notions or captious criticisms of the present. Leoncavallo is not anxious to gauge us. His relations to the German Emperor are well known, and a person who arrest the attention of a monarch must be interesting himself.

"How did that strange personality affect you?" I asked.

"As an aesthetic influence he amazed me. Not only did he grasp the modern attitude and its relations to the art of the past, but his insistence of the ethical force in any art, particularly so in music, makes him a force, an empire in himself. Naturally the historical association in my 'Roland of Berlin' had its dramatic episodes, but the Emperor went far beyond that and strengthened my ideal with suggestions both technical and poetic, so much so that I was overwhelmed with surprise."

The question of operatic financial success has no place in the economy of Leoncavallo. He felt himself strong and conscientious in the future of his works, particularly here in America, and believes that real achievement is sure to secure an impartial judgment, based upon a fair hearing.

On His Critics.

Leoncavallo is not in the least perturbed about the inspired "roasting" his present concert project has received in some questionable quarters. "I was warned before I came to New York," he said, "of certain amazing conditions that exist in your city, and I know exactly how art and business and criticism are all intermingled here. But I am determined to let my work stand on its own merits, and I am presenting it to the people, not to the critics. I do not mind criticism in my own country—why would I mind it here? I mean the criticism of critics, of course. Real artists do not create for the praise of critics,

nor are they moved by their censure. As for myself, I do not even read criticisms. Why should I read descriptions of the impression I made on my audiences when I can see and feel for myself how I stand with them? The issue is between the people and myself. Each critic, estimable as he may be, reminds me of a third party forcing his way into a conversation where he is not wanted and not listened to. I understand that there are such persons as critics, but I must believe it on hearsay, for I have never met any, nor have I ever read their writings. It is quite clear to me that, as Rome is not Italy, New York is not America. My appeal is not made to a city, but to a country; not to a clique, but to a nation. Persons in a position to know in Italy have told me how the criticism of the New York daily papers is regarded throughout the rest of your country, and of course, being a faithful reader of THE MUSICAL COURIER, the representative newspaper of the world, I know a great deal about critical conditions here, which some of my informants abroad do not know. I am confident as to the outcome of my tour, and look forward with eager anticipation to laying my work before your great public in the other cities. New York has received me royally, for of course I do not look upon the attacks which my manager tells me the critics have made as the real expression of the New York public. The enthusiasm of my audiences is the verdict which was passed on me here, and which I accept gratefully and will remember as long as I live."

The Latin Temperament.

The temperament of the Latin races is not exactly gauged by the Anglo-Saxon, which in the ultimate analysis forgets the very fact of temperament. From the issue of a Latin race Leoncavallo received the flow of sentiment called "melody," just as he inherited many other sentimental and emotional waved of human expression. Sometimes we are impressed with the sentimentalism of sentiment, and we overdo the very expression under which emotion is vivified by the Italians - and that makes of a classical work a mere classical imitation stretched far beyond its possible existence. It then dies on our hands. To thoroughly feel Italian art our natures would first have to be charged with an overplus of emotion, whereas even the elements of emotion are unfelt by most of us. Hence we fail to appreciate to its classical limit such a dramatically powerful aria, as, for instance, "Casta Diva." It does appeal to our Gothic, cold, rigid, mathematical thought, a thought that has put out Leibnitz, Kant, Fichte, Lessing, Goethe and Haeckel, as against the warm natures [. . .] Goldonis, and the tremendous and powerful leaders of the Renaissance (who made Germany, and in fact all trans-Alpine countries, a literary possibility), the mysterious Leonardo, the Cyclopean Michael, those wonderful poets and characters Aretius, Boccaccio, Petrarch, Dante and God only knows who—there were so many!

But their warmth, reflected in Palestrina, in Mercadante, in the Scarlattis, Durante, Padre Martini, and even that exotic, Orlando Lasso, is inbred in the nation itself, and was expressed during the last century in the melodic magnificence of Donizetti, Rossini, Bellini and Verdi, through whom our very nature, our views of life, were affected, until we could hardly breathe without humming one of their arias. They are a set of classics today, not because they are operatically inimitable, but because they have aroused in us an idea, and that idea, being national and natural, does not die entirely outside of its musical valuation. We may criticise them, but we cannot create their melody and their structure. The Italian is naturally melodic as a psychological fact.

Stern and rigorous with Beethoven and Brahms and their modern [. . .] involved and at times perplexing orchestration of tone, true to the instincts of the trend of that art, open to suggestion as to means of expression, and utilizing the art of technic as an art apart from the art itself, we look upon [. . .] melody as simplicity, as naivete, forgetting that without it a fugue is cold and shattered. Hence the absence of singers. We are in an antagonistic attitude the moment a singer sings an Italian aria. The very recitative has lost its wondrous meaning. There is nothing dramatic about its texture any more. In short, we are blase on Italian music and art. As a fact, however, there is a Renaissance today in Italy that is so healthy, so refreshing, so complete in its esthetical force, so humanizing, just as humanizing as the Greek revival of the sixteenth century—that it puts all our commercial propositions into the darkest shade. We could even afford to exult, as did Lessing and Heine, at the idiocy of our supposed supremacy. Again will it be illustrated that the cradle of the race is still significant as a cradle, and that we are are children, even in Marconi science. Just for a moment think of Volta, of Galvano, of the predecessors of these, all known

as the very basis of modern science, not only submitting the proposition, but also the instrument to prove it, as Marconi did. How stupid, in view of the fact of the thermometer and the barometer, for us to expose ourselves as a competitive force in art and invention. Sir Isaac Newton could afford it, and even he, one of the saving intellects of the earth, the one who transcendantly changed our babyhood into manhood, was as much Italian as Spinoza was, and certainly Spinoza was an Italian.

We are all Italian the moment we live. We cannot live without Italy in our veins, in our constitution, certainly not in music, certainly not in medieval art and all subsequent art, certainly not in thought itself. Even the creation of a German Empire must be credited to the Italian, Cavour, as history will do. In fact, if we wish to live now, we must live in the Italy that made *now* possible, recumbent, reposeful, quiet, intellectually religious, sciolistic, ardent, devoted to marvelous ideals—Italy, good, active forever, resplendent in thought and action, the same Italy as in the past!

If Italy has a transient art today in music, give it a chance and borrow from it, as we always did, the grandeur of its simplicity, a simplicity that can ever express itself in the melody, the font of musical thought. But it is a great question, that question of national melody; let it rest until some one—another Nietzsche—tries to solve it.

In the meantime the very presence of Leoncavallo must help us in the manifestations of our own ideals. How rarely have we with us a being created such beautiful etching as the "Pagliacci"! How rarely! Can we do it? Not yet.

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47. *Musical America*, October 20, 1906. "Leoncavallo Again Warmly Applauded; Italian Composer's Last New York Concert Finest of Series; Excerpts from "Rolando di Berlino" the Principal Offerings of the Evening—Mme. Rizzini's Fine Voice and Style Delight Audience."

The third and last of the series of concerts given in New York by Ruggiero [sic] Leoncavallo and his Italian singers and orchestra took place in Carnegie Hall on Sunday evening, before an audience whose responsive enthusiasm equalled that of the two previous events.

From an artistic point of view it was the most successful concert of the three. The singers had become better accustomed to the acoustics of the hall, and the orchestra had its full quota of players, those members who did not arrive in time for the first concert and whose absence seriously hampered the composer-conductor in obtaining desired effects on that occasion, being in their places.

The first part of the programme consisted of selections from "Rolando di Berlino," the much discussed opera which Leoncavallo was commissioned by the Kaiser to write much to the chagrin of the German composers. In *Alda's* aria Mme. Rizzini again charmed her hearers by the brilliant timbre of her voice, her fine vocalization and her well-poised style. She also joined Mr. Barbaini in a duet. Mr. Perya displayed a sweet and well-trained voice in *Henning's* ballad, and Mr. Bellatti was again heard to advantage in *Giovanni's* prayer. In the second half of the evening excerpts from "Boheme," "Pagliacci" and "Chatterton" were given, and the "Ave Maria" and "Viva l'America" were repeated, Mme. Rizzini again scoring with her aria from "Chatterton."

Signor Leoncavallo's modesty and simple dignity won the respect of the audience from the outset, and he was repeatedly recalled throughout the evening.

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48. *Musical America*, October 20, 1906. "Newark's Greeting to Leoncavollo [*sic*]; Italian Conductor And His Orchestra Enthusiastically Applauded at Second American Concert."

NEWARK, N. J., Oct. 15.—It was unfortunate that the weather on the opening night of the Newark concert season should have been so unpleasant as it was last Tuesday evening on the occasion of

the Leoncavallo concert in Krueger Auditorium. Nevertheless a large audience assembled, in which the Italian population of Newark was numerously represented. The compatriots of the conductor and the performers came to give a welcome to Italian art and their applause was long and hearty.

Leoncavallo as a conductor proved to be sincere, earnest and dignified. Though not so originally intended, the programme was a repetition of that of the concert in New York the night before. It included the familiar "Pagliacci" prologue, the overture and a duet from "Roland di Berlin," a septette from "I Medici," an intermezzo from "Chatterton," four selections from "Zaza," an "Ave Maria" dedicated to Pope Pius X, and a march "Viva l'America" dedicated to President Roosevelt. There were melody in abundance, good harmony, a real feeling for dramatic truth, and perfect sincerity.

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49. *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, October 20, 1906. "Leoncavallo a Troy; L'illustre Maestro visita il collegio dei R. R. P. P. Salesiani," p. 2.

Troy, 19. — L'altra sera al Rand's Opera House, presente un pubblico eletto, il maestro Leoncavallo: diede l'annunziato concerto.

Il programma fu svolto mirabilmente dall'insuperabile orchestra e dai celebrati artisti di canto; ogni pezzo fu salutato da entusiastici, interminabili applausi: si chiesero ed ottennero diversi "bis."

All'illustre compositore, sempre festeggiatissimo, venne fatta alla fine una grande ovazione.

I giornali locali diedero ample e fedeli relazioni dell'indimenticabile serata; unanimi riconoscono le peregrine e soavi bellezze della musica originale, forte, ispirata e sciolsero inni di ammirazione al genio di Leoncavallo; lodarono poi senza ristrizioni l'inappuntabile esecuzione.

Al Collegio Italo-Americano

Verso mezzogiorno i R. R. P. P. Salesiani del Collegio Italo-Americano di Troy, ebbero l'alto onore di ospitare l'illustre Maestro Leoncavallo, che s'intrattenne con loro per ben due ore.

Alle 11 a.m. egli saliva la pittoresca collina in vettura, accompagnato dal Direttore del Collegio, P. S. Rabagliati e dagli artisti Perya, Barbaini, Ferrari. L'aspettavano all'ingresso pavesato di candiere italiane ed americane, il corpo insegnante, I giovani collegiali ed a cuni suoi ammiratori della città, schierati in bell'ordine, silenziosi ed impazienti.

Quando comparve il celebre compositore scoppiarono applausi fragorosi. Il prof. Giuseppe Andreoli gli diede il benvenuto con belle ed appropriate parole, calde di sincero patriottismo e di ammirazione profounda pel genio italiano: ringraziò l'illustre ospite per l'onore fatto ai figli di Don Bosco.

Leoncavallo, commosso fino alle lagrime, lo abbracciò e baciò fra le acclamizoni generali.

Egli poi gentilmente acconsentì a farsi fotografare circondato dai professori e dagli allievi.

Visitò il collegio, ammiro il sottostante bellissimo panorama e si degnò di sedere a colazione in un'ampia sala perata a festa: la gioia più viva si leggeva su tutti i volti.

Alle 2 p.m. dovendo partire per Utica, il grande Maestro lasciava, commosso, il collegio, con promesso e desiderio di farvi ritorno prima di imbarcarsi per l'Europa.

Alla stazione abbracciò e baciò il Direttore e lo ringraziò con effusione per l'affetuosa accoglienza fattagli.

Mentre il treno partiva, Leoncavallo affacciato al finestrino, sventolò per lungo tratto il fazzoletto, sorridendo e salutando.

La visita lasciò nell'animo di tutti, ricordo imperituro di simpatia e di ammirazione per l'illustre uomo, onore e gloria l'Italia.

50. *The Post Express*, Rochester, N.Y., October 26, 1906. "The Lyceum; Leoncavallo."

It looks as though happier stars were to preside over the destinies of Leoncavallo's American tour than watched over the like experience of his countryman Mascagni. Leoncavallo is the elder man of the two and his appearance and comfortable physique suggest a mind better balanced and a temperament less hysterical than that of the composer of "Cavalleria Rusticana." Leoncavallo by no means suggests the predestined musician. He is more like one of those amiable burlesques of King Edward that appear in "Fischietto" from time to time, minus old age of course. But he gave Rochesterians a fine initiation into his music and they found that their belief in its goodness was justified. It used to be said of the young Italians, like Leoncavallo, Mascagni and Puccini, that they were building on the foundation laid by Wagner. That is not so. Beyond a few tricks of orchestration there is little in any of them that suggests Wagner. Leoncavallo is as Italian as the Verdi of "La Traviata." His spirit is that of the old Italian opera, plus an instrumental coloring more gorgeous than even Verdi himself contemplated until his three last operas. The notion that Wagner revolutionized opera is now discounted. He added to it new means of expressiveness and the wonderful idiom of the Leit Motif. But the old Italian opera will live side by side with the Wagnerian music-drama as eternal as melodrama itself.

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51. *Musical Courier*, October 31, 1906. "Leoncavallo and Tito Ricordi."

Rudolph Aronson is just in receipt of a communication from Leoncavallo in which the Maestro takes exception to a letter published in the New York papers on October 12, and signed by Tito Ricordi.

Among other things the Maestro emphatically denies Ricordi's statement regarding performers at the Scala, Milan, that the players are simply engaged for the season, and that when the theater is closed no one who has played there can claim to be a member of La Scala Orchestra.

Maestro Leoncavallo assures us that all the members of his orchestra, now on tour in this country have played at the Scala, Milan, and hence the management has the perfect right to announce that fact to the public. Furthermore, the excellence of the orchestra was duly attested by Dr. Muck, the new conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, who was present at the Leoncavallo concert Sunday evening, October 21, at Symphony Hall, Boston, and also by Philip Hale, the eminent critic of the Bosron Herald, who had this to say on October 22:

"The orchestra played with color and elasticity. The strings were warm, and various solo passages for wind instruments were well phrased by the respective players. There was much greater precision and a finer sense of rhythm than we had been led to expect."

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52. *Musical America*, November 3, 1906. "President Receives Score; Leoncavallo's "Viva L'America" Presented to Him by Aronson."

WASHINGTON, Oct. 30.—President Roosevelt has received from Rudolph Aronson a specially prepared copy of Leoncavallo's "Viva L'America," a march which was dedicated to him by the composer. The outside cover, in silk, bears an embossed design by John Frew. The music is etched on heavy vellum.

Mr. Aronson, who just twelve years ago presented to Johann Strauss, the "waltz king," in Vienna, a gold and silver wreath as a gift from American musicians, yesterday presented this copy of Leoncavallo's work to President Roosevelt at the White House.

The President said:—"I am delighted that a composer of the position of Leoncavallo should do me this great honor and I shall forward him my letter of thanks."

53. *Musical America*, November 3, 1906. "Leoncavallo Replies to Ricordi's Letter; Composer Denies Publisher's Statement Regarding La Scala; All The Members of the Maestro's Orchestra Have Justified Their Claim to Designation He Uses—Tour a Gratifying Success."

Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo has taken exception to a letter published in several New York papers last month, signed by Pito [*sic*] Ricordi, of the well-known Milan firm of that name.

In a recent communication to Rudolph Aronson, the impresario, the composer of "Pagliacci" emphatically denies Ricordi's statement regarding performers at La Scala, Milan, to the effect that they are simply engaged for the season, and that when the theatre is closed no one who has played there can claim to be a member of La Scala's orchestra.

Signor Leoncavallo states that all the members of his orchestra now on tour in this country have played at La Scala, and, hence, the management has a perfect right to announce that fact to the public. The meritorious performances of the maestro's capable organization have won the warm commendation of many eminent music critics and attracted the patronage of the most prominent musicians. The tour is exciting much interest throughout the country, and the success thus far has been gratifying in high degree.

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54. *St. Paul Dispatch*, November 3, 1906. "Composer and Orchestra; Leoncavallo and His La Scala Players to Be Heard in This City; Some Notable Soloists; Program Which Will Be Presented at the Concert Friday Evening."

Only a maestro and an orchestra of such importance as Leoncavallo and his La Scala players could attract the attention of St. Paul music-lovers in the same week with the opening symphony concert.

But the composer of "Pagliacci" will claim his own among music-lovers the world over and when he comes next Friday to the People's church all who have been fascinated by the sensuous beauty, the tragedy and the bitter mirth of his great little opera, will be in the audience.

The organization which Messrs. Cort & Kronberg have brought to this country with Leoncavallo comprise the seventy-five men who played last season at La Scala, when Leoncavallo's new opera, "Zaza," was produced, and who complete their term during the coming season. The American impresarios are under bond to the Italian government guaranteeing the return of musicians and singers in time for the Christmas season at Milan, which opens at La Scala Dec. 24.

The most recently received press notice of the work of Leoncavallo and his orchestra is from Columbus, Ohio: "If the orchestra was a delight," writes the critic, "it was not a surprise, for much had been expected of it, but the soloists were both a delight and a surprise. As one by one they made their appearance the last always seemed to be the favorite."

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55. *Musical Leader*, November 9, 1906. "Leoncavallo and La Scala Orchestra."

BALTIMORE, MD., November 9, 1906.
Leoncavallo and La Scala Orchestra.

Baltimore's musical season was begun on October 11, by the much heralded composer conductor, Leoncavallo, and the orchestra from La Scala, Milan. It is not for us to talk about the maestro. He has made his reputation and is known to the musical world. One may commend, however, his entirely unassuming conduct, devoid of all mannerisms. Yet the orchestra lacked *esprit de corps*, seemingly needing more energetic guidance. It is difficult to believe it represents the best in Italian orchestras. Some of the selctions as, for example, the Duet from "Zaza," by Mme. Rizzini, and Mr. De Ferran, were well sung and well received. Mme. Ferrabini and Mme. Calvi also deserve praise for their singing of the excerpts from "La Bohème" and "Pagliacci" respectively. There is little apology for "Viva l'America."

Such threadbare and empty themes as "Dixie" and "Yankee Doodle" would require music of unusual merit to relieve their commonplace character , especially when heard on a concert programme.

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56. *Musical Leader*, November 10, 1906. "Milwaukee Critics on Leoncavallo."

Leoncavallo, his band of singers and the La Scala Orchestra came to Milwaukee last Monday, gave their concert, acknowledged rounds of tremendous applause and departed to continue their triumphal tour. An audience that comfortably filled the theater delighted to honor the great composer and the vocalists who interpreted excerpts from his operas, and expressed itself not only in enthusiastic applause but in cheers an bravos, a demonstration very unusual in Milwaukee. Special tribute was paid to Mme. Ferrabini and Mr. Perya, the tenor, who was obliged to sing the "Rolando Ballato" three times before he was allowed to leave the stage. In fact nearly every vocal number on the programme had to be repeated. Careful comparison of the criticisms evoked by the concert shows an amusing want of unanimity. The orchestra called for but "faint praise," though it generally commended for the devotion and zeal with which it followed its leader; it is not thought a great organization. One critic goes so far as to call it "inconsiderate" and a handicap to the singers, but he took on this occasion a very gloomy view of things in general. Where another critic "caught a fresh glimpse of the genius of the composer," he refuses to be comforted because "as we meet Leoncavallo's former orchestra effects, we are also treated to melodic effects not very different from those in his first opera, and which, in fact," as a further elucidation, "remind one frequently of music we imagine to have already in 'Pagliacci.'" It is reassuring, however, to note that the majority of the critics endorse the estimate of the audience and express ungrudgingly their sincere appreciation of the "glorious voices" of the Italian artists. "All the vocal numbers, from the familiar 'Prologue' to the 'Rolando Ballato,' were delightfully given. "Mr. Perya's delivery and interpretation were both superb." "Anything more natural, simple and exquisitely beautiful than Mme. Ferrabini's art is seldom heard"—to quote from one who in reviewing this concert was the most just, definite and satisfactory. It is to be regretted that in this connection it is impossible to quote accurately our most erudite and authoritative critic. It must be said that on this important occasion he failed to make himself intelligible. His unusual erudition and amazing vocabulary involved him hopelessly in a futile endeavor to do more than simply set down what he felt was due Leoncavallo and his co workers [*sic*]. But when a critic finds place for two hundred and fifty words in three consecutive sentences and adds to the equipment of his colleagues such gem phrases such as these, "scenes that generated and nursed his fame," "yeoman work," "the southern elan and enthusiasm expended," "brutal effects," "full quota of climaxes," etc., etc., he has done as much as can reasonably be expected of him. However, the Italian maestro has the the advantage of not knowing our language. If he is content to accept the expression of the audience as an estimate of his offering, he has good reason to feel gratified with his reception in Milwaukee.

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57. *Spokane Review*, November 12, 1906. "Opera Manager Minus Diamonds; Leoncavallo Manager is Stripped By Thieves in Butte, Mont.; Engagement is Big Success; Large Audiences During Brief Tour—Fun With Italian Singers in Company."

Wearing a soiled collar, ringless, diamondless and clad in a mud spattered suit, J. Saunders Gordon, the usually immaculate manager of the Leoncavallo Opera company, which plays here November 18 and 19, appeared at the Spokane theater yesterday afternoon. He had arrived suddenly from Butte. While in Butte, Mr. Gordon was robbed of a valise containing all his papers, company routings, two diamond rings and a diamond scarf pin valued at $500, besides a suit case [*sic*] containing numerous articles of wearing apparel and clean linen. Rain accounted for the mud on his raiment. The manager

discovered his loss but a few moments before the train for Spokane departed, and as he was behind in his work, he notified the Butte police and left at once.

Willing to Talk.

Despite his appearance, Mr. Gordon was not loath to talk of the company which he is bringing to Spokane soon. In the characteristic language of a theatrical manager he told of the trials and tribulations of the Italians in the United States.

"Although we are taking the company on a very short tour, it has thus far been a very successful one. The company will play but 50 engagements in America, covering over 14,000 miles and staying here about 60 days. It left Minneapolis yesterday for Butte, and from there comes to Spokane. Performances will also be given in Seattle, Vancouver, Portland and Salt Lake City, besides a number of the principal cities of the east, playing return engagements in Chicago, Boston and New York." The season will end December 7.

"Arrangements have been made here to run special trains to Spokane from all the principal points in the surrounding country, and the railroads have announced that special excursion rates will be given. From indications I think that we will have large audiences at both performances.

Fun With Italians.

"Those in charge of the company have had many amusing experiences with the Italians. When we took them off the steamer at New York there were eight bands playing on the wharf, and nearly all the Italians in New York there shouting a welcome. We had considerable trouble in keeping them together while in New York as they were all prone to stand and gaze for hours at the skyscrapers. Our leading tenor got lost one day in New York and did not show up until the evening performance was nearly finished.

"Trouble was encountered at getting them to stay at good hotels. At one place we struck a hotel that charged unusually high rates. Every Italian member of the company absolutely refused to stop there, demanding that they be taken to a cheaper hostelry. At last they became mollified when we told them we could stand the bill. They say the rates at the smaller Italian hotels are about one fifth of the what the good hotels in America charge.

Donkey Causes Panic.

"In Chicago, the company had an experience which, although amusing, nearly resulted in all the singers and musicians quitting on the spot. In the first act a donkey comes on the stage pulling a small cart. This animal possessed the usual instincts of its kind and had at different times become decidedly obstinate. This evening he had shown signs of obstinacy, and we expected some trouble. The brute would not go on the stage, and as the last resort the stage manager massed his entire force of about 10 men behind the cart and ordered them all to push. They put too much energy into their work and the donkey and cart not only went on the stage, but over the footlights and down into the orchestra pit. There was a small panic and the Italians became so frightened that they all wanted their pay, saying they were going to leave the troupe on the spot."

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58. *Musical Courier*, November 21, 1906. "Enthusiasm Over Leoncavallo."

It is very delightful, in these blase times, to see such enthusiasm as it was manifested at Leoncavallo's second concert Sunday before last in Orchestra Hall. That the Italian master had to play his program twice over was not alone a tribute to the excellence of his music, but it demonstrated that there are still left to us a great many people who take their artistic pleasures with considerable intensity. Your fastidious connoisseur is not addicted to the "encore" habit. It is rather a bore to give himself over to such violent exercises as are entailed by its indulgence; besides, the repetition of a piece, he tells us,

brings with it an anti-climax. But the audience at the concert on Sunday was not given to any finicky ideas as to artistic propriety. It liked the music, and was not ashamed to show its liking. So it encored the whole concert. The program which was played and sung was, in part, the same as had been performed on the previous afternoon. The new numbers were made up of three excerpts from "Zaza," the intermezzo from "Chatterton," and some numbers from "La Bohème." Leoncavallo's music showed on this occasion, as it had before, how thoroughly the composer is imbued with the spirit of his race. Could any but an Italian have penned those tunes, which are not less emotional than melodious? And not a composer living has understood better than the composer of "Pagliacci" what is meant by vocal effect. Leoncavallo's methods are clearly those of all Italian dramatic writers. He has applied the newer mechanism of composition, but the essential matter which he has expressed is still that which had been uttered before Rossini and Donizetti and Bellini and Verdi and a host of lesser Italian writers. But it is an expression most charming and effective. It makes for melody, and melody is a very delightful thing. There is dramatic consistency, too, and a wealth of emotional intensity which is heightened by the masterly treatment of the orchestra. The singers from La Scala, who had appeared the preceding day, appeared again on Sunday. Mme. Ferrabini was heard to advantage in numbers from "Zaza" and "Bohème" and in a fine duet from the first named opera, which she sang with Signor Barbaini. Signor Bellatti who, on Saturday, had made a very good impression by his interpretation of the prologue to "Pagliacci," gave again much pleasure by his singing of an aria from "Zaza." Signor Barbaini repeated his success with the waltz from the same opera, as well as in some concerted numbers. Mme. Calvi was the soloist in the "Ave Maria," which also received its second performance, and which pleased the audience hugely.

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59. *Billboard*, December 1, 1906. "Glimpses at Italian Opera."

Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo, whom we know best as the composer of L'Pagliacci [*sic*], recently gave a series of concerts in Carnegie Hall, under the management of Messrs. John Cort and S. Kronberg. The little opera mountebank has furnished many a prima donna her first opportunity of being successfully launched upon the operatic stage and has been an aid to the aspiring young singer of either sex, as well as having furnished enjoyment to the most critical audience when sung by singers of international reputation, and the opera itself always proves a delight, being one that we never seem to tire of. It is, indeed, a privilege to see the Italian composer for the first time, as well as to hear his own interpretation of other compositions not so well known to us, but of recognized worth abroad. Sig. Leoncavallo is of ponderous build, with a tendancy [*sic*] to width rather than height. A typical Italian, with his black locks, bowing moustache and lustrous eyes. He is accompanied by La Scala Orchestra, from La Scala, Milan, and the following artists, to illustrate his compositions: Mesdames Rizzini, Ferrabini and Calvi, and Messrs. Barbaini, Perya, De Ferran and Macchi. The evening I attended, the Pagliacci numbers of the program were received with the greater appreciation, though a quartette, Rolando di Berlino, was roundly applauded and sung delightfully by Mesdames Rizzini, Ferrabini and Messrs. Perya and Bellatti. Two selections from La Boheme were charmingly interpreted by Madame Ferrabini. The audiences have been rather small, as is, unfortunately, too often the case when something of this kind is offered, the average New Yorker seemingly prefers the musical comedy brand of music.

Possibly it will interest my women readers to know how her Italian sister dresses for a high class concert. If she imagines there was anything unusual in their appearances, she must undeceive herself, for in this respect Leoncavallo alone showed individuality in the general bagginess of his full dress togs, that was entirely foreign to our styles for men. Madame Rizzini looked quite Parisian in a black net built over white, heavily embroidered in black chenille; the low-cut bodice finished at the top with rich gold applique; there were short draped sleeves of the net over white and a girdle of black velvet. Madame Clavi wore a white silver spangled net made over white taffeta, decollete, short puffed sleeves and Empire girdle of white satin. Madame Ferrabini was also in a white net embroidered with silver in a leaf pattern,

a two-piece gown, simple in outline. She has a beautifully cultivated voice of rich, pure quality, and her solos elicited much enthusiasm.

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60. *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, December 11, 1906. "Leoncavallo a New York."

Siamo' lieti di presentare nuovamente il nostro cordiale e sincero saluto al maestro Ruggero Leoncavallo, e quale è ritornato a New York. La sua tournèe artistica è stata addirittura in continuo trionfo. Dappertutto entusiasmo feste, banchetti e regali di gran valore. Tanto l'insegne maestro che glim esimil artisti hanno trionfato e con loro supremamente la divina arte italiana che sempre si impone nel fiume continuo, nell'onda perenne di melodia, purissima e bella.

Specialmente a Denver, come ce ne informarono I nostri corrispondenti, l'entusiasmo pel maestro italiano, fa delirio.

L'impresario è restato soddisfatissimo, tanto che da vero americano, aumentava le paghe agli artisti ed all'orchestra.

Coll'illustre maestro, che presto ripartirà per l'Europa, dovendo adempire ad altri impegni, sono rimasti la signora Ferrabini, mezzo soprano, il tenore Barbaini ed il baritono cav. Bellatti.

E' con animo lieto che abbiamo vergato queste righe, ed è con immenso piacere che diamo il ben tornato al maestro Leoncavallo, augurandogli sempre nuovi e nuovi trionfi nella creazione possente del suo genio.

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61. *Des Moines Register*, December 12, 1906. "Leoncavallo's Last American Appearance."[159]

Leoncavallo, the famous Italian composer, with an orchestra of sixty-five musicians and ten soloists, will give his last appearance in America at Foster's Wednesday evening. Des Moines was not originally included in the itinerary, but it was found possible to play another engagement and still reach New York in time to sail for Milan to rehearse for the opening of the La Scala theater on Christmas. Hence, Leoncavallo will bow his adieu to "that dear America" from the stage at Foster's Wednesday evening. The tour of Leoncavallo began in New York Oct. 8 and has extended as far west as Portland.

Leoncavallo has made by all accounts an excellent impression upon his audiences in New York and elsewhere. He is a sincere musician, eager that an American public should know something of the operas that he has written since "Pagliacci," if only through fragments of them sung in operatic form. He is a man of dignity, and composers are not always so when they are pressing their music upon strange audiences. He is neither importune nor tricky. He makes no display of himself. He would plainly have his audiences equally serious minded and unaffected. As the Italian temperament goes, and as his singers freely exhibit it, he seems singularly reserved. Besides "Pagliacci" he will conduct selections of his "Zaza," a septet from his "Medici" and the overture to "Roland of Berlin," the opera on which the German emperor collaborated. The excerpts from "Zaza" are most interesting because in them Leoncavallo has carried farthest the theory that men and women around the next corner in ordinary dress and the ordinary business life may serve as well for opera as the gods and goddesses or the heroes and heroines of romance. If only there is passion in them and drama in their emotions and actions, the composer has his material and his inspiration.

The La Scala orchestra is from the La Scala theater in Milan. It [. . .]

The closing number, "Viva l'American," [*sic*] a mixture of "Yankee Doodle," "Dixie," and "The Star Spangled Banner," will be given. This should be a fitting climax to the farewell.

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[159] Des Moines was not Leoncavallo's last American appearance on this tour. The final performance was in Muncie, Indiana on December 6, 1906, one night after the Des Moines concert.

62. *Musical Leader*, December 15, 1906. "Denver, Colo., December 15, 1906; Leoncavallo."

To what chain of circumstances we may be indebted therefor is wholly immaterial, the fact remains we have been privileged to see this celebrated composer, also to hear the instrumentalists and vocalists that are credited with being "the famous La Scala Theater Orchestra and eminent artists." Concerning his visit to Denver, Sig. Leoncavallo may say "veni, vidi, vici." Yes, truly, he came, saw and conquered by large odds the major portion of an audience that numbering nearly 1,200 had gathered at the Central Presbyterian Church Monday evening, December 3. It was made plain from the moment the composer-conductor came into view that it would make little difference what he--his orchestra or his artists did, everything was to be--and was appreciated, *i.e.*, if judged by the vociferous applause recorded. Every number given was encored so insistently that repetition was made necessary in order to satisfy. From a sentimental point of view Sig. Leoncavallo has good reasons to feel justly proud of the hearty welcome and distinction accorded him by his countrymen and women here, for in addition to a floral tribute Sig. Corte, the Italian consul, on behalf of the various Italian societies of Denver presented him with a beautifully engraved gold medal. The programme was a disappointment. Many had attended to hear "the famous La Scala Orchestra" render compositions of the great master under his own direction, instead of which they had the pleasure (? ?) of hearing the orchestra give only two numbers, and then as accompanist to singers who, with the exception of Signora Ferrabini, were only mediocre. The gems of the evening were a selection from "Bohème," a Lettera de Musette, sung by Signora Ferrabini, whose pure, rich, well-trained mezzo voice and artistic singing completely captivated the audience. This and the overture from "Leonardo di Berlino" [*sic*] by the orchestra richly merited the demonstration bestowed. If the musicians who were here really constitute "the famous La Scala Theater Orchestra," the writer trusts he will be pardoned for expressing the opinion that there are in the United States at least ten orchestras, among them the Denver Symphony Orchestra, that interpret this great composer's compositions with infinitely greater evidence of musicianship.

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63. *New York Tribune*, December 15, 1906. "Leoncavallo's Farewell; Italian Composer Guest of Countrymen—Caruso Present."

Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo, the Italian composer of "I Pagliacci," was the guest of honor at a farewell dinner at the Hotel Astor last night, given by a number of prominent Italians of this city. He sails for Europe to-morrow on the Kronprinz Wilhelm. Covers were laid for one hundred guests.

When the composer entered the grillroom, shortly after 8 o'clock, on the arm of ex-Coroner Antonio Zucca, who was toastmaster, the guests arose and greeted him with vigorous handclapping. Shortly after he had taken his seat Enrico Caruso entered unaccompanied. In spite of the fact that he has recently shaved off his mustache he was instantly recognized, and the reception he received showed that he has not lost caste with his countrymen in spite of the unpleasant notoriety he has recently experienced. Caruso was all bows and smiles, and seemed to be greatly pleased at the warmth of his reception.

A band under the leadership of Signor Mazza, formerly conductor of La Scala orchestra, in Milan, played a selection from "I Pagliacci," after which the dinner began.

A band under the leadership of Signor Avitabili, of the Cafe Martin, was to have provided the musical part of the entertainment, but according to the statement of Antonio Caridi, who had charge of the arrangements for the banquet, when Avitabili heard that Leoncavallo was to be the guest of honor he refused to be present. It seems that some years ago, in a contest in Italy, Leoncavallo won and Avitabili had to be content with second prize. Therefore, he informed the committee that it would be humiliating for him to act as conductor at a dinner for his successful rival. There were speeches in Italian, by Antonio Zucca, Ruggero Bolino, Conta [*sic*] Aldrovandi and Angelo Legniti.

Among those present were Francesco Tocci, A. J. Stefani, Conte C. Mariotti, Signor Stracciari, one of the Metropolitan's new barytones [*sic*]; G. Ciapparelli Viafora, an Italian cariacaturist; Signor Vigna, conductor at the Metropolitan Opera House; Chevalier Solari and many others.

Signor Leoncavallo has just completed a two months' tour of the principal cities of the United States with his orchestra. He said that he had been well received everywhere, and was well pleased with his tour, which he hoped to repeat next year.

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64. *The New York Sun*, December 15, 1906. "Dinner to Leoncavallo; Caruso There to Honor the Great Composer; Also a Band Which Had Been Engaged With Some Difficulty—Antonio Zucca and the Guest of Honor Tell What a Great and Glorious Country Uncle Sam Has."

As the Italian conductor Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo sails for Europe to-day on the Kronprinz Wilhelm, and will therefore be unable to conduct that special performance of "I Pagliacci," which Oscar Hammerstein was going to arrange for him, a group of his compatriots got together and arranged a farewell blowout for him.

The composer himself occupied the seat of honor at the right hand of ex-Coroner Zucca, with the Conte Aldrovandi on his own right hand. Between the fish and the roast duck he told a SUN reporter that he intended to return to this country, probably next year. He would bring with him his own orchestra and a complete company of singers who would perform two of his operas, not merely selections from them, as was the case this year. He declared that he had been delighted with his reception here and was most grateful to the great American people. Boise City, Idaho, he said, had been especially enthusiastic.

The most distinguished of the 100 guests present was Enrico Caruso. He sat on Mr. Zucca's immediate left and was speedily swamped by the applications of Italian autograph fiends who wanted him to sign their menu cards. He graciously granted all these requests, but balked when a request came up from the floor that he should make a speech.

"I have to sing to-morrow night," he said in that excellent English which he does [. . .].

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65. *Musical America*, December 22, 1906. "Farewell Dinner to Leoncavallo; Caruso, Stracciari, Vigna and Other Italians Honor Composer; Committee Has Difficulty in Securing an Orchestra to Supply the Music—Distinguished Italian Says He will Come Back again Next Year."

Enrico Caruso, Arturo Vigna, conductor of the Metropolitan Opera House Orchestra, and Ricardo Stracciari, the Metropolitan's new baritone, with prominent residents of the Italian colony in New York, gave Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo, the composer, a farewell dinner in the wine cellars of the Hotel Astor on Friday evening.

Behind the palms, out of view of the main guest table, a hastily improvised orchestra strove anxiously to play Leoncavallo's music in a way to suit the maestro.

As soon as it was definitely known that Leoncavallo would sail on Saturday on the *Kronprinz Wilhelm*, the prominent Italians of New York began making arrangements for the dinner. Their first quest was for an orchestra leader who could best interpret his music.

They tried to get Avitable [*sic*], the leader of the orchestra in a well-known French restaurant. To their surprise, her refused to consider their offer. At first, he was unwilling to give his reasons, but finally he told them that in a competition years ago in Milan for original compositions, he and Leoncavallo had been rival contestants. When the result was announced Leoncavallo stood first, with Avitable [*sic*] second.

"Leoncavallo has become a great musician, and I am obscure. To play at his feast would be magnaminous—very—but also humilating," he said.

Then the leaders of other local orchestras were sounded. They gave a variety of reasons for refusing, but none would play in the presence of the maestro. Finally the members of the committee were in despair. Isolated volunteers were called for, and, finally, enough private and professional musicians were found who were willing to play.

Signor Caruso sat on the left of Antonio Zucca, the master of ceremonies. He was speedily swamped by the applications of Italian autograph fiends who wanted him to sign their menu cards. He graciously granted all these requests, but balked when called upon for a speech.

"I have to sing to-morrow night," he said, "and public speaking is very bad for a singer's voice."

Then the diners concluded to have a little fun.

"Vi—Vi—gna—i—i—i!" They shouted, facing Conductor Vigna.

"That is a kind of Americanized Italian college yell," explained one of them, "with the joke in the 'i—i—i,' for that is the sound we make to stir up a jackass in Italy."

Between courses Leoncavallo said, through an interpreter: "I like America. I like American audiences. They have greeted me with so much enthusiasm, and have treated me with so much kindness, I will surely return next year, when I will have my own company of artists and my own orchestra to interpret my operas in operatic form."

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66. *Spokane Review*, July 7, 1907. "At Work On New Opera; Leoncavallo Preparing To Give 'The Red Shirt.'; Dramatic Plot Identified With Garibaldian History in Italy."

MILAN.—Leoncavallo is hard at work on his new opera, "Carnicia [*sic*] Rossa," at his villa at Brissago on Lake Maggiore.

Any one [*sic*] familiar with Italian history knows that the "carnicia [*sic*] rossa" (red shirt) is identified with a Garibaldian. The plot is exceedingly dramatic and is laid in a town of the Austrian dominion. Two brothers are in love with the same girl. Both are soldiers, one a follower of Garibaldi, the other fanatically fighting on the side of the Austrian empire. The latter had been loyal to his brother and never betrayed him to the authorities until he discovered that he was the favored one, when, prompted by jealousy, he denounced him as a traitor. The brother is thereupon arrested and deferred to the military tribunal. The girl, in her despair, seeks a way to save him. She pretends to accept the court of the Austrian soldier, but only on condition that he will not sacrifice his brother. The other promises to obtain his acquittal.

The day of the trial arrives. The girl suffers anguish in suspense as she awaits the signal–a gunshot if he be condemned, a trumpet sound if acquitted. To her comes the Austrian triumphantly. He has assisted at the trial, knows his brother is acquitted and wants to claim his reward. But suddenly the firing of a gun startles the valley. With a cry of despair and rage the girl draws a knife and stabs the expectant suitor. A fatal mistake had caused the signals to be changed and while the avenging girl abandons herself to despair and remorse over the body of the killed man the people enter joyfully, proclaiming the acquittal of the Garibaldian.

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67. *Los Angeles Times*, August 12, 1907.

Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo, who has written one great work and a mass of unutterable trivialities, is now issuing a new opera–a work which will be looked upon with eager expectation by his friends and with the critical sense of the public in general.

It is called "The Red Blouse," and is based upon an episode of the period when Austria ruled Venice. Two brothers, one of whom is in sympathy with Austria, while the other is an ardent Venetian patriot, are infatuated with the same girl. She loves the patriot, and makes no secret of her preference.

Vowing vengeance, the rejected brother denounces his brother to the police as a Garibaldian. His immediate arrest follows. The girl, expecting his prompt execution, and guessing his brother's crime, sends for the latter, and promises to be his bride if he can bring about the release of the prisoner. The brother eagerly agrees to testify in his favor. The day of the trial comes, and a gunshot is to tell her that the man on trial has been sentenced to death, while a trumpet call will announce his acquittal. The traitor-brother, having given his testimony, and feeling sure of the other's acquittal, hastens to the girl to claim her as his own. As he enters her apartments, a shot is heard. It proves afterward to have been accidental, but with a wild cry, she proclaims his treachery, and rushing toward him, stabs him. He dies just as the crowd enters, proclaiming her lover's release. The girl abandons herself to remorseful grief.

Not a bad plot, as Italian opera stories go, and in dramatic values, if properly worked out, should be an equal of "Tosca." But hearing is believing, as far as Leoncavallo is concerned these days.

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68. *Musical Leader*, August 20, 1908.

LEONCAVALLO, composer of "Pagliacci," is strenuously working at the instrumental part of his new opera, "Maja," [*sic*] which will be produced next autumn at Nice or Monte Carlo. The subject of the opera is an episode of life in Provence, where Leoncavallo has betaken himself in order to get inspiration on the spot. He has nearly finished also another opera, "Camicia Rossa" (Red Shirt), in three acts, which deals with the first struggles of Italy for independence. Leoncavallo proposes to write essentially Italian music, as contrasted with that which shows traces of German influence. Another Italian musician working at a new opera is Wolff Ferrari [*sic*], who is young, enjoys a larger fame in Germany than in Italy, due largely to the fact that his former opera, "Le Donne Curiose," drawn from a piece by Goldoni, has been performed there very often during the last few years. The new opera by Wolff Ferrari [*sic*] is called "I Gioielli della Madonna" (The Holy Virgin's Jewels) and is in four acts. The libretto is taken from an episode of real life, the theft of jewels by a young man from a sacred figure in order that he might adorn his sweetheart with them. The libretto is by the poet Zanga rini [*sic*]. "Gioielli della Madonna" will be produced next winter in Berlin.—*Daily Telegraph*.

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69. *Musical America*, August 29, 1908. "Leoncavallo Protests; He Deplores Neglect of Italian Masters in Italian Conservatories."

Leoncavallo complains that the Italian conservatories are not doing their duty. There is in them too much worship of foreign gods, especially of Germans. The teachers make their pupils acquainted with Bach, Beethoven, Weber; they should, he declares, also familiarize them with Monteverdi, Durante, Piccini, Boccherini, Palestrina, Cimarosa, Scarlatti, Zingorelli, Martini and others who are equal to the foreigners. Did not some of the greatest German masters—Gluck, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn—sit on the benches of the Bologna school? Were not all the directors of the Paris Conservatoire, prior to the last century, Italians? Having thus shed a tear over the neglect of the old Italian masters, in a letter to the *Gazetta di Torino*, Leoncavallo comes to the sorrows of the living master. His own operas are sadly neglected in the Italian theatre (shame on them!). However, he hopes for better luck with the two operas he is now at work on—"Maja" [*sic*] and "Camicia Rossa." Leoncavallo apparently needs three things badly, according to Henry T. Finck, of the *Evening Post*—the gift of creating original music, a sense of humor, and an apparatus for reducing the size of heads."

70. *Musical America*, September 19, 1908. "Leoncavallo Dissatisfied; Finds Italian Opera in Critical Condition in His Native Country."

ROME, Sept. 19.—Mascagni is not the only Italian composer who has cause to find fault with his compatriots. Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo has just unbosomed himself, as follows:

"My two new operas will not be first produced in Italy, neither will my 'Rolando' be given here. As to the latter opera, it requires three first-class voices—where should I find them in Italy, when the United States gobble up every singer of note in the kingdom? Besides, I doubt whether it would pay to produce my works here. Italian opera is in a critical condition in this country, no matter how well it succeeds in the rest of the world and particularly in the United States."

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71. *The Nation*, November 12, 1908.

Leoncavallo lamented not long ago that it was useless to write any more operas in Italy until New York gave back to that country the great singers whose patriotism could not resist American dollars (Caruso, Tetrazzini, Scotti, etc.).

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72. *Musical America*, May 29, 1909. "Leoncavallo's Opera Not Up To the Standard; 'Zaza' Shows No Signs of Artistic Development in the Composer—Follows Play Closely."

LONDON, May 22—Though Leoncavallo's opera "Zaza" has just been produced in London, it really dates back to November, 1900, when it was given its first performance in Milan. According to the London critics the opera will not add much to the fame of the composer of "Pagliacci."

In the musical version, the lines of the original play are followed closely. Thus in the first act we meet *Zaza* behind the scenes at the theater at which she is singing, witness the not very edifying squabble with her rival, *Floriane*, with whom, she has been told, *Dufresne* is in love, and then finds her casting a spell over the latter. With the heroine's passion and her discovery, after he tells her that he has been summoned to America, that her lover is a married man, the next two scenes deal.

As in the play, *Zaza* goes to Paris to find *Dufresne's* wife, and, encountering his little girl—who discloses the fact that her parents are going to live in America—she succumbs to her better feelings, and retraces her steps without creating a domestic broil. In the final act there is the inevitable scene between *Zaza* and her lover, followed by their parting, and the curtain falls upon the spectacle of the woman crying her heart out in the solitude of her room.

The subject is not of the most inspiring kind, and the score does not show any of those tokens of artistic development from the "Pagliacci" period (1892) such as might not unnaturally be looked for in a work emanating from the same source after an interval of eight years. But "Zaza" does not represent the highest expression of his powers. In large part he seems to have been content to rely upon melodic phrases which have served their purpose all too often, and to treat them after the manner most familiar.

The first act, though most of the music it contains is trivial, has its effective moments, and among such may be reckoned the treatment of the situation—vulgarly puerile as it is on the dramatic side—of *Zaza's* overtures to *Dufresne*, while the love-duet which follows it is not ineffective in the conventionally "passionate" manner of the Italian modern school. In the second act nothing happens)the heroine does even disrobe) to give the composer a chance, and he is heard, consequently, in a more persuasive mood in the next act, the music which accompanies *Zaza's* meeting with her lover's little daughter not lacking expressive qualities.

73. *Musical Courier*, June 2, 1909.

THE New York American is responsible for the news that Leoncavallo soon is to publish his "Memoirs," in which he will give the following account of how he came to write "Pagliacci":

"In Paris the baritone singer, Maurel, had promised me an introduction to Signor Ricordi, the musical publisher. Encouraged by that promise, I pawned the furniture from my room, and set out for Milan. There Maurel kept his word; and in our interview Ricordi commissioned me to write the music for the "Medici" opera for 2,400 francs (about $500), payable at 200 francs ($40) per month, with the obligation of completing the work within a twelve-month. But when that work was done I had to keep up courage for another three years, during which I resumed in Milan the drudgery of teaching.

"After the success of 'Cavalleria Rusticana' I lost my patience, and resolved upon one last desparate effort. I buckled to, and in the space of five months wrote the words, and music of 'Pagliacci,' which was destined to so gratifying a triumph.

"When it came to be translated into French, Catulle Mendes discovered some resemblance to his 'Femme de Tabarin,' and in the persuasion that I had filched my plot from him, took the preliminary steps for a lawsuit. He soon, however, loyally withdrew, for I was able to demonstrate to him that my story is in reality the reproduction of a case that actually came before my father when president of the Court of Justice at Cosenza.

"And, what is still stranger, the hero of my story, freed from prison, is still alive, and in the service of Baroness Sprovieri, in Calabria."

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74. *The Nation*, September 18, 1909.

From Rome we learn of the presentation, at no remote date, of the new operetta by Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo, which is called "Malbrouk," and the libretto of which is by Maurice Vaucaire. The opera will be offered this season to the German as well as to the Italian public. Its subject is allegorical, and it is said that the hero has nothing in common with the Malbrouk of the old French song. Signor Leoncavallo's Marlborough is derived, rather, from Boccaccio, and from such analyses of the piece as are available, one gathers the impression that the new opera is of the merriest.

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75. *Musical America*, September 25, 1909.

RUGGIERO [*sic*] LEONCAVALLO is not one of those composers who believe in confining their energies to one undertaking until it is brought to completion. On the contrary, during the last two years he has divided his time among three operas in the making. All three are now ready for the public, but only two of them will be brought this season.

At the composer's wish the "Camicia Rossa" ("The Red Shirt"), the first to be finished, will be held back for the opera festival in connection with the Fine Arts Exposition in Rome in 1911, celebrating the unveiling of the Victor Emanuel monument. This would seem to indicate that Leoncavallo himself places a higher estimate on the "Camicia Rossa" than either "Maja" [*sic*] or "Malbruk."

"Maja," [*sic*] as already announced, will have its *première* at Antwerp's new Royal Opera House early in the season; later it will be sung in several of the Italian and French cities. "Malbruk," which treats of a humorous subject, will have its first performance in either Berlin or Rome next February.

76. *Musical America*, January 29, 1910. "New Leoncavallo Opera; 'Malbruk,' a Comic Fantasy, Wins Approval of Rome."

ROME, Jan. 22.—Almost simultaneously with the production of his new grand opera, "Maia," Leoncavallo's long-awaited light opera, "Malbruk," was given a first hearing this week at the Teatro Nazionale. Leoncavallo calls his work a comic fantasy, its songs are pleasing, and, though the comedy is rather slight, there is plenty of fantasy. The production was a decisive success.

The composer himself and Signor Nessi write the libretto on an old Breton legend as a basis. *Malbruk*, an aged warrior, seeking the hand of *Alba*, the demoiselle of the white goose, sends to her as his emissary his nephew, *Arnolfo*, who has himself fallen in love with the girl. At the height of the bridal festivities *Malbruk* is summoned to war, and returns to find that his place is taken by another. To discover this person's identity, he examines the sleeping guard of honor, and cuts off half the moustache of the one whose heart seems to beat faster than the others. This one, *Arnolfo*, promptly cuts off half the moustaches from the faces of his sleeping comrades, and in this way escapes detection.

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77. *Musical Courier*, February 16, 1910.

The cables rumors in the Sunday dailies to the effect that Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo is dying of heart disease should be received with extreme caution if not downright distrust. THE MUSICAL COURIER service in Italy has not reported up to date any such alarming news about the composer of "Pagliacci," and we therefore set down the publication as a canard for the consumption of the avid Sunday reader. Our local dailies think nothing at all of killing a composer or two on the Sabbath morn if other "news" be insufficient to fill the unnecessarily large number of pages.

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78. *Musical America*, February 19, 1910. "How Inspiration Came to Leoncavallo."

A pretty story from Rome has been going the rounds of the press anent the genesis of Leoncavallo's new musical play, "Malbruk," which was received with much favor at its recent *première*. During his recent visit to Berlin he attended a party given by a manufacturer. Leoncavallo's companion at table was the pretty wife of a doctor, who was anxious to secure good waltzers for the dance which was to follow the dinner. Great was her surprise, however, when she discovered that the composer had not entered the ballroom. She went to the smoking-room and found him comfortably ensconsed in an armchair, enjoying a cigar.

Asked if he was not going to dance, Leoncavallo pointed to his corpulent figure. The lady was disappointed.

"Well, if you do not dance," she said, with something of a pout, "you might play a waltz and show that you can be put to some use."

An idea seized the composer. He laid his cigar aside, and the next moment he had taken the place of the pianist. He struck up a waltz which he had never played before.

The couples on the floor gave him inspiration. The waltz was followed by a polka. Leoncavallo sat at the piano for half an hour. When he rose the guests flocked 'round him and thanked him effusively. The master asked his host to find him a quiet corner and provide him with pencil and paper. Lighting another cigar, he wrote the melodies he had played.

From that moment he decided to write a light opera, and a few days afterward he was hard at work on the music of "Malbruk."

79. *Musical America*, May 21, 1910.

RUGGIERO [*sic*] LEONCAVALLO, who has recovered from his serious illness, and is now at work again on the remodelling of his ill-starred "Maja [*sic*]," recalled not long since an experience he once had in Manchester which taught him the lesson that it is never safe for an artist to be facetious at his own expense in public. Next to him in the parquet of a Manchester theater, where his "Pagliacci" was being sung, sat an enthusiastic stranger, who, when the finale was reached, seemed unable to contain himself longer, and burst forth with, "What a masterpiece! What a perfect work!"

Leoncavallo, prompted by the recollection of notable examples, thought the occasion timely for a little joke; accordingly he began to pull his work to pieces. "A masterpiece!" he echoed scornfully. "My dear sir, I am a musician myself, and know something about the art. The opera is absolutely worthless. It is stolen from all quarters and brazenly slammed together. For instance, the Berlioz Cavatina has been filched, likewise the duet from the first act of Gounod's 'Faust,' while the Finale is only a pathetic imitation of one of Verdi's Finales."

Next morning, before boarding his train for London, the composer bought a copy of the foremost Manchester paper to see what its critic had to say of the performance. What was his astonishment to read these headlines, in large, glaring capitals: "Signor Leoncavallo's Own Opinion of 'I Pagliacci'—Declares that It Is a Plagiarism—Admission by Composer That the Opera is Without Originality!" The Italian composer's neighbor of the previous evening was, then, a newspaper man who had tricked him. "But I still feel a cold chill," Leoncavallo confesses, "whenever I think of how I made a fool of myself."

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80. *Detroit News-Tribune*, May 29, 1910. "One on Leoncavallo."

Leoncavallo recounts an amusing incident that befell him some time ago in a theatre in Manchester, England, where he occupied a stall one evening to hear the performance of his "Pagliacci." At the end, a stranger, sitting next to him kept exclaiming enthusiastically, "What a perfect masterpiece!" Leoncavallo, imagining himself utterly unknown in the audience, began to play the critic of his own work, and chimed in ironically, "A masterpiece? I don't in the least agree with you. I'm a musician myself, so know what I'm talking about. The fact is, this opera is a worthless piece, and brimful of imitations and plagiarisms. For instance, the Cavatina is filched bodily from Berlioz, the duet in the first act is all Gounod, while the finale is a sorry copy of one you will find in Verdi." Next morning Leoncavallo drove to the railway station and bought a paper. Comfortably seating himself in the train, he opened it and was astonished to find the following headlines: "Signor Leoncavallo's Opinions on 'Pagliacci.' Declaration of Plagiarism, Confession of a Composer Bereft of All Originality." "Evidently," Leoncavallo now says, "my neighbor was a journalist who had dogged me, but to this day I have cold shivers every time I recall the incident."

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81. *Musical Courier*, September 3, 1910. "New Leoncavallo Opera."

Signor Leoncavallo is at work at present in his Swiss summer home—a beautiful villa at Brissago, on the upper end of Lake Maggiore—"creating" the music for his new opera, which he has already christened, "La Foscarina." The libretto is already being written by a Swiss, M. Angelo Nessi, of Locarno, and an Italian, Signor G. Macchi, of Milan. Leoncavallo hopes that the opera will be ready by early spring, to be played at Genoa by the Coramba Scognamiglio troupe, and afterwards to London.

82. *Musical Courier*, October 5, 1910.

Leoncavallo is making great plans for the future. At present he is at work on a new opera to be entitled "Prometheus," with which he proposes to introduce something new. The libretto, which is really more a poem than an opera text, is by the Italian poet, Colautti, and is said to be very poetical and beautiful. It will be first produced at Rome. Leoncavallo has not given up the idea of his trilogy, of which the first work was the "Medici;" he is planning as a continuation two operas to be entitled "Savonorola" and "Cesare Borgia." He has also nearly completed a three act opera called "Foscarina," of which the scene is laid in Venice early in the sixteenth century.

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83. *Musical America*, October 20, 1910. "Leoncavallo's Next Opera to Be Produced First in Italy."

GENEVA, Oct. 20.—Leoncavallo, the Italian composer of "Pagliacci," is not to follow in the footsteps of his compatriots, Puccini and Mascagni, by giving America the first glimpse of his new opera. Leoncavallo is busy, at his villa in Brissago, Lake Maggiore, on his next work, "La Foscarina," and expects to have it completed by the end of the year. It will first be produced in Genoa in the early Spring [*sic*], but will be taken to New York soon thereafter. The libretto of "la Foscarina" is by Angelo Nessi and Giacomo Macchi, and the opera is said to be "light" in style.

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84. *The New York Times*, November 19, 1910. "Paris Critics' Jealousy; Plainly Affects Their Comments on Leoncavallo's New Operetta."

PARIS, Nov. 19.—Several critics, animated by the newly revived jealousy of Italian composers, have frankly put their condemnation of Leoncavallo's operetta "Malbrook [*sic*] s'en va-t-en Guerre," upon that ground.

On the whole the operetta did not have a very enthusiastic reception of the Apollo on Thursday night. Its humor and music are both rather heavy. The plot shows little inventiveness, yet it has the elements of popularity and the splendor of the staging of the operetta will, it is expected, go far toward insuring its success.

The music is inferior to that of the composer's "Vie de Bohème," yet contains many charming passages.

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85. *New York World*, November 20, 1910. "'Malbrouck' Suits Paris, But Not the Critics; Leoncavallo Says His New Opera Burlesques the Stately Music of Great Composers."

PARIS, Nov. 20.—The theatrical novelty last week was the production of Leoncavallo's latest opera, "Malbrouck." The composer calls it "a farce with music treated farcictlly [*sic*]."

The principal theme is the old French folksong known as "Malbrouck s'en Va t'en guerre," which has the same melody as "He's a Jolly Good Fellow." This theme runs throughout the opera.

Although it is not so stated on the programme, the composer says he has treated the theme in the way of burlesquing the style of Beethoven and other great composers.

Several French critics have failed to see the humor in it and declare that its music is extremely reminiscent. They find the plot rather dull, but the public apparently found the new comic opera a delightful departure from the usual offerings.

86. *Metropolitan Opera House*, date unknown. "Leoncavallo's Opinion of 'Pagliacci'."

"Composers are not always keen to tell stories at their own expense or at that of their compositions," says W. F. Gates in "Anecdotes of Great Musicians," "but the following related by Leoncavallo, he deemed to good to keep, though at the time it put him in the light of a first-class plagiarist.

"Being one day in the town of Forli, he heard that his opera, 'Pagliacci,' that work that has given him to much fame, was to be produced, and he decided to hear it *incognito*. That the rising young composer was in town, was not generally known.

At the opera his seat was beside a bright-eyed and enthusiastic young lady, who, when she saw the composer did not join in the general applause, but remained quiet, turned to him with the question:

"'Why do you not applaud? Does it not suit you?'

"The composer much amused replied: 'No, on the contrary, it displeases me. It is the work of a mere beginner, not to call him anything worse.'

"'Then you are ignorant of music,' she said quickly.

"' Oh, no,' replied the composer.

"Then he preceeded to enlighten her on the subject, proving the music worthless and entirely without originality.

"'See,' said he, 'this motive is—,' and he hummed lightly a short melody; 'this aria is stolen from Bizet, and that is from Beethoven.' In short he tore the whole opera into pieces.

"His neighbor sat in silence, but with an air of pity on her countenance. At the close, she turned to him and said: 'Is what you have said to me your honest opinion?'

"'Entirely so,' was the reply.

"'Good,' said she, and with a malicious gleam in her eyes left the theatre.

"Next morning, glancing over the paper fell upon the heading, 'Leoncavallo on his "Pagliacci"'; and reading further, was somewhat startled to find the conversation of the evening before fully reported and accredited to the proper source. He had, unfortunately, played his little joke on a lady reporter, who had proved too smart for him.

"Leoncavallo swore off from making disparaging remarks concerning his own works to vivacious young ladies, no matter how handsome or enthusiastic they might be."

Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo was born in Naples in 1858 [*sic*]. His well-known opera, "I Pagliacci," which was produced in Milan in 1892, met with instantaneous and enthusiastic success. Of his works it is the only one familiar to American audiences.

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87. *The Nation,* April 6, 1911.

Berlin is better supplied with opera than any other city in the world. The cosmopolitan taste of the Berliners is illustrated by the list of operas sung on the seven days from March 12 to 18. At the Royal institution the repertory included Flute, Konigskinder, Regiment, Lohengrin, Fidelio, Leoncavallo's "Maia."

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88. O. P. Jacob, *Musical America,* April 8, 1911. "'Maia' Has Good Music, Poor Book; Berlin Première of Leoncavallo's Work Not Unqualified Success."

BERLIN, March 19.—Once again the Berlin Royal Opera has had a *première*. First performances of opera are certainly few and far between here and when they do occur they are unfortunately not epoch-making. Leoncavallo's much-looked-for opera "Maia" was given its German

première last night in the Berlin Royal Opera, the very first representation of the work having taken place in the Scala at Milan. There was a full house, composed in great part of professional people from here and abroad and of representatives of the press.

A success? Doubtful, although the music, it should be stated at the outset, is vastly superior to the libretto. The Paris publisher, Paul de Chaudens [*sic*], wrote the book. Ordinarily it may be advantageous to have a millionaire for a co-worker, but it is apt to become harmful for a composer if he is thereby led into writing music for an inadequate libretto.

The scenes of the opera are laid in Camargue, an island in the south of France, formed by the delta of the River Rhone.

Maia, a young peasant woman, loves the son of the wealthy farmer by whom she is employed. This son, *Renaud*, returns her love, but refuses to assert himself against his father's wishes. While *Renaud* is serving his time in the army *Torias*, the herder of the Camargue, woos *Maia* and tells her that her bethrothed is unfaithful to her and that, in addition, *Renaud's* father has already chosen a bride for his son. *Maia* is torn between conflicting emotions, when *Renaud* unexpectedly appears and reassures her of his undying love. But *Renaud* proves himself a swaying reed and in the second act is shown with his father and the bride whom the latter has selected for him. *Maia* denounces *Renaud* in the presence of the assembled wedding guests and *Torias* now openly declares his love for *Maia*.

In the third act *Maia* in her grief seeks the solitude of the forest, whither she is followed by *Renaud*, who, too weak to oppose his father openly, tells her that he has set aside all filial regard and will henceforth devote himself to her alone. *Torias* inopportunely appears on the scene and a wild combat between the jealous rivals ensues. *Maia* intentionally receives the blow which *Renaud* intended for *Torias*—a rather worn-out stage effect—and finally dies in the arms of her lover.

Being acquainted with the original libretto, the writer was somewhat surprised by the arbitrary alteration of the ending of the opera. His Excellency, von Hüleen, was formerly an army officer and naturally delights in pictures having a more or less military character. So on Saturday it had been ordained by the Generalintendant that the original conclusion of the opera by which *Maia* plunges into the Rhone River, and the later one, according to which she dies in her lover's arms, be changed so that *Torias* flees from the scene of involuntary murder and returns shortly before the demise of the heroine, accompanied by several meaningless individuals and—a country policeman in full gala uniform. Thus the law is at all times—brought foremost in Germany.

In such a libretto many a musical genius might have found his Waterloo. And the shortcomings of the book are all the more rehrettable because Leoncavallo has illustrated in "Maia"—perhaps more than ever before—the merits of the Italian modern school. An intimate relationship seems to exist between the composer of "Maia" and Puccini, and above all the music is not only singable but frequently vocally effective. The parts of the heroine, the tenor *Renaud* and the baritone *Torias* are extraordinarily well characterized, and the ensembles polyphonically are cleverly arranged. Nor is melodic originality lacking. But here the composer has not remained logical. When the old-time genius of the "Pagliacci" composer once asserts itself a natural continuance in the same vein is looked for. But here as never before Leoncavallo sinks from the heights of genius into musical platitudes. Possibly, though, this again is but the natural result of illogical libretto. Wherever human life and passions venture forth unrestrainedly the music at once a significant and always interesting character. The strongest factor in the opera is the instrumentation, which is full of color and tonal effectiveness.

Maia's Romanza in the first act, for instance, is of beautiful effect and no unworthy acquisition for any opera. The duet in the same act is also full of vibrating life and passion. But what a breach of operatic technic to introduce a long duet in the beginning of the first act before the figures have yet awakened the necessary interest! Every possible climax is thereby liable to be ruined at the outset, especially when the material utilizable is so scarce.

The performance was decidedly praiseworthy. The opera had evidently been conscienciously rehearsed and staged and left little to be wished for in these particulars. That *Maia* after she had received her death blow, should continue to sing another long duet with *Renaud* proved rather annoying from a logical standpoint.

Kapellmeister Blech deserves unstinted praise for the manner in which he kept the ensemble together and conducted the orchestra, which played with tone beauty and dash as though it had played nothing but Italian opera for years. Mme. Kurt sang *Maia* (a rather high part even for a dramatic soprano) with a vocal quality and tone production that pleased immensely. Francis Maclennan, the American, who was a handsome *Renaud,* was in excellent voice and attacked his high notes with a facility that gave his voluptuous tenor the opportunity to assert itself to the best advantage. And still I have the feeling that there is a great deal more in store for Mr. Maclennan as a tenor. As is frequently the case with robust tenors, his voice seems going through a process of greater development. That which caused a genuine surprise to many was his exquisite piano which he produced with a pure chest tone. Tenors who have their voice under such control are certainly rare enough. Bischoff, the *Torias,* is an excellent artist, but I would rather say little about his rendition. His harshness of voice I am willing to attribute to indisposition.

Putnam Griswold sang the smaller part of the father *Renaud* with the musical precision and interesting arts of impersonation of the experienced performer. The smaller parts were ably taken care of by Miss Gates, Fräulein Pacholiki, Fräulein Lindemann and Herr von Schwind.

The Italian colony of Berlin appeared in large numbers. After the first act the applause was rather lukewarm, but after the second act Leoncavallo—who had come to Berlin for this première—was called before the curtain five times. How often the maestro, who was presented with an immense floral wreath, bowed his acknowledgments after the close of the opera we did not wait to see.

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89. Author and Newspaper Unknown, New York, Undated. "Leoncavallo's 'Maia.'"

Leoncavallo came, saw and conquered Berlin. "Maia" met with an extremely cordial reception, and after the second act–which is the best of the three—the composer was called with a good deal of enthusiasm. The music is very charming: it is far more lyrical than Leoncavallo has hitherto written; sensational effects are conspicuous by their absence. If anything, there is too much lyric and too little dramatic action, but the old love of flowing melody is expressed throughout, while the whole is a refined and musicianly composition which should take its place in the foremost rank of modern opera

The book–by Paul de Choudens—is poor. It depicts an episode said to have taken place a century or so ago in the south of France. Maia is a peasant girl in service in the dairy of Germain, whose son Renaud loves her. The girl loves him too, but the shepherd Torias—who is also in love with Maia—poisons her mind against Renaud, telling her he is false to her. She accordingly promises Torias to wed him if his accusations are proved. Renaud swears his innocence, but he is a weak-minded fellow, and appears next day at the Shepherds' Fete, with the girl his father has selected for his wife.

Maia tells him her mind in plain language—in fact, she makes a scene. Old Germain, however, turns her into ridicule and makes the villagers join in, and the only friend to stand by the poor girl is Torias, with whom she finally goes off. She still loves Renaud and cannot live without him, so she determines to drown herself in the Rhone. Her weak lover quarrels with his father and asks Maia to marry him, but just as she is revelling in her happiness Torias appears on the scene and a fight ensues between the rivals. Maia throws herself on Renaud's breast to save him, and receives the knifethrust intended for Torias. She dies in the arms of her despairing lover [. . .]

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90. Author and Newspaper Unknown, August 5, 1911.

After negotiations lasting two years Sir Edward Moss has induced Leoncavallo, the famous composer, to come to London and conduct and superintend at the Hippodrome a series of performances of an abridged version of his opera, "Pagliacci." The first performance will be given in a few weeks time.

Leoncavallo is bringing from Italy his own company and orchestra. He will occupy the conductor's seat twice a day during the term of his engagement, which is a fairly lengthy one.

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91. *Musical America*, September 9, 1911. "Leoncavallo As Comedian; Italian Composer Takes Part in Skit for Charity."

ROME, Italy Aug. 20.—Maestro Leoncavallo and several operatic artists gave a novel sort of entertainment to the visitors at Montecatini, on August 15. This was the performance of a skit called "L'Argenzia Teatrale." The composer posed as an impresario of the most rigid type and refused all the candidates for operatic honors. These people were heralded into his presence by a gluttonous and semi-inebriated valet of the Goldoni or Molière stamp. Leoncavallo, the imitation impresario, sent the lot to hades, telling them that they sang crows. And in the meantime some of the artists, notably Rosina Storchio, a famous soprano, who sang bits from "Don Pasquale" and La Bohème," were loudly encored by the auditors, who included cabinet ministers, senators and deputies. The performance, which took place in the theatre [. . .] a good deal of money for charity.

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92. *Musical America*, November 4, 1911.

The ever-amiable Leoncavallo, drawing his snug little $5,000 a week at the London Hippodrome, has been bombarding the English with compliments in the newspaper interviews. They take it, however, only as good-natured flattery when he tells them they are a musical nation, just as they smile indulgently when he talks about their beautiful climate. He says that the reasons grand opera is not more popular there are, that it is an expensive luxury and that their impresarios insist on giving heavy German music.

"Wagner and Strauss can never be popular in London," he opines. "In Bayreuth Wagnerian cycles succeed because the place is so dull that any diversion is welcomed. But here in London, where the sun shines and the world smiles–never!" What extraordinary subtlety of perception brought to bear on the phenomenon of thousands of people flocking from the four corners of the earth to Bayreuth, there, apparently, merely to size up the place as a bore and to turn to the festival performances as a last resort, by way of a narcotic, as it were!

The *Evening Standard* makes pithy comment, expressing gratitude to the composer of "I Pagliacci" for his encouraging words but disagreeing with him in his prediction that London will ever become as enthusiastic musically as Milan, for London is never as enthusiastic as Milan.

"Not enthusiasm, but a certain quiet endurance of the inevitable is London's strong point. Hence, some might say, the frequency with which it gets Wagner and the moderns of modern tendency."

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93. Herbert F. Peyser, *Musical America*, October 25, 1913. "Holding Up the Mirror to Leoncavallo; "Pagliacci's" Author Soliloquizes on Himself and His Works in an Interval of a Six-Weeks' Trip to San Francisco—Regrets That but One of His Ten Operas Is Familiar to Americans—Opinions of Contempory [*sic*] Musical Tendencies Delivered in a Hurried Visit to New York—New Operas He Is Working On."

Somehow or other it does not seem natural that a personage of eminence and distinction should find his way into New York without having the tidings of his advent blazoned forth in the daily prints. Somehow or other that seemingly impossible phenomenon has strangely come about. At this moment Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo, composer of the perennially popular "Pagliacci," coequal with Mascagni (and no one else) as a propulsive potentiality of Italian operatic veritism, is peacefully inhabiting San

Francisco. A bare week ago he adorned New York with his presence for two entire days, yet scarcely any one [*sic*] appears to have been apprised of the circumstance. He had arrived, big as life, on the *Oceanic*, and took up a brief abode at the Astor. None the less the dynamics of publicity never exceeded a *pianissimo*. One journal printed a brief notice of his arrival and that constituted practically the sum and substance of the matter.

Possibly the composer of "Ridi Pagliaccio" wanted to avoid obstreperous acclamation. If so, he succeeded rarely. It is scarcely credible that under any other conditions the populace would not have endeavored in some way to pay more intimate respects to him who had erected the music of its best-loved talking-machine record.

Leoncavallo's rotundity makes him appear in his portraits taller than he actually is. His real height scarcely exceeds five feet five. In all other respects his pictures do him complete justice. His hair curiously suggests Nahan Franko's in its unequal commingling of black and white. His mustache rears itself at angles that make it seem a first cousin of the Kaiser's. Casual inspection will disclose the interesting fact that it is tricolored—black, white and reddish. Portly though Leoncavallo is he shuns chairs proportioned to his dimensions, and during his talk with a representative of MUSICAL AMERICA he maintained himself valiantly upon one that struck the observer as perilously small.

Genial is the term that most appositely pertains to the personality of the expansive Ruggiero [*sic*]. He radiates good nature and *bonhommie*. On occasion he is almost naive, while satisfaction bubbles up within him, and illuminates his face with smiles when he meditates upon his achievements and the effect they have had on the popular mind. Wheteher or not one is disposed to esteem his works as highly as he himself values them it is impossible not to react in some fashion to the warmth of his good nature. And he adds volubility to his other assets of personality. His conversation (in a far better French than is usually at the command of an Italian) was a monologue delivered with due Italian effervescence and characteristic stress of emphasis. Though his train for the West left in two hours he had no objection in the world to talking about questions of art. He was happy, very happy, for had not a cable-gram from his dear wife Bertha, just reached him telling him of the success of his opera "Zingari" in Florence, a city that had never heard it before? The visitor was greeted with fluent cordialty.

"So happy am I to be here," he exclaimed when the object of his visit was mentioned, "that it grieves me to have to leave after six weeks or so. In San Francisco I shall conduct several of my operas—'Pagliacci,' 'Zingari,' 'Zaza.' Also 'Aida' for the unveiling of the Verdi monument. Ah! but I should like to stay longer and to see to the presentation of others of my works in America. It is really not fair that only one of them should be heard in so many places. Is it not a pity that there are opera houses over which a publisher exercises so powerful an influence that the operas of one particular composer are constantly exploited and those of another barred? Mr. Puccini's works are always heard. Naturally, I am not in the least objecting to this, for they are thoroughly worthy of that honor. But it is the idea of restraining others that I find unjust. My operas I am sure would be well received. Think of the successes I have enjoyed and the esteem I have been held in in so many music centers of Europe! Think of 'Zingari!' Think that the Emperor of Germany selected me above the innumerable German composers to write a work for his Royal Opera House! Think that, despite all the harsh criticism and ill-will with which it was met, 'Roland of Berlin' has already been sung between sixty and seventy times. In Paris there are numberless French composers clamoring for and receiving hearings. And what does the public prefer, what receives the widest attention? Italian works, mine included. They love me and treat me like a god in Vienna. I was lionized at the opera there one evening when I was coming down the stairs after a performance of 'Lohengrin.' Does it not seem unfair in the face of all this, that only one of my ten operas can be given a hearing in this part of the world? Oh! I should so very much like to introduce the others myself. I should even like to stay here an write an American opera—base it on a good American play if I could find such a one. But were I to write an American work I should collaborate only with an American."

A question as to the preference for any one of his operas brought a bland smile to the face of the composer. "That I cannot tell you," he said presently; "A father cannot say which of his children he prefers and my works are my children. I am very fond of 'Zingari.' It has been called the sister of

'Pagliacci,'" he added proudly. "I am a hard worker. In twenty years I have composed some ten operas. My 'Medici' trilogy is still to be completed—Savonorola' and 'Cesare Borgia' are unfinished. But the others--'Pagliacci,' 'Boheme,' 'Zaza,' 'Roland of Berlin,' 'Malbruck,' 'Rose Queen,' 'Zingari,' 'I Medici.' Now I'm about to begin a new one, 'Ave Maria.' The libretto is Illica's—anything more beautiful I have never read. I have only had it for a month, though, and have not yet started work on it. Ah! but when it *is* done—!

"The 'Camicia Rossa' upon which I was engaged? That opera," he said, lowering his voice as though the import of his statement were fraught with the gravest mystery, "I never completed. I was advised not to by many important persons. It dealt with the Irredentists, you see, and there was danger that it might arouse political feeling at an inopportune moment. Ah! I put that work aside quietly and say nothing more about it."

In one thing, at any rate, Leoncavallo suggests Richard Wagner. He writes his own librettos—at least he has written most of them. In answer to a query as to the why and wherefore of the procedure, to whether it sprang from pure love of literary work or the express conviction that the best operas result from the incarnation of librettist and composer in a single individual he answered that "most librettists in Italy are journalists'; and further intimated that journalists were not the most pleasant of persons to cooperate with—at least when it came to turning out operas. But apparently the subject was more or less painful to him. He disposed of it with celerity.

Composers often go notoriously awry in their valuation of the works of their colleagues. Nevertheless their opinions continue to be eagerly sought; one likes to know them if only to disagree with them. One need not be argumentatively inclined to find oneself at loggerheads with Signor Leoncavallo's notions. But at all events his beliefs and contentions are delivered in the best of faith.

"Sir," he began when the matter of contemporary tendencies and composers was broached. "I have always been and I always shall remain Italian. Italy has been the teacher of the world in music and it still has much to impart. In the early days Germany, France and other nations have learned from my nation. Only in the course of time did they evolve characteristics of their own. Mozart came to Italy and studied. Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Mendelssohn—they and no end of others either lived in Italy at some time or other of their lives or else learned much directly from the Italians. What a glorious array of great teachers we have given to the world—a Palestrina, a Marcello, a Rossini, a Donizetti, a Bellini, a Verdi, to give you only a few. The first impulse has come from Italy; other nations had to experience it before they could proceed on their own way.

"Now, Strauss and Debussy will not last, because they are not natural, because they try to do things that will not appeal to the great body of people at large, but just to some technical specialists. They are not sincere and only what is written in complete sincerity succeeds. My 'Pagliacci' succeeded because I wrote it in a spirit of absolute sincerity. Those little men who imitate what others have originated are negligible quantities, artistically speaking. There are plenty of them in Italy to-day.

Public the Final Arbiter

"The artist may consider himself triumphant when he has the public on his side. The public must reach up to him and he, in turn, reach down to it. No one who is truly great will be satisfied to write for a few exceptionally learned persons and consider it beneath his dignity to bid for the approval of the multitude. The composer has accomplished something great when he writes something that insinuates itself into the public ear and refuses to be dislodged from there. And therefore I hold it a greater and more difficult accomplishment to have written 'La Donna e Mobile' than to have composed 'Salomé.' Verdi's air is a greater piece of art than Strauss's opera. If people yawn on hearing a certain composition you can know it is bad art. Whatever tires one is such.

"The public is the final arbiter in all questions of art and the public is right. You will find that it has never really withheld its support in the case of the great masterpieces. If one sometimes hears that such has been the case one may safely assume that some temporary agency was at work which in some way or other hindered the appreciation of the people. One reads to-day that Rossini's 'Barber of Seville' was a failure at its first presentation. It was really nothing of the kind. Only the young and unknown

Rossini had dared to set to new music a libretto that Paisiello had used and so a cabal, composed of the friends of Paisiello, was on hand to do whatever mischief it could. A black cat that happened to walk across the stage as the tenor was singing his cavatina afforded occasion for laughter and hisses and this, combined with all other annoyances caused by the hostile claque produced the impression of failure. And similarly when 'Traviata' was first sung and the audience laughed uproariously at the enormously stout soprano who was supposed to be dying of consumption, the hearers made merry over the incongruity of it all, and gave the occasion the appearance of a failure. Instances of the kind could be multiplied indefinitely. But unless there has been some strongly predisposing factor in the way the worth of a great work has always been recognized by the people from the outset.

"I can treat operatically only such themes as are vital, natural, and true. It would not be possible, for instance, for me to write music for fishes that sing and Valkyries that fly through the air. I have never seen such things in life and so I should be at a loss when it came to treating them. But give me men who can laugh, men who can weep and I can laugh and weep with them. Such has always been my aim. Art should concern itself primarily with the truth. The artist must not tie himself down with theories. Wagner, man of genius that he was, laid down many theories which he purported to follow, but in the last analysis never did. He was unwilling, he averred, to write ensembles, concerted numbers, duets, and he claimed to have written 'endless melody,' works of which pieces were not susceptible of detachment and separate performance. Yet Wagner was constantly refuting himself in practice. When he gave concerts in the days of his struggles for recognition what sort of things did he give out of his own works—the 'Ride of the Valkyries,' the 'Waldweben,' the 'Siegfried Funeral March,' the 'Magic Fire Music.' All of them are numbers with a definite beginning and a perfectly well-defined ending. Take the wonderful last act of 'Götterdämmerung,' which makes it worth one's while to sit through the first two, and what have you but a string of detachable pieces—the 'Rhinemaiden's' Trio, the 'Narrative' of *Siegfried*, the 'Funeral March,' the finale! And even in 'Parsifal,' supposedly the broadest exemplification of his system, we find precisely the same thing."

Expects an American School

Whatever any one [*sic*] else may have to say for or against the question Signor Leoncavallo is quite positive of two things—that America will develop a national school of music and that opera in English has come to stay. "Of the former I cannot see how there can be any doubt," he said. "A nation must first be completely settled as to its material well-being before it thinks of artistic creation, and America has plenty of time before it. The clash of material interests will be like stones struck together—it will produce sparks and these figurative sparks will be artistic productivity. To contend that a musical genius cannot arise in America is ridiculous. A genius could suddenly appear in the midst of the Sahara. What should there be to hinder the arrival of one here? The conglomeration of races? Was not England once a mixture of races possessed of characteristic elements apparently irreconcilable? Yet did not England in the course of time produce a Shakespeare and a Byron?

"Italian is unquestionably the most favorable language for singing. English is more difficult than French or German, but it is none the less possible. The only thing that troubles me is that people over here speak English so differently from the way I was taught to pronounce it. I cannot understand those who try to talk to me in this country and they, in their turn, are not able to understand me. If I tell a taxi driver I want to go to the Hippodrome he doesn't seem to know what I'm talking about. Then, when I show him the name in writing, he says it in a curious guttural way (the composer gave an imitation of the sound at this juncture). If I say I want to go to the Savoy Hotel the same thing happens. I cannot grasp the fundamental principles of your enunciation over here. Still, as you people are able to understand each other when you speak there's nothing to hinder mutual comprehension in singing, I should think."

Some years ago Leoncavallo was quoted as deploring the lack of good singers in Italy. His ideas have not changed on that score. "Not only our best singers nut also our best conductors are being lured away by the fascination of the high prices they receive elsewhere. We have to do the best we can with what remains. But just now we are holding on carefully to all our youngest singers and with them we should eventually be able to atone in part, at any rate, for that of which other nations have deprived us.

94. Stuart Gayness, *San Francisco Examiner*, October 31, 1913. "Public To See Dedication of Great Highway".

The Lincoln Highway, which promises to be a lasting monument to the automobile industry, and one of the greatest developments ever made in this country, will be officialy dedicated tonight by every city, town and hamlet between New York and San Francisco. The widespread enthusiasm with which the highway project has been received throughout the country is the best indication of its ultimate success and the dedication celebrations held throughout the United States to-day will officially start the campaign for construction of the highway.

That San Francisco should take an important part in the dedication of the proposed highway is in keeping with the position which this city will occupy as the western terminal of the road. In order to show the city's appreciation for its selection as the western end of the highway a big celebration will be held to-night at the Valencia Theatre. Men prominent in commercial and civic organizations will take an active part in the dedication and will make speeches on the wonderful possibilities of the highway.

Elaborate Programme.

Elaborate plans have been made by the members of the Motor Car Dealers' Association, under whose auspices the celebration will be held, for giving the highway project a big boost to create interest in the road among motorists and lovers of good roads throughout this section of the state. The men who are striving to make the national highway a practical reality will assemble at the mass meeting. Gifted speakers will tell of Abraham Lincoln, of the struggles to connect civilization with the ever diminishing wilderness and of the time in the not far distant future when all the world may come to California over the longest and finest highway in the world. A splendid concert by the Municipal band and solos by well known singers will divide the time with the speakers.

Everybody Welcome.

"The committee in charge of the celebration has thrown open the doors to every resident of the city. We want everybody that can be present to come," said E. P. Brinegar, state counsel for the Highway Association. "The celebration is in honor of the greatest highway project that was ever undertaken and San Francisco occupies the most important position on the highway as the western terminal. We want to start the project with a boom."

Leoncavallo to Attend.

The programme is to be by no means limited to oratory. The committee has been promised the presence of Leoncavallo, the great composer who is now visiting the city, author of "Pagliacci" and "Zingari," and the Municipal Band will render, as a special feature, Leoncavallo's "The United States Forever." Beatriz Michelena, the prima donna who established a well-remembered success in "The Tik-Tok Man," and Mrs. Roy Lee will both contribute musical numbers.

The women of San Francisco who are interested in progressive movements will be well represented. A delegation from the San Francisco center of the California Civic League will participate and practically every commercial and promotion organization in the city and down the peninsula will be represented by its officers.

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95. Ruth Miller, *Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 21, 1920. “Leoncavallo's Last Opera Receives Its World Premier Here,” 21.

Yes, last evening Titta Ruffo, with his blood-stained face and red smeared hands, as he took his uncountable curtain calls and bowed with a little blind faltering to the storming applause, had made us believe that Leoncavallo had written a gory if at times a trifle conventional masterpiece.

There is little space for detailed commentary on the musical score, but one remarkably built, orchestral climax should be mentioned—the one when Edipo and Gioasta [*sic*] flee shrieking, horror-stricken, and the chorus surges on the stage. Remarkable because of the unbelievable simplicity of the means employed to create an unforgettable moment of symphonic tension. It accomplished this tense, nerve lashed, melodramatic moment by merely sweeping into an almost trite hurly-burly which ended in a martial rhythm that dangerously neared the tawdry, which in turn slipped into the quiet hymn-like melody that precedes the dreary aria of the blinded king.

But no matter how your brain says coldly, "Old stuff. That is thus, and so and so and thus," your nerves quiver and respond as much as if Leoncavallo had discovered some miraculous new combination of musical sounds. The inescapable dramatic effect is there. And after all, isn't that the important thing?

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96. Richard Aldrich, *The New York Times*, February 22, 1921. "Leoncavallo's Edipo Re," p. 19.

[. . .] The music with which Leoncavallo has attempted to interpret [Sophocles' tragedy] is by turns commonplace, bombastic, rhetorical and freely amiable. He has tried in vain to mold his phrases on a large scale: to lift himself above the "pleasing" level that is so familiar to opera-goers of this day. He uses an arioso style for the voices that occasionally takes on a more melodic mold.

In the orchestra the composer's impotence to express his subject is clearly shown. There is not much of matter nor of style, and the orchestration itself rarely rises above the commonplace. There is a singular lack in this music of the baleful atmosphere, of the vague premonition of doom that envelops the opera, of definite characterization of the personages, of potent exposition of the emotional crises. At the very climax the music says perhaps least.

No wonder the opera is considered as almost a personal bequest to Mr. Ruffo. There is hardly an opera that is more a "one man" opera than this. Oedipus is constantly on the stage and sings about as much as all the other characters put together. The music lies in the best ranges of Mr. Ruffo's voice and he sang it last evening with unceasing and unmodulated power.

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97. *The New York Sun*, March 19, 1922. "'Zaza" at Metropolitan."

There was a repetition of the season's so far most popular novelty at the Metropolitan last night. It is easy to understand the vogue of "Zaza" and for the pessimistically minded to appreciate that music matters little—especially in opera. "Zaza" has too many tricks of the trade–and most of them feminine–to fail of at least a couple of years of success.

Leoncavallo's score to the old Parisian play was more cordially received here than even in its home country. The composer always complained of having no one suitable to sing, and principally act, the title role. It is a pity, possibly, that he had to die before seeing Mme. Geraldine Farrar in it; then again, not such a pity—for he would have had to hear her at the same time, and he might have had that old Italian supersitition about operatic roles actually having to be sung. But after his sad experiences with America the immediate welcome given "Zaza" might have warmed his old Pagliaccian heart to a kindlier memory of things cis-Atlantic.

The play of "Zaza" lends all its little piquancies, shrewd vulgarities, sobs and snickers to the opera. If the music be coarse of texture, slobbering of melody, it is an excellent reflection of the play. Theatrics stalk about in foolish fleshlings, and the same theme which Tchekov handled so magnificently in a short story of only a few pages is pulled out into lengths of taffy and flavored with little *Toto* (which, as all soldiers know, means something else again!). "Zaza" rules the year—but such is the kingdom of opera.

The same cast as before supported Mme. Farrar, with Mr. Crimi in the gentlemanly lead and Mr. Amato as the goodhearted pacemaker of the piece. The house was sold out.

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98. *New York Herald-Tribune*, April 9, 1936. "A N.Y. Collector Buys Original Ms. of 'Pagliacci'; Manuscript of 'Pagliacci' Bought by Gabriel Wells; 57th Street Dealer Gets Leoncavallo Opera in Italy."

Gabriel Wells, of 145 West Fifty-seventh Street, dealer in rare books and manuscripts, announced yesterday that he had bought the original autograph manuscript of Ruggiero [*sic*] Leoncavallo's famous grand opera, "Pagliacci." The sale was completed on Saturday, he said.

The manuscript, which is now at Mr. Wells's office, is written entirely in the composer's hand, on 179 large folio sheets of heavy ruled music paper, with violet ink. It is bound in an imperial folio volume, with cloth back and marbled board sides, and the edges entirely uncut. It bears Leoncavallo's signature in five places. It is complete and perfect, the only repair being a mended corner of pages 293 and 294, which does not affect the text.

It consists of a Title-page; Prologue, with a copyright authentication, 39 pages; Intermezzo, following page 206, 12 unnumbered pages (3 blank); Text, including the libretti and score, 304 pages, plus one page with the copyright authentication.

The front cover bears the printed label of the publisher of the score: "Stabilimento dell' Editore Edoardo Sonzogno in Milano. Musica del Maestro R. Leoncavallo. Grande Partitura (Autografo)."

Mr. Wells purchased the manuscript from Edoardo Sonzogno, of Milan, son of the original publisher. It had been in the family's possession since the one-act opera was written in 1892.

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99. Ross Parmenter, *The New York Times*, February 1, 1960. "Another 'Bohème' Makes U. S. Debut; Leoncavallo Opera on Same Theme as Puccini's Given at Columbia University."

The other "La Bohème"—Leoncavallo's—was presented last night at Columbia University's McMillin Theatre. Pasquale Rubino, the conductor responsible for the production, said he had found records of performances of the opera in South America, but this, he was convinced, was its first showing in the United States.

It should not be its last. As one might expect from a work by the composer of "Pagliacci," it brims with melodies. Its high spirits are genuine. The libretto, written by the composer himself, is a good one. And even though it, too, draws from Murger's novel, it differs sufficiently from the rival opera by Puccini.

Leoncavallo's "Bohème" was written first, but Puccini's beat his to the boards. At first it looked as if the Leoncavallo version was going to be the winner, for Puccini's was not a great success at its première in Turin in 1896, whereas Leoncavallo's scored at its première in Venice the next year. Since then, however, the scales have tipped the other way. So much so, in fact, that most people don't even know Leoncavallo ever wrote a "Bohème."

The Lovers Are Different

Familiarity with the Puccini work added to the interest of last night's performance. At first one had the odd feeling that it lacked its first act, for it opens at the Cafe Momus. But then one realized such an act was not necessary here. Mimi and Rodolfo are not the chief lovers. Musette and Marcello are.

This shift of focus makes all the difference. The opera does not have the sad sweet sentiment of the Mimi-Rodolfo affair. Instead, it has the more cynical light-heartedness of Marcello and Musette, even though Marcello is made a little more romantic by being made a tenor. Only in the last act —the death of Mimi—do the two plots coincide.

The group that sang last night's performance was the Opera Guide Theatre Company. This was its third production. The two previous ones were Catalani's "Loreley" and "La Wally." That the company intends to follow is policy of presenting the lesser known Italian operas is evidenced by the fact that its next one will be Mascagni's "Iris."

Last night's performance was for the benefit of the endowment fund of Casa Italiana of Columbia University. There were a host of well-wishers present, including Giovanni Martinelli, Lucia Albanese and Salvatore Baccalone [*sic*]. And the congenial, friendly attitude of the audience was one of the many factors that disarmed criticism.

A Vivid Production

With only two pianos in place of an orchestra and a company not wholly professional, the production only gave a rough idea of the work. But it was vivid enough to arouse gratitude. And some of the singers, especially Jerome Lo Monaco, the tenor who sang Marcello; Domenic Simeone, the bass-baritone who sang Schaunard, and Keith Cota, who doubled as Colline and Viscount Paolo, had sonorously impressive voices.

Other members of the cast were Geraldine De Lys (Musette), Anne Ottaviano (Mimi), Abe Polakoff (Rodolfo) and Irene Barrow, Michael Chavarri, Albert Geis and Frank Gambini, who sang characters not to be found in Puccini.

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100. Raymond Ericson, *The New York Times*, October 24, 1960. "Opera Unit Repeats Novel 'La Bohème.'"

Last January the other "La Bohème", the one by Leoncavallo, was given at Columbia University's McMillin Treatre [*sic*] in what was believed to be its United States première. The novelty won enough favorable comment to inspire a second performance, which was given Saturday night in the same auditorium. It was produced by the Opera Guide Theatre for the benefit of the endowment fund of Casa Italiana of Columbia University.

While Pasquale Rubino again conducted the performance, in which two pianists played the orchestral part, five of the singers were new. Of these, William Diard, the tenor who sang Marcello, dominated the cast with his secure, impassioned performance.

Domenico Simeone, the baritone who sang Schaunard in the first performance, was switched to the role of Rodolfo. The other newcomers were Louis Elliot Davidson, baritone, Schaunard; Frank Lombardo, bass, who double as Colline and the Viscount Paolo; Maria Madrisotti, soprano, Mimi; and Ellie Weber, soprano, Eufemia.

Geraldine De Lys, mezzo-soprano, was heard once more in the leading role of Musette, Michael Chavarri and Frank Gambini completed the cast.

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101. John Gutman, "The Other Bohème," March 30, 1971.

For several years now, one of the favorite ventures of the Metropolitan Opera Studio has been a program we call "The Other Opera," meaning a libretto that has become famous through the work of a well-known composer, but has also been composed by another musician, or, indeed, in some cases, by several others. We investigated, among others, a "Masked Ball" by Auber, a whole collection of Cinderella operas, and a "Wozzeck," not by Alban Berg, to say nothing of a multitude of "Salomes" which–though not called that–by any other name smelled as sweetly decayed. (We won't even mention an "Orfeo" by Kurt Weill, which takes place in a railroad station...)

However, the work that got us started on this rather fascinating path, was the opera (parts of which the Metropolitan Opera Studio is performing tonight) the "Other Bohème." It would not be correct to say that the second "Bohème" is as unknown as the others mentioned above, but if there has been a performance of it (with orchestra) in recent menory in this city, it has escaped our attention. There was a performance with piano, at Columbia University, in 1960, but in 1970 London heard a performance (with a somewhat uncouth orchestra) which was reviewed in some detail by Desmond Shawe-Taylor. It is from the article by that outstanding English music critic that the following pertinent remarks are purloined.

> "There is some conflict of evidence as to who first hit upon the idea of basing an opera upon Murger's famous novel, but when the two composers discovered that they were both at work on the same subject they quarrelled violently and remained on bad terms for the rest of their lives. Puccini's setting was produced first (1896); Leoncavallo's over a year later (1897). For a while, the two ran neck and neck; but after a few years Leoncavallo's piece was eclipsed..."
>
> "In all the lively scenes the influence of Verdi's "Falstaff" is paramount, and there is more than a touch of Massenet in the supple curve of the vocal line. But when Act 3 introduces us to the more sombre atmosphere of Marcello's garret, we suddenly find ourselves in the chromatic world of "Tristan."
>
> "Stylistic incongruity is not felt for long, however, because we are soon plunged into melodious and impassioned music that is nothing if not Italian: a splendid emotional duet for Mimi and Musette, a stormy scene between Musette and Marcello (a tenor and in effect the principal), and Marcello's "Testa adorata" (a minor "Vesti la guibba [*sic*]") which brings down the curtain after she has finally left him."

Another London observer of the musical scene, Mr. Peter Heyworth, has also supplied us with the most pertinent remarks on the feuding twins:

> "Compared to Puccini's suave, sophisticated idiom, Leoncavallo's score is a crude hotch-potch of "Carmen" and "La Gioconda" with Puccinian echoes–not so surprising as he had served as Puccini's librettist for "Manon Lescaut." But with all its lack of refinement it has a vitality that stems from an unshaken confidence in opera as a popular entertainment. His "La Bohème" shows that "Pagliacci" was less of a flash in the pan than is usually supposed. In any case, I find it hard to resist a work in which a character has only to open his mouth for a tune to fly out of it."

The present writer could not agree more and, indeed, hopes that tonight's performance will make many listeners feel the same way. As long as I have been robbing two of my colleagues of lengthy quotations, I might as well remember that all good things come in threes. Therefore, I conclude with an excerpt from another excellent piece by that fine Italian specialist, Mr. William Weaver:

> "But the fact remains that the "other Bohème" is a satisfying charming piece: it is not the masterpiece that Puccini's version is, but it is well worth reviving. At first, the spectator may be a little confused: as if the familiar characters were playing some kind of Pirandellian game, Marcello is now a tenor and he and Musette (her name not Italianised here) have usurped the main roles of the story. Rodolfo, a baritone, has little to do except for a fine air in Act IV; and Mimi is a considerably less pathetic figure–closer, one suspects, to Murger's original. Her death, however, ends the work in a familiar, effective and "operatic" fashion. The charming tunes that run through the story are more typically French than Puccini's music ever is. Musette's little songs in Act I and Act II might have been heard in some cafe-chantant of the period: now they have a sweet nostalgic flavour. But the dramatic scenes of the opera remind one that Leoncavallo was, after all, a founder of verismo, and the last two acts equal in many places the

excitement of "I Pagliacci."

While very few people would deny that Puccini's masterful score for "La Bohème" is in many ways superior to Leoncavallo's it is unfortunate that this strange and rather inexplicable coincidence has deprived the latter composer of the fame and appreciation which his "Bohème"most definitely would have deserved. We are not giving up the hope that one of these decades the full-fledged stage performances of the "other Bohème" may appear, but in the meantime the Metropolitan Opera Studio is deeply grateful to Mr. Leon Barzin, Mr. George Monseur and the National Orchestral Association for giving our young singers the opportunity to try their luck a bit removed from the beaten path, and, at the same time, to persuade at least some of tonight's listeners that there is more to Leoncavallo's score than just a title full of emotional connotations.

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102. Doral Henahan, *The New York Times*, April 1, 1971. "At Carnegie Hall, That Other 'Bohème'; Neglected Work Yields Interesting Evening; Leoncavallo Opera Is Staged as Concert."

Leoncavallo's "La Bohème"? A misprint, surely. But no; as opera students know from books and even from records, Puccini's version of Parisian garret life, circa 1837, is not the only one. Still, who knows the Leoncavallo first hand, as a staged work? Until the Metropolitan Opera Studio and the National Orchestral Association collaborated on a concert presentation on Tuesday night at Carnegie Hall, there seemed to be no record of even a concert performance here with orchestra.

Reasons for the neglect are easy to cite. Puccini's opera reached the stage first, a year ahead of Leoncavallo's, and its libretto more shrewdly focuses on the doomed Mimi. Leoncavallo, who wrote his own libretto, gives all the best tunes to Musette, the frivolous soubrette, and her boy friend [*sic*] Marcello. A last-act attempt to drag the drama together by suddenly turning attention to Musette's dying friend Mimi confuses the story for anyone who knows Puccini.

But such enjoyable confusion. For most of this four-act, somewhat abbreviated version conducted by George Monseur, a plainly green but plainly gifted young man, "La Bohème" went from tune to tune in a simple-minded but meltingly lyric way. One heard some Verdi, some Boito, A Massenet-like canzonetta—Bach even managed to insinuate himself, in the first-act Cafe Momus scene. But with an affecting duet for Mimi and Musette in Act III, the score turned suddenly darker and more poignant.

But, even when a turn-of-the-century verismo style took hold, the crudeness that one might anticipate in neglected Leoncavallo was never a problem in this production. The Musette, Theresa Treadwell-Carroll, happened to be not merely improbably handsome but musically and dramatically intelligent. Her velvety mezzo voice could sound tremulous, as if being forced a bit, but Miss Treadwell-Carroll struck one as a singer with an immediate future.

So, in her briefer role, did Carole Farley. Though her Mimi lost some emotional conviction in the death scene, she perked up one's ears with the top notes of a potentially important lyrico-spinto soprano.

At the moment, Miss Farley's lower voice is no match for her top, and it lost quality in several patches. But keep her name in mind. She is young enough to do anything.

Rodolfo, in this "La Bohème," is a baritone with not much of a part, but Brent Ellis made an excellent impression in his one big aria. The Marcello, Melvin Brown, had problems with pitch a couple of times, and strained his light lyric voice too often. But he sang with elegance and sense, as did the others in the cast: Donald Chapman, Stephen Berman and Francois Clemmons.

All in all, a most interesting night, and one that must have led many listeners to wonder why there is not room for two "La Bohèmes" in this world. As a prelude, strangely enough, Joseph Fuchs gave an occasionally awkward but musically solid reading of the Beethoven Violin Concerto, with Leon Barzin conducting.

103. Bernard Holland, *The New York Times*, January 24, 1984. "Opera: Other 'Bohème.'"

"LA BOHÈME," for those who don't already know it, is really twins. Conceived and born almost simultaneously, these two operas—one by Puccini, the other by Leoncavallo—have experienced very different destinies.

Puccini's was the first to be performed, and it has grown into opera's most beloved and cuddly playmate. Leoncavallo's Bohème—which had a revival of sorts at Alice Tully Hall Sunday night—has become, on the other hand, a forgotten child. It came before the public first in 1897, Puccini's a year before; and regardless of the reasons—be they historical precedence, adroit politics or questions of simple quality—the Leoncavallo, after some success at first, has more or less faded away.

Sunday's performance, a concert version by the newborn Mondo Lirico Opera Company, perhaps served as a valid complaint against the neglect of the Leoncavallo opera, but in no way did it make us forget Puccini.

Both operas are based on Henry Murger's book "Scenes of Bohemian Life," and most of the characters and some of the plot are shared by the two operas. Leoncavallo's is in four acts and the distribution of voices differs from Puccini's. Rodolfo is a baritone, and it is Marcello, a tenor, who assumes the juiciest music. Mimi is again a soprano, but Musette, who takes a larger major role in the Leoncavallo version, is a mezzo-soprano. Some of the music is very lovely. One comes away remembering the rippling orchestral music of Act II, the music of Mimi and Musette in Act III and Rodolfo's strong moments at the end.

Some of the singing here was very capable, though gaps did exist. Mario Fusco had a nice ringing sound as Marcello; Abe Polakoff was a solid Rodolfo; Elaine Malbin sang with a penetrating strength as Mimi, and Natasha Lutov made a very competent Musette. The weakest of the principals was Domenico Simeone, whose pale baritone sounds and shaky intonation diminished Schaunard's very important contribution to the music. Others in the cast were Naomi Lewin, Alfonso Tepedino, Ron Meixsell, Peter Maravell and Adam Klein.

There were a few bad apples among the violinists, but otherwise the Bronx Arts Ensemble conducted by Thomas Booth played very well indeed. There was a big audience at Tully Hall to hear it all, and it was an enthusiastic one.

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104. John Rockwell, *The New York Times*, April 19, 1985. "'Zazà' at Cincinnati Opera."

The Cincinnati Opera seems to be making a specialty of verismo revivals. In 1983 it offered Alfano's "Resurrection," and Wednesday night the company opened its 1985 season with Leoncavallo's "Zazà."

Although it has never quite disappeared from view, "Zazà" hasn't been heard often enough to challenge Leoncavallo's status as one of music history's great one-shots—that shot being, of course, "Pagliacci." "Zazà" was first performed in 1900 at the Teato Lirico in Milan with Rosina Storchio in the title role and Arturo Toscanini conducting. It served as a favored vehicle for a number of flamboyant prima donnas, among them Emma Carelli and Geraldine Farrar, for whom it was presented at the Metropolitan Opera in 1920-22—its last major American production prior to Wednesday night.
While beloved by prima donnas, "Zazà" has been dismissed by most critics, who have regarded both it and its composer as irredeemably lowbrow (James J. Huneker called it "dry rot, hardly worth a critical match to set it afire"). From a musical point of view, the score seemed better than that on Wednesday.

Leoncavallo had a melodic gift, and his orchestrations had color and invention. Better still, he was in easy command of a post-Wagnerian style that flowed fluently between recitative and aria. There are discrete "numbers," but they arise naturally from the conversational ebb and flow; indeed, most of the score consists of just such a crisscross of conversation, with no ballets, little purely instrumental music and just one offstage women's chorus.

What dates this opera—and what would probably still make it succeed, in the right

circumstances—is its melodrama. Leoncavallo based his libretto on a play written in 1898 for Gabrielle Rejane, one of those legendary European actresses (others were Bernhardt and Duse) who captivated the public at the turn of the century with trashy texts written just for them.
"Zazà" is the story of a music-hall singer who loves a man she discovers to be married, and whom she leaves. The drama is pure pulp, suffused with sentimentality and a bourgeois morality that, of course, the courtesan is seen ultimately to uphold more honorably than the gentleman.

However, Leoncavallo was clever enough to provide scenes of real variety and range for his star— risque sensuality in the first act; ecstatic contentment in the second; tear-jerking corn in the third; rage, pathos and despair at the end. No wonder Farrar doted on it.

The Cincinnati Opera production (which receives its second and final performance Friday night) makes an honorable effort at resurrecting what audiences used to love about "Zazà." Yes, there were weaknesses in the cast, and the drama would certainly carry better in a small Italian opera house rather than the 3,631-seat Cincinnati Music Hall.

But the real problem is that Patricia Craig simply lacks the charisma any Zazà must have. She sings pleasingly enough—an honest spinto with a slightly pressed top—and she acts conscientiously. She even conveys the pathos movingly, here and there. But excitement and anguish elude her.

She is joined in principal roles by Kristian Johannsson, an Italian-based Icelandic tenor, who bleats effortfully as her lover; Charles Long, a practiced American baritone, as her friend Cascart, and Flora Rafanelli, an amusing Italian mezzo, as her mother.

Anton Coppola conducts the first- rate Cincinnati Symphony idiomatically, and James de Blasis, general director of this company, directs a straightforward and effective production, distinguished by some handsome art-nouveau sets from Alan Kimmel; its only miscalculation is the perhaps inevitable but clumsily realized amplification for the spoken role of the lover's child. The production is presented with dimly lit, not always syntactically accurate surtitles.

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105. Juliet Giraldi, *Opera Now*, September/October 2002. "Italy; Prisoners of Fate; Il prigionero, Dallapiccola; Edipo Re, Leoncavallo."

Two one-act operas, both produced by Fabio Sparvoli and conducted by Yoram David and, with the exception of the part of the protagonist, using the same cast, brought deep tragedy again to Turin (after *Lear* in the autumn). It was an interesting choice of programme, however. Although radically different in the treatment, the two operas were linked by the common theme of a man imprisoned by his own destiny.

The most important literary source of Dallapiccola's opera, which was finished in 1948, was **Il prigionero**, *La torture par l'esperance* by Villiers de l'Isle Adam, the story of the Rabbi Asa Abarbanel, who, during the Spanish Inquisition, was imprisoned in the dungeons of Saragozza and burned at the stake. Its profound source, however, is autobiographical and describes the persecution suffered by the composer's own family, during the first world war when he was a child in Istria, and during the second, when, owing to his wife's religion and the anti-Semitic laws in force in Italy at the time, he was forced to live in hiding. The horrors of war and totalitarianism, the cry for liberty, the illusion of brotherhood and freedom, are the themes of Dallapiccola's opera.

So, although the Mother and the Inquisitor were both dressed in the rich costumes of 16th-century Spain, the producer had lifted the story out of context; the set (by Giorgio Richelli) consisted of an abstract cement cylinder which, at the incredibly beautiful climax of the opera, joyous but illusory, opened to reveal a starry sky. The prisoner was played by the baritone Carmelo Caruso, whose voice ably conveyed all the anguish of the part, while the role of the grieving Mother was sung by Raffaela Angeletti, a young soprano from Turin.

Edipo Re was Leoncavallo's last work and is not often seen; its first performance was in Chicago in 1920, thanks to the efforts of a friend of the composer, the famous baritone Titta Ruffo, who naturally played the protagonist. Leoncavallo himself died without seeing it.

In the Turin production Sparvoli had preferred a traditional setting in ancient Thebes, using a descending ceiling and a reddening sky to represent the climax of the tragedy. Alessandra Torella had created some striking costumes, especially those of Giocasta and her handmaidens. Renato Bruson brought all his expertise to the title role, which was new to him, and he was supported by the very pleasant tenor of Ezio di Cesare (the gaoler in *Il prigionero*) as Creonte.

Forzano has cleverly reduced the text of Sophocles to libretto, while the poetic moments have been exploited by Leoncavallo to produce some lovely music: Edipo's aria 'Remingo andar, da Tebe in bando' and Giocasta's answer, 'Svaniranno dall'alma le negri nubi alfine' come to mind. Some of the accompanying orchestral passages are very effective: the agitated cellos in 'Per notti e notti insonni e tormentate', the harps and sweet violins accompanying the arrival of the queen, the solo cello that underlines the words of the blinded king . . . But Edipo's adieu to his daughters, 'Miei poveri fiori', ends the opera on a cloying note.

There is no doubt that of the two operas, it was *Il prigionero* which left the deepest impression. The 12-tone idiom, the dissonances, the clashing of the brass, rendered with terrible veracity the tragedy of the protagonist, lacerated by false hope, his last utterance, that of 'liberta?' dying on his lips; *Edipo Re*, in the traditional musical form of Italian verismo, remained a tragic myth, far removed from reality.

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