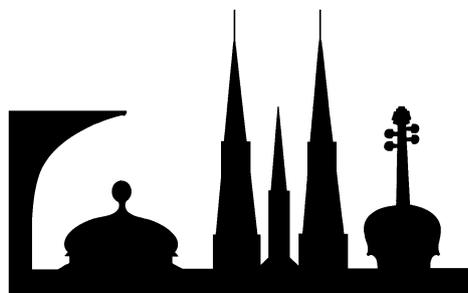


# Performing Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* in London, Florence and Naples 1770–1785

Contrasting styles and competing ideals

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## Abstract

In this master thesis I look at the revivals of Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* in London (1770 and 1785), Florence (1771), and Naples (1774). After the premiere of *Orfeo ed Euridice* in Vienna in 1762, Gluck himself reworked the opera for new productions in Parma (1769) and Paris (1774). The versions studied in my thesis, however, were adapted and included music by other composers, such as Johann Christian Bach and Pietro Alessandro Guglielmi. There were a number of added scenes, new characters, and inserted arias, sometimes in a very contrasting style to what Gluck and Calzabigi tried to achieve in their reform of *opera seria*. For this reason, the reworkings have often been called *pasticcio* versions in modern literature.

Through a comparative study of the music manuscripts and the printed libretti, I show that these four productions of the opera exhibit four unique approaches to performing the opera at public opera houses in the late eighteenth century. *Orfeo* was consistently lengthened in order to make the performance long enough for an evening at the opera, but how it was changed varied considerably according to the context of the performance. This suggests a complexity and nuance of the practice of adaptations and substitutions in late eighteenth-century opera in general, and the reception of *Orfeo* in particular, that have not previously been fully acknowledged.

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## Introduction

### The changeable nature of *opera seria*

Opera in the eighteenth century was never just one thing. It was changeable, multi-faceted, and dynamic. It may have been dominated by Italian castrato singers, long virtuoso da capo arias and Metastasian heroic libretti, at least in the first half of the century, but *opera seria* was also repeatedly the target for satirical ridicule, scathing criticism, and nationalist opposition, as well as peacefully existing alongside other forms of musical drama and being a pervasive and integral part of eighteenth-century cultural and social life. Hence, studying it means covering a broad range of experiences, accounts, and opinions, as well as many different types of music and performances.

Eighteenth-century opera was changeable, not just as an inevitable by-product of tastes changing over time and place, but because change was integral to the operatic genre in general, and *opera seria* in particular. The dramatic structure of *opera seria*, with its strict alternation of recitative and aria, was unchanged for most of the century, but the stability of this very structure allowed for substitutions, cuts, and additions from one performance to another. When an opera was revived or imported, there were almost always changes made to it. Arias were substituted in order to fit the talents of a new lead singer, scenes were added or cut in order to fit the expectations of the audience, and the structure of the operas allowed for that level of adaptability according to varying contexts and conditions.<sup>1</sup> In London, an imported opera performed in its original form was the exception, not the rule.<sup>2</sup> This dramatic structure also encouraged developments of musical style within the genre. While the structure remained the same, the music continued to develop within the arias, from Handel, Vinci, and Hasse, to Johann Christian Bach and Mozart, and it could be argued that *opera seria* was as important for the development of the classical style as the symphony or *opera buffa*.<sup>3</sup>

Just as there was change and musical development within the genre, there were several different operatic genres, which existed in parallel and influenced each other. Italian comic opera, *opera buffa*, co-existed with *opera seria* for most of the century, and became increasingly popular and eventually dominated the public opera houses by the end of the century.<sup>4</sup> There were a number of genres for chamber operas or occasional operatic works, such as the *serenata*, *cantata*, and *fiesta teatrale*. There were also regional genres, most notably the French opera tradition. By mid-century, there were more and more attempts to “reform” *opera seria*, for example in the operas by composers Niccolò

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis Price, Judith Milhous, and Robert D. Hume, *Italian Opera in Late Eighteenth-Century London: Vol 1, The King's Theatre, Haymarket, 1778–1791* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 1–52.

<sup>2</sup> Fred Curtis Petty, *Italian Opera in London, 1760–1800*, (Yale University: Ph.D., 1971), p. 62.

<sup>3</sup> Eric Weimer, *Opera Seria and the Evolution of Classical Style: 1755–1772* (Ann Arbor, 1984), pp. 1–2.

<sup>4</sup> Petty, *Italian Opera in London*, p. 75.

Jomelli and Tommaso Traetta. The more famous reform operas by Cristoph Willibald Gluck and Ranieri de' Calzabigi in Vienna and Paris were influenced not only by previous reformers, but also by some of the conventions of chamber operas, such as the *festa teatrale*, as well as French opera, in their new type of Italian opera.<sup>5</sup>

All through the century there was a lively debate about the relative merit of these different genres or national schools of opera, as well as criticism and calls for reform of *opera seria*. In the two famous French debates *Querelle des bouffons* (1752–54) and Gluck vs. Piccini (1779–1781), there was an argument over both genre and national schools, and an early example of criticism towards *opera seria* is Benedetto Marcello's *Teatro alla Moda* (1720). In 1755, Francesco Algarotti published *Saggio sopra l'Opera in Musica* in which he called for a reform of *opera seria*, describing many of the features of opera that Gluck and Calzabigi would later adopt.

When studying opera in the eighteenth century, a complex and colourful image emerges. It consists of competing ideals, contrasting experiences, and conflicting opinions, which all exist in parallel. This thesis is about a case which clearly exhibits this type of complexity: the performances of *Orfeo ed Euridice* by Gluck in London and Italy in the 1770s and 1780s. They appear right in the middle of two of those competing operatic ideals in the late eighteenth century: the conventions of *opera seria* on one hand, and the aspirations of reform opera on the other.

### *Orfeo ed Euridice* on stage in the late eighteenth century

*Orfeo ed Euridice* by Gluck is one of the few operas from the eighteenth century that is still regularly performed today, alongside Mozart's comic operas. In contrast to the classical status that it later gained, the early reception of the work is quite different and more complex. It was customary at the time to make changes to an opera when it was revived or imported, and for almost every new performance of *Orfeo* in a new city some changes were made to it. Gluck himself made three versions of the opera: the original for alto castrato Gaetano Guadagni in the lead role in Vienna 1762, a version for soprano castrato Giuseppe Millico in Parma 1769, and a version in Paris 1774 that was translated into French for high tenor and with new added material, especially ballets.

However, Gluck was not the only one to change the opera for new performances. There were at least 26 productions of the opera between 1770–1785, and most of them involved some changes.<sup>6</sup> In some places these changes were remarkably few and the performances were close to Gluck's Vienna or Parma versions. This was the case in Bologna (1771), Stockholm (1773), and Naples *Palazzo Reale* (1774). In other places, such as in London (1770–1771 and 1785), Florence (1771), and Naples *San Carlo* (1774), extensive changes were made in order to fit the performance to some of the conventions of public opera houses. Since *Orfeo* in its original Vienna version was

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<sup>5</sup> Patricia Howard, *Gluck and the Birth of Modern Opera* (London, 1963); Raymond Monelle, "Gluck and the 'Festa Teatrale'", *Music & Letters*, 54/3 (1973), pp. 308–325.

<sup>6</sup> Alessandra Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck: Storia della Trasmissione e della Ricezione* (Florence, 1995), pp. 364–367.

unusually short compared to most contemporary operas, the changes were primarily additions. Arias, scenes, and new characters were added in order to make the opera long enough for an evening at the opera and the additions were for the most part in a contrasting style to the original music and drama.

In this thesis I have chosen to focus on the performances and reworkings of *Orfeo* with the most extensive changes: London (1770 and 1785), Florence (1771), and Naples *San Carlo* (1774). There are several reasons for this. Firstly, these reworkings, with their major changes, most clearly exemplify the shifting and competing ideals of opera in the late eighteenth century and stand out because of the extent to which the reform opera was accommodated to fit the conventions of *opera seria*. Secondly, these reworkings nevertheless exhibit significantly different attitudes and approaches to the adaptation of the opera. Finally, while there are more examples of extensive reworkings of *Orfeo* in the 1770s, for example Munich (1773), and Gluck's own version for Paris (1774), those studied here have been limited to those that are connected to soprano castrato Giusto Ferdinando Tenducci. This is in part a delimitation of material for the purpose of this thesis, but it also highlights Tenducci's role in connecting them, something that has been overlooked in previous literature. In all of them, except London (1770–1771), Tenducci was the lead singer and he may even have adapted some of the versions himself or added some of his own compositions. Consequently, they share similarities and music. Yet, they also exhibit clearly different approaches.

## Purpose, method, and theory

The aim of this study is to contribute to a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the complexity of opera culture in the late eighteenth century, through investigating the reworkings of *Orfeo ed Euridice*, their role in the early reception of the opera and how they shed light on the negotiation between different aesthetic ideals and conventions at this particular time in opera history. The focus of the investigation is what different approaches there were to performing *Orfeo* in London, Florence, and Naples, and how and why those approaches varied according to the social context and purpose of the performance.

In the essay “The Dramaturgy of Italian Opera”, Carl Dahlhaus writes that

Faced with the reform operas of Jommelli, Traetta, and Gluck, composed under the influence of *literati* as modifications of the Metastasian type, it is difficult for historians *not* to interpret them as solutions to problems unsolved in the older *dramma per musica* or as attempts to compensate for its deficiencies. This interpretation rests, however, on a one-sided concept of the “dramatic” derived from the reform operas themselves. The only appropriate procedure, methodologically, would be to reconstruct the specific idea of the dramatic that really underlay earlier *opera seria*.<sup>7</sup>

This thesis is an attempt to acknowledge this and see reform opera as one of many ideals, aspects, norms at the time, and not necessarily a solution. In fact, the reworkings themselves can be seen

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<sup>7</sup> Carl Dahlhaus, “The Dramaturgy of Italian opera” in *Opera in Theory and Practice, Image and Myth*, eds. Bianconi and Pestelli (Chicago, 2003), p. 114.

as solutions to the practical problems of the original in the public opera house of the 1770s: too short, too few characters, too little virtuosity. The benefits of this is a richer and broader understanding of the phenomenon and a less simplified historiography.

A theoretical perspective that has been useful in order to rethink the reworkings of *Orfeo* is Leonard Meyer's notion of the centrality of choice in the development of musical style in *Style and Music*.<sup>8</sup> He points out that there is nothing inevitable or causal about musical changes, and that at any specific time in history, there is a number of possibilities available for composers which they choose from: "History is not the consequence of a causal past, but of a selective present".<sup>9</sup> Such a perspective highlights how each reworking of *Orfeo* was the result of individual choices and addressed certain problems with the original. They were *not* an inevitable outcome of the dissemination of the opera in a culture that was dominated by *opera seria*. The focus of my study, then, has been to try and discern from the material what the possibilities were and what choices were made. I have tended to focus on the differences and the individuality of each version, and how and why a certain solution was chosen in each case. Their individual differences demonstrate that there was a relatively broad range of options available, and this is testament to the complex and multifaceted nature of opera in this period.

In the first chapter, I investigate the differences and similarities between the reworkings in London, Florence, and Naples, through a comparative study of the surviving libretti, music prints and manuscripts. For these performances, enough primary material has survived so that it is possible to compare the differences between them. While no full score has survived for any of the London performances, there are libretti for the 1770, 1771, 1773, and 1785 performances,<sup>10</sup> as well as a printed collection of *The Favourite Songs in the Opera Orfeo* from 1770, through which it is possible to reconstruct much of the 1770 and 1771 performances.<sup>11</sup> For Florence (1771) and Naples *San Carlo* (1774) both music manuscripts and libretti have survived.<sup>12</sup>

In the second chapter, I explore what the music itself can tell us about the different approaches to reworking *Orfeo* in London 1770 and in Florence 1771. The competing aesthetic ideals of *opera seria* and reform opera can be seen clearly in the contrasting musical styles and dramatic structures of the reworkings, and the differences between Gluck's original and the London and Florence

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<sup>8</sup> Leonard Meyer, *Style and Music* (Philadelphia, 1989)

<sup>9</sup> Meyer, *Style and Music*, p. 148.

<sup>10</sup> *Orfeo ed Euridice, Orpheus and Eurydice; An Opera, in the Grecian Taste. As Perform'd at the King's-Theatre in the Hay-Market* (London, 1770); *Orfeo ed Euridice, Orpheus and Eurydice; An Opera, in the Grecian Taste, As Perform'd at the King's-Theatre in the Hay-Market* (London, 1771); *Orfeo ed Euridice; Orpheus and Eurydice; An Opera in One Act* (London, 1773); *Orpheus and Eurydice, A Musical Drama, In Imitation of The Ancient Greek Theatrical Feasts* (London, 1785).

<sup>11</sup> *The Favourite Songs in the Opera Orfeo* (London, [1770])

<sup>12</sup> *L'Orfeo Del Cav. Cristofor Cluck Da Rappresentarsi nel Teatro di S. Carlo Li 4. Novembre 1774* (Naples, 27.4.5-7); *L'Orfeo, Azione Teatrale de Sig<sup>re</sup> Cav<sup>re</sup> Cristoforo Gluck* (Florence, B.93.1-3); *Orfeo, Azione Teatrale Musica Del Sig: Cristoforo Clucx* (Parma, 172/I-III); *Orfeo, ed Euridice, Dramma per Musica, Da Rappresentarsi in Firenze nel Teatro di Via del Cocomero nell'Autunno dell'Anno 1771* (Florence, 1771); *Orfeo, ed Euridice, Dramma per Musica, Da Rappresentarsi nel Real Teatro di S. Carlo nel dì 4. Novembre 1774* (Naples, 1774).

versions are studied through a music analysis that focuses on stylistic elements, as well as on form and dramatic structure.

In the third chapter, I discuss what the connection is between the types of changes that were made to *Orfeo* in the 1770s and 1780s, and the social and aesthetic context in which it was performed. In the first part of the chapter, I look at the importance of the type of theatre in which the opera was performed and the audience's awareness of reform opera and reform ideas, through what is presented in the libretti and other contemporary writings. In the second part of the chapter, I look at the reworkings in the light of changing attitudes towards the work as defined by writers such as Lydia Goehr and Michael Talbot, in order to describe the conflicting approaches towards adapting the opera that the reworkings represent.<sup>13</sup>

## Previous research

The approach of this study has no precedence in previous literature on the eighteenth-century reworkings of *Orfeo ed Euridice*. While there is some literature that addresses the various performances of the opera, those studies tend to have a fairly limited view of them. This is either because they have been studied solely as an aspect of the reception of *Orfeo*, and are not connected to broader issues such as trends and conventions in *opera seria*, or they have been studied as single instances within larger studies of opera in London and Naples in the late eighteenth century, or as part of the oeuvre of Johann Christian Bach, where aspects such as their connection to other *Orfeo* reworkings and the reception of reform opera are lost.

Among the literature that has approached the reworkings as part of the early reception history of *Orfeo*, the most extensive is Alessandra Martina's Italian doctoral dissertation *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*.<sup>14</sup> It is a thorough investigation of how the different reworkings are connected, and includes some discussion of how and why the performances and reworkings vary in different places. In its focus on reception of the "work" *Orfeo*, however, it only in passing puts the opera in relation to broader opera culture. She also overemphasises the lineages of Guadagni and Millico, Gluck's two "original" *Orfeo*, and overlooks Tenducci, the third early *Orfeo*. Martina based her more extensive survey on the smaller scope of the preface to the facsimile of Ferdinando Bertoni's *Orfeo* by Paolo Cattelan, in which he discusses the reworkings that are connected to original *Orfeo* lead castrato Guadagni, including Bertoni's new music to Calzabigi's libretto for Venice in 1778.<sup>15</sup> Other literature worth mentioning in this category are Patricia Howard's "For the English", in which she discusses which of Gluck's original versions was performed in London 1773, Eve Barsham's

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<sup>13</sup> Lydia Goehr, *An Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: an Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford, 1994); Michael Talbot, "The Work-Concept and Composer-Centredness" in *The Musical Work: Reality or Invention?*, ed. Talbot (Liverpool, 2000).

<sup>14</sup> Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*.

<sup>15</sup> Paolo Cattelan, "Altri Orfei di Gaetano Guadagni. Dai Pasticcini al nuovo 'Orfeo' di Ferdinando Bertoni (Venezia 1776)" in *Orfeo ed Euridice* (Milano, 1990).

articles in the *Cambridge Opera Handbook* on *Orfeo*, and Alfred Loewenberg's "Gluck's 'Orfeo' on the Stage: With Some Notes on Other Orpheus Operas".<sup>16</sup>

In other studies, the *Orfeo* reworkings have been discussed within a broader context of opera in late eighteenth-century London or Naples, or the music of Johann Christian Bach. One of the most important of these is Michael Robinson's article "The 1774 S. Carlo Version of Gluck's *Orfeo*" in which he makes a comparative study of London (1770–1771), Florence (1771), and Naples *San Carlo* (1774).<sup>17</sup> He also gives a more detailed account of the Naples version as part of his book *Naples and Neapolitan opera*.<sup>18</sup> The article is a thorough account of these versions and how they are connected, but it is incomplete, presumably due to lack of access to other sources, such as the Parma 1769 manuscript and the London 1785 libretto. Some other examples of literature that bring up some of the reworkings is *Italian Opera in London, 1760–1800* in which Fred Curtis Petty describes all the different London performances in his survey of the repertoire of the King's theatre Haymarket 1760–1800, and *Italian Opera in Late Eighteenth-Century London: Vol 1, The King's Theatre Haymarket, 1778–1791* in which Price, Milhous, and Hume discuss the London 1785 performance in detail.<sup>19</sup> However, Price, Milhous, and Hume are very unclear about how it relates to earlier London performances or Tenducci's *Orfeo* performances in Italy. Another survey of the reworkings can be found in *The Collected Works of Johann Christian Bach*, where Ernest Warburton provides much context for the London performances, such as advertisements.<sup>20</sup> He also connects the London performances with the Naples manuscript, but is focused only on Johann Christian Bach's music, and thence misses the connection to other reworkings, especially in Parma and Florence.

This study attempts to be part of a larger trend within opera studies to broaden the perspectives of eighteenth-century opera. *Opera seria* suffered for a long time from criticism about its supposed lack of dramatical unity and coherence. One of the most influential advocates for this line of criticism was Joseph Kerman, who in his *Opera as Drama* calls the chapter on Baroque opera "The Dark Ages".<sup>21</sup>

There are several examples of studies, mainly in the 1990s and early 2000s, in which eighteenth-century opera culture as a whole is considered, including aspects of opera that do not represent structural unity or dramatic continuity, such as *pasticci*, stage spectacle, and adaptations. Some examples of this which have been of value for this thesis are Curtis Price in "Unity, Originality,

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<sup>16</sup> Patricia Howard, "For the English", *The Musical Times*, 137/1844 (1996), pp. 13-15; Patricia Howard (ed.), *Cambridge Opera Handbooks: C.W. von Gluck, Orfeo*, (Cambridge, 1981); Alfred Loewenberg "Gluck's 'Orfeo' on the Stage: With Some Notes on Other Orpheus Operas", *The Musical Quarterly*, 26/3 (1940), pp. 311–339.

<sup>17</sup> Michael Robinson, "The 1774 S. Carlo Version of Gluck's *Orfeo*", *Chigiana* 29-30 (1972–73), pp. 409–13.

<sup>18</sup> Michael Robinson, *Naples and Neapolitan Opera* (Oxford, 1972).

<sup>19</sup> Price, Milhous, and Hume, *Italian Opera in Late Eighteenth-Century London*; Petty, *Italian Opera in London*.

<sup>20</sup> Ernest Warburton, *The Collected Works of Johann Christian Bach: Vol. 9, La Clemenza di Scipione; and, Music from London Pasticci* (New York, 1990); Ernest Warburton, *The Collected Works of Johann Christian Bach: Vol. 11, Orfeo ed Euridice: Azione Tatrale in Three Acts/Libretto by Raniero de Calzabigi; Music by Christoph Willibald Gluck as Performed at the Teatro San Carlo, Naples, in 1774 with Alterations and Additions by Johann Christian Bach* (New York, 1987).

<sup>21</sup> Joseph Kerman, *Opera as Drama* (New York, 1956).

and the London Pasticcio”, Michael Burden in “Metastasio’s ‘London Pasties’: Curate’s Egg or Pudding’s Proof?” and “The Lure of the Aria, Procession and Spectacle: Opera in Eighteenth-Century London”, and last but not least Carl Dahlhaus’s “The Dramaturgy of Italian Opera”.<sup>22</sup> Another example of more recent literature that focuses on the importance of individual singers is Patricia Howard’s *The Modern Castrato: Gaetano Guadagni and the Coming of a New Operatic Age*.<sup>23</sup>

In contrast to previous literature, in this thesis the reworkings themselves are the object of study. I draw both on literature that have studied them from the perspective of reception history, as well as those who have studied them as part of repertoire studies at different opera houses or the oeuvre of J.C. Bach. I combine these approaches, in order to make a more in-depth study of the aesthetic ideals and musical styles that make up the reworkings. This is relevant both for Gluck reception history, as well as opera history in the eighteenth century at large.

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<sup>22</sup> Curtis Price, “Unity, Originality, and the London pasticcio”, *Harvard Library Bulletin*, 2/4 (1991), pp. 17–30; Michael Burden, “Metastasio’s ‘London Pasties’: Curate’s Egg or Pudding’s Proof?” in *Pietro Metastasio: Uomo Universale (1698–1792)*, eds. Sommer-Mathis and Hilscher (Vienna, 2000);

Michael Burden, “The Lure of the Aria, Procession and Spectacle: Opera in Eighteenth-Century London” in *The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Music*, ed. Keefe (Cambridge, 2009); Dahlhaus, “The Dramaturgy of Italian Opera”.

<sup>23</sup> Patricia Howard, *The Modern Castrato: Gaetano Guadagni and the Coming of a New Operatic Age* (Oxford, 2014).

## Four different approaches to performing *Orfeo ed Euridice* in London, Florence and Naples

In this chapter I discuss each of the productions of *Orfeo ed Euridice* in London (1770), Florence (1771), Naples *San Carlo* (1774), and London (1785). When comparing them, I focus on how they differ and how their different approaches are connected to the context and purpose of the performances. These four productions are all connected to the castrato singer Giusto Ferdinando Tenducci, who sang the main role of Orfeo in Florence, Naples, and in London (1785), and in this chapter, I argue that his agency in connecting these performances was greater than what has previously been clear. Throughout this chapter I point towards how four productions for public opera houses, and all connected to Tenducci, still resulted in four distinct versions and four quite different approaches.

### London (1770): clarity and contrast

*Orfeo ed Euridice* at the King's Theatre, Haymarket in London in April 1770 was the first performance and reworking of *Orfeo* that Gluck himself was not involved in. It was also the first performance of the opera in a commercial public opera house, and this is what seems to have prompted the types of changes that were made to the original.

This version of the opera has suffered from a bad reputation. Charles Burney wrote some years after the premiere that “The unity, simplicity, and dramatic excellence of this opera [...] were greatly diminished here by the heterogeneous mixture of music, of other composers, in a quite different style”.<sup>24</sup> Twentieth-century musicologists too have dismissed the London version: Charles Sanford Terry has called it “a mutilation of a classic”<sup>25</sup> and Eve Barsham “the beginning of the progressive watering-down, pasticcio-fashion, of Gluck's opera in London”.<sup>26</sup> Those statements may be valid, but the intention behind the performance, its execution, as well as its reception, paint a more complex picture. Admiration for Gluck's opera, and an interest in the reform ideals, existed side by side with a willingness to satisfy *opera seria* conventions, such as virtuoso arias and a variety of musical styles.

### *Gaetano Guadagni and the genesis of the London performance*

The performance of *Orfeo* in London 1770 was instigated by the alto castrato Gaetano Guadagni who was *primo uomo* at the King's theatre that season. He had sung the role of Orfeo in the original production of the opera in Vienna in 1762, and judging from the printed libretto, it was Guadagni

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<sup>24</sup> Charles Burney, *A General History of Music: from the Earliest Ages to the Present Period*, vol. 4 (London, 1789), p. 496.

<sup>25</sup> Charles Sanford Terry, *John Christian Bach* (Oxford, 1967), p. 117

<sup>26</sup> Eve Barsham, “Orpheus in England” in *Cambridge Opera Handbooks: C.W. von Gluck, Orfeo*, ed. Howard (Cambridge, 1981), p. 63.

himself who suggested “to the Gentlemen Managers of the King’s-Theatre” that the opera should be performed in London.<sup>27</sup>

Guadagni had a long-standing relationship to London after having spent some of his early years in the city. In that early stay, Guadagni sang in Handel’s oratorios, and he was educated as an actor with the celebrated theatre manager and actor David Garrick. Daniel Hartz has suggested that Guadagni’s unusual acting skills, which he learned from Garrick, were influential in the creation of *Orfeo* for Gluck and Calzabigi.<sup>28</sup> Knowing that the London audience would be familiar with certain aspects of *Orfeo* from the English tradition of spoken theatre might have encouraged Guadagni to introduce the opera in London, even though Patricia Howard suggests that he might as well have been spurred on by “his pique at being passed over” for the production of the opera in Parma in 1769.<sup>29</sup>

From his preface to the printed libretto, it is clear that Guadagni held the opera in high esteem. He also explicitly asks the audience to read the libretto beforehand, which Howard describes as “unprecedented”:<sup>30</sup>

The taste which the English nation has always shown, (in a superior degree to almost any other) for true harmony, engaged me to propose the performance of this Opera, to the Gentlemen Managers of the King’s-Theatre, not doubting but its excellent composition, added to the classical merit of the drama, would afford something beyond what is usually seen, to gratify real judges; to whom in your Persons, it is particularly dedicated.

The original Composer made himself a perfect master of his author’s meaning; and infused the genius of the poetry into his music; in which he followed the example of my great master Handel, the phoenix of our age; who in all modes of musical expression, where sense was to be conveyed, excelled beyond our praise.

In order to the more immediate observation of this beauty, resulting from a happy coalition between the writer and composer of an Opera, I most earnestly wish that such Ladies and Gentlemen, as propose to honour the exhibition of this with their presence, would read the piece, before they see it performed; I believe they will not find their attention ill repaid.<sup>31</sup>

The management at the King’s theatre also seems to have considered the opera important and worthy of unusual attention. On the 2 April 1770 it was announced that the premiere had to be postponed because, due to illness, there had not been enough practices to “perfect” such a “complicated” performance:

[Mr Crawford] is exceedingly [con]cerned to be obliged to defer the serious Opera of *Orfeo* till next Saturday, when it will certainly be performed; the late indisposition of two principal singers, and one of the principal dancers, has made impossible to have as many practices as are necessary for perfecting so complicated a performance to do credit to the Manager or satisfaction to the Public:

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<sup>27</sup> *Orfeo ed Euridice* (London, 1770), p. 2.

<sup>28</sup> Daniel Hartz, “From Garrick to Gluck: The Reform of Theatre and Opera in the Mid-Eighteenth Century”, *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*, 94th Sess. (1967-1968), pp. 111–127.

<sup>29</sup> Howard, *The Modern Castrato*, p. 126.

<sup>30</sup> Howard, *The Modern Castrato*, p. 128.

<sup>31</sup> *Orfeo ed Euridice* (London, 1770), p.2.

He therefore flatters himself, that the indulgence and encouragement he has hitherto met with from the Public, will plead his excuse; and that they will be convinced, when they see the performance, that everything has been done, in his part, and neither pains nor expence spared to render it worthy their approbation and protection.<sup>32</sup>

These two examples, Guadagni's foreword to the libretto and the newspaper announcement, show that at least one of the reasons that *Orfeo* was performed in London in 1770 was the high esteem of the work amongst the singers and directors at the opera house. This is important, because even though the London production has been accused of being a "mutilation of a classic", this was not primarily the result of carelessness or indifference on behalf of the opera management. We do not know what they thought of the result, but we can discern a good intention in the execution of the performance of *Orfeo*, and we need to look for what this intention was and why the opera was reworked and performed the way it was, rather than pass strong value judgments about this version.

#### *Why the opera needed changes in a public opera house*

So, if the opera was held in such esteem by Guadagni and others at the King's theatre, then why did they make extensive reworkings to the original? The front page of the printed libretto for the 1770 premiere provides a clear motive as to why there were changes made to the original. It was too short and needed expansion in order to make the evening of a conventional length:

The MUSIC as originally composed by Signor GLUCK, to which, in order to make the Performance of a necessary length for an evening's entertainment, Signor BACH has very kindly condescended to add of his own new composition, all such chorusses, airs, and recitatives, as are marked with inverted commas, except those which are sung by Signora Guglielmi, and they are likewise an entire new production of Signor GUGLIELMI, her husband.

The POETRY is from Signor CALZABIGI, with additions by G. G. BOTTARELLI, of all that Messrs. Bach, and Guglielmi have enriched this Performance by their Music.<sup>33</sup>

This clear statement of the intention behind the reworking of the opera is remarkable. Operas were habitually reworked and adapted when revived or imported in London without such disclaimers.<sup>34</sup> Yet, this adaptation of *Orfeo* prompted an explanation of why the opera was not performed in its original version. It suggests that *Orfeo* was known, at least to some extent and in some circles, in its original form, or that the reform opera ideals behind it were well-disseminated.

The explanation in the libretto of why the opera was reworked also stands out among the different *Orfeo* versions discussed in this thesis, as there are no similar explanations of the reasoning behind the reworkings of other versions. However, from this passage we should be able to draw the conclusion that the main reason why *Orfeo* was reworked in public opera houses in general in the late eighteenth century, including Gluck's own Paris version, was the practical concern that it

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<sup>32</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 2 April 1770, 12819. I have found no mention of this quotation in any of the secondary literature.

<sup>33</sup> *Orfeo ed Euridice* (London, 1770), p. 1.

<sup>34</sup> Petty, *Italian Opera in London*, pp. 62–63.

was too short for an evening at the opera. The differences between the various versions, then, are not a result of differences in *why* it was reworked. Instead, their differences are a result of what choices were made in *how* to make the opera longer.

*How the opera was changed in London: clearly attributed additions in a contrasting style*

The main changes that were made to the opera in London were the addition of whole new scenes and new arias, as well as a number of new characters. The additions were also in a musical style very different to that of Gluck, instead reflecting the musical styles and idioms of Bach and Guglielmi. This creates sharp contrasts between the original and the additions. Nevertheless, there is a consistency in how new music is added. Instead of single arias being added seemingly at random, new scenes are generally added to the original as a whole. This means that whole blocks in the opera would be in a particular style, clearly separated from other scenes.

No full score of the London version has survived, so understanding what the performance was like means piecing together the printed libretto for the premiere with the selection of arias in *The Favourite Songs in the Opera Orfeo* that was printed later in the year.<sup>35</sup> The following analysis is based primarily on the printed libretto, as that is indicative of what the production was like at the premiere, or in the first few weeks, and all arias are clearly attributed. Not only are Bach and Guglielmi, as well as Bottarelli, credited in the preface, but the additions are also marked with inverted commas in the text itself. This is very different to the other versions of *Orfeo* studied in this thesis. In the libretto for Florence (1771), there are no attributions at all to composers other than Gluck. In the libretti for Naples *San Carlo* (1774) and in London (1785), one or two of the contributing composers are mentioned in the preface, but there is no clarity as to which songs are by which composer, and in both cases, it is likely that some of the composers of arias were not credited at all.

*The Favourite Songs* verifies the attributions in the libretto, except in two cases. The libretto does not indicate that the overture and the arioso “Men tiranne” are written by anyone other than Gluck, but in *The Favourite Songs* an unattributed overture is added, and there is a version of “Men tiranne” by Guadagni. There are also three arias in *The Favourite Songs* which are not included in the libretto, but these disparities are connected to changes made later in the season.<sup>36</sup>

There are four added scenes in this version. The first added scene is the opening scene of the whole performance. The scene contains the interaction between two new characters: Eagro, “Orpheus’s father”, and Egina, “Orpheus’s sister”. The second added scene appears just before Orfeo’s meeting with the furies in the underworld, i.e. in between the first and the second act in the original Vienna version. The scene includes another new character: Plutone, the king of the

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<sup>35</sup> *Orfeo ed Euridice* (London, 1770); *The Favourite Songs in the Opera Orfeo* (London, [1770]). The manuscript scores of the Florence and Naples *San Carlo* versions also give some hints about the music in London that has not survived.

<sup>36</sup> Warburton, *The Collected Works of Johann Christian Bach: Vol. 9*, p. xiii.

underworld. The third and fourth added scenes appear together and precede Orfeo's "Che puro ciel" in the Elysian fields. These two scenes involve Euridice, "happy ghosts", and Amore.

Table 1. The performance in London (1770). Additions and substitutions in bold.

<i>London 1770</i>	<i>Recitative</i>	<i>Aria</i>	<i>Composer according to the libretto</i>	<i>Music in The Favourite Songs</i>
		[Overture]		Yes (new and unattributed)
<b>Scene 1</b>	<b>È giusto il tuo dolor</b>		<b>Bach</b>	
		<b>Non è ver</b>	<b>Bach</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	<b>Delizia de' viventi</b>		<b>Guglielmi</b>	
		<b>Contenta assai</b>	<b>Guglielmi</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Scene 2		Ah se intorno	Gluck	
	Basta basta		Gluck	
		[Ballo]		
	Euridice, Euridice!		Gluck	
		Chiamo il mio ben	Gluck	Yes
	Euridice, Euridice!		Gluck	
		Piango il mio ben	Gluck	
	Numi barbari Numi		Gluck	
		Gli sguardi trattieni	Gluck	
	Che disse?		Gluck	
<b>Scene 3</b>	<b>Implacibili Dei!</b>		<b>Bach</b>	
		<b>Per onor dell'offeso</b>	<b>Bach</b>	
		[Ballo]		
Scene 4		Chi mai dell'Erebo	Gluck	
		Deh placatevi con me	Gluck	Yes
		Misero Giovine	Gluck	
		Men tiranne	Gluck	Yes (new and by Guadagni)
		Ah quale incognito	Gluck	
		[Ballo]		
<b>Scene 5</b>		<b>Chiari fonti</b>	<b>Bach</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	<b>Del bel regno felice</b>		<b>Guglielmi</b>	
		<b>Sotto un bel ciel</b>	<b>Guglielmi</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	<b>Deh, lasciatemi in pace</b>		<b>Bach</b>	
		<b>Obbliar l'amato sposo</b>	<b>Bach</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	<b>Che bella fedeltà!</b>		<b>Guglielmi</b>	
<b>Scene 6</b>	<b>Non temete, ombre</b>		<b>Bach</b>	
		<b>Accorda amico il fato</b>	<b>Bach</b>	<b>Yes</b>

		[Ballo]		
		Dio d'amor	Bach	
Scene 7	Che puro ciel!		Gluck	
		[Ballo]	Gluck	
		Vieni a' regni	Gluck	
	<b>Anime avventurose</b>		<b>Bach</b>	
		[Ballo]		
		<b>Torna, o bella</b>	<b>Bach</b>	
Scene 8	Vieni, siegui i miei passi		Gluck	
		<b>Vieni; appaga</b>	<b>Bach</b>	
	Qual vita è questa mai		Gluck	
		Che fiero momento	Gluck	Yes
	Ecco un nuovo tormento		Gluck	Yes partly
		Che farò	Gluck	Yes
	Ah finisca una volta		Gluck	
Scene 9	Che veggio! Ah, Numi!		Gluck	
		[Ballo]	Gluck	
		Trionfi Amore!	Gluck	

The first added scene consists of two recitatives, an aria for Eagro by Johann Christian Bach, “Non è ver”, and an aria for Egina by Pietro Alessandro Guglielmi, “Contenta assai”. In the scene, Eagro and Egina lament the death of Euridice and pity the grief of Orfeo. This scene, with the new characters commenting on the action that has preceded the opera, is more like a prologue than part of the main plot. This scene will be analysed in more detail in the second chapter.

The second added scene, scene 3, is relatively short. In this scene, Plutone is insulted by Orfeo’s attempt to enter the underworld and urges the furies to prevent him. He sings a recitative and an aria: “Per onor dell’offeso mio regno”. Like Eagro and Egina, Plutone is a new added character, but in contrast to the opening scene which is set apart from the main plot, Plutone is weaved into action through the stage directions in the libretto. At the end of this scene, it says: “Pluto ascends his throne, and then the Dance”. The dance, presumably, is the original *ballo* that precedes the chorus “Chi mai dell’Erebo”, and the subsequent scene begins with “Orpheus, and the same”, which suggests that Pluto stays on stage in his throne during the following scene when Orfeo tries to appease the furies with his music.<sup>37</sup>

The two added scenes in the Elysian fields are called scene 5 and scene 6 in the libretto. Scene 5 consists of recitatives and two arias for Euridice by Bach, “Chiari fonti” and “Obbliar l’amato

<sup>37</sup> *Orfeo ed Euridice* (London, 1770), p. 14.

sposo”, and one aria for a “happy ghost” by Guglielmi, “Sotto un bel ciel”. Scene 6 includes a recitative and aria for Amore, “Accorda amico il fato”, as well as a ballet and a chorus.

The first of these two scenes opens with Euridice’s aria “Chiari fonti” in which Euridice depicts the beauty around her, but laments how she cannot enjoy it when her beloved is not with her (See Table 2 and Appendix 1).

Table 2. Lyrics and translation of “Chiari Fonti” from the London (1770) libretto.<sup>38</sup>

<i>Luogo delizioso ne’ Campi Elisi per i Boschetti che ci verdeggiano, i Fiori che ci rivestono i prati, i Ritiri ombrosi che ci si scoprono, i Fiumi ed i Ruscelli che lo bagnano.</i>	<i>A delightful view of the Elysian-Fields, its grottos, enamelled meadows, shady solitudes, and the rivers and rivulets which water them.</i>
Chiari fonti, ermi ritiri, Piagge amene, ombre beate, Se frà voi non è il mio bene, Non sperate, Che dia tregua a’ miei sospiri L’amoroso mio pensier.	Ye crystal fountains, solitary retirements, delightful shores, and blissful shades, as my treasure is not to be found amongst you, ye must not expect that my affectionate thoughts will ever make truce with my sighs.
Finchè stà da me diviso Ah, per me non è l’Eliso Un soggiorno di piacer.	Ah, sure, as long as I am deprived of him, Elysium itself, cannot be an abode of bliss to me.

This aria clearly mirrors the topic of Orfeo’s accompanied recitative “Che puro ciel”, which opens the scene set in the Elysian fields in Gluck’s original. “Chiari fonti” is significant because it is the only added aria which appears in all the four versions of *Orfeo* studied in this thesis. It is a pastoral-style aria, with a slow lyrical melody above a sixteenth-note parallel third accompaniment and a pedal bass line with repeated eighth notes. There are also accompanying flutes and clarinets. Based on its being included in several subsequent reworkings, including in Munich 1771, it must have been a very popular aria that also worked well at this point in the opera. In the original version, Euridice is silent in the second act, and Gluck himself added an aria for Euridice in this place in his version for Paris (1774).

After “Chiari fonti”, the London version has a recitative and an aria for a “happy ghost”, in which the ghost tries to cheer up Euridice and encourages her to forget her beloved: “I attend on thee; bury in oblivion all gloomy thoughts”.<sup>39</sup> Euridice, however, cannot forget her husband, as she claims in the subsequent aria “L’obbliar l’amato sposo”: “To forget my beloved spouse!—Ah, no; I cannot; nay, I would not!”<sup>40</sup>

At the end of scene 5, the chorus announces the arrival of Amore: “’Tis Love; behold the God himself”.<sup>41</sup> This is another parallel to the original scene in the Elysian fields, in which the chorus announces Euridice’s arrival. It is also a unique example in this production of including elements

<sup>38</sup> *Orfeo ed Euridice* (London, 1770), p. 18–19.

<sup>39</sup> *Orfeo ed Euridice* (London, 1770), p. 18.

<sup>40</sup> *Orfeo ed Euridice* (London, 1770), p. 21.

<sup>41</sup> *Orfeo ed Euridice* (London, 1770), p. 21.

of the original dramatic structure in an added scene. The chorus is central to Gluck's and Calzabigi's structure of the scenes in *Orfeo*, where it alternates and interacts with the soloists. The use of the chorus in this scene, then, is more similar to Gluck's dramatic style than the Metastasian structure of the other additions in the opera. Even though it is a small instance, it is another reason to defy the description of the London reworking as simply a mishmash of different styles, or a watering-down of the original. There was also attention to detail and an appreciation of the original in the creation of this reworking.

In the following scene, scene 6, Amore arrives and describes in the recitative how Orfeo has "charm'd the Gods' awaken'd ire".<sup>42</sup> The subsequent "Accorda amico il Fato" is a generic aria about Fate and Love. At the end of the scene there is a dance and another short section for the chorus, "O God of Love, these shores, and banks, re-echo thy applause",<sup>43</sup> after which Orfeo finally appears with the recitative "Che puro ciel".

Apart from the above additions, the libretto indicates a substitution in the second half of scene 7, i.e. the recitative "Anime avventurose" and the chorus "Torna, o bella", as well as the duet "Vieni appaga" in the following scene. They are marked with commas, which according to the preface indicates that the music is by Bach or Guglielmi, and the words by Bottarelli. However, the lyrics are Calzabigi's from the original libretto. Does this mean that the music was by Bach to Calzabigi's text? Unfortunately, this music was not included in *The Favourite Songs*, neither by Gluck nor by Bach, so it is not possible to confirm what the music was. Considering how carefully the printed libretto attributes all the other songs it would suggest that this music was indeed by Bach, or possibly by Guglielmi. It could be a mistake, but the libretto for the 1771 performance in London is marked in the same way in the same place, which suggests that the commas were included purposely.

There are also some instances where cuts were made to Gluck's original scenes. The first cut appears in Orfeo's cavatina "Cerco il mio ben così" in the first act, where Orfeo laments Euridice's death. In Gluck's original there are three verses with recitative in between the verses, whereas in this version there are just two verses and it starts with a recitative. The other cut in this version comes in scene 4. Orfeo's arioso "Mille pene" and the first "Ah quale incognito" chorus are cut, and the libretto goes straight from chorus "Misero giovine" to the arioso "Men tiranne". The substitutions and cuts are not motivated by making the performance "of a necessary length for an evening's entertainment". Instead, the cuts and substitutions might have been made for reasons of style and balance. Without the substitutions in scene 7 and 8, a considerable part of the latter part of the opera would be like the Vienna version. This might not have been a problem, but if they were substituted, that meant that there was music by Bach or Guglielmi, in a more modern, virtuoso style, at the end of the performance as well as in the beginning. The cuts could also have contributed

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<sup>42</sup> *Orfeo ed Euridice* (London, 1770), p. 21–22.

<sup>43</sup> *Orfeo ed Euridice* (London, 1770), p. 22.

to a sense of balance between Gluck's music on the one hand, and the music by Bach and Guglielmi on the other.

Except the short insertion of chorus in scene 5 and 6, the added scenes all have a traditional *opera seria* structure, alternating recitative and aria, in contrast to Gluck's and Calzabigi's alternation between chorus, ariosi, and accompanied recitatives. The first two added scenes are solely created for new characters, and if anything, add new perspectives on the drama which is otherwise centred almost exclusively on Orfeo. The two scenes in the Elysian fields bring more arias and perspectives for the two other main characters, Euridice and Amore.

#### *Contemporary reception and criticism of the London version*

When discussing the reception of *Orfeo* in London, the following passage from Charles Burney's *A General History of Music* is often quoted. As a contemporary example of criticism of the London reworking of the opera, it shows that not everyone was happy with the ways in which the opera was changed:

The unity, simplicity, and dramatic excellence of this opera, which had gained the composer so much credit on the Continent, were greatly diminished here by the heterogeneous mixture of music, of other composers, in a quite different style; whose long symphonies, long divisions, and repetitions of words, occasioned delay and languor in the incidents and action. A drama, which at Vienna was rendered so interesting as almost to make the audience think more of the poet than musician, in England had the fate of all other Italian dramas, which are pronounced good or bad in proportion to the talents and favour of the singers.<sup>44</sup>

However, other operagoers were more impressed by the production, as seen in this journal entry by James Harris:

Went in the evening to the opera of Orfeo[,] the King and Queen there—house remarkably crowded —opera very pleasing—so far French, as to admit into it dancing & chorus—the rest, pure Italian—Grassi shone & Guadagni—twas over by nine. The scenery of Hell magnificent—so also that of the Temple of Love—I have never seen such a spectacle.<sup>45</sup>

These two widely different reactions to the performances of *Orfeo* in London show that there was not just one reception to the opera and its revisions. However, James Harris's account was probably more representative of the operagoing public in London. Burney's critique notwithstanding, it seems that the staging of *Orfeo* in London, as well as the way it was reworked, was very successful. *Orfeo* was the third most performed serious operas at the King's theatre all through the second half of the eighteenth century with 32 performances in total.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Burney, *A General History of Music*, p. 496.

<sup>45</sup> Donald Burrows and Rosemary Dunhill (eds.), *Music and Theatre in Handel's World: The Family Papers of James Harris, 1732–1780* (New York, 2002), p. 587. Quoted in Howard, *The Modern Castrato*, p. 128.

<sup>46</sup> Petty, *Italian Opera in London*, p. 390.

*The performances in London in 1771 and 1773*

*Orfeo* premiered in London on the 7 April 1770, in a version that is reflected in the printed libretto. However, after the first performance, the opera soon acquired some new changes. These changes are discussed in detail by Ernest Warburton in his preface to *The Collected Works of Johann Christian Bach*.<sup>47</sup> On the 17 April there was an advertisement in *The Public Advertiser* which announced that it was now “With a new Overture, and an Addition of several new Songs”.<sup>48</sup> Some of these changes can be found in *The Favourite Songs of the Opera Orfeo*. The overture and Guadagni’s version of “Men tiranne” have already been mentioned. There are also three arias which do not appear in the libretto and all of them are attributed to Bach. One is for *Signor Bianchi* in his role as Eagro: “Sulle sponde del turbido lete”. The other two arias, “Non temer, amor lo guida” and “Più non turbi”, are for *Signor Piatti*, who is not listed as a singer in either of the libretti from 1770 or 1771. Two of these arias, “Sulle sponde” and “Non temer”, are subsequently found in the 1771 libretto. Warburton attributes three of these arias to Bach’s earlier operas *Artaserse* and *Alessandro nell’Indie*.<sup>49</sup> This shows that the London production of *Orfeo* was evolving over the time that it was performed and that *Orfeo* in the 1771 season was a continuation of the 1770 production with some changes, rather than a new version.

While the performance as described by the 1770 libretto, exhibits some clarity and carefulness, the subsequent additions and changes contribute to even more contrast and somewhat less clarity. The 1771 libretto is similar to the 1770 libretto, but with the addition of two new scenes. The first new addition comes after Amore’s offer to Orfeo to retrieve Eurydice in the underworld. This scene contains a recitative and an aria for a further new character Tiresia. “Non temer, amor lo guida”, and an aria for Eagro, “Sulle sponde del torbido lete”. In this scene Tiresia and Eagro discuss the offer that Orfeo has received from Amore. Tiresia believes he will succeed, but Eagro is more doubtful. This scene, then, is similar to the opening scene with Eagro and Egina. There are two characters who are not part of the main plot who looks at the action from the outside and discuss the motivations and actions of the main characters.

The other new addition appears in the Elysian fields scene, in which an aria is added for another happy ghost, “Amor qui regna”. In the libretto it is written that the song is for *ombra prima*, which according to the *dramatis personae* is sung by Maria Lelia Guglielmi. Warburton suggests that this is a mistake and that this new aria is sung by Savoi, and that Guglielmi would have sung “Sotto un bel ciel”, because that was the aria she sang in the 1770 production.<sup>50</sup> There is no indication of who was the composer of “Amor qui regna”. It may have been Bach, but it could also have been

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<sup>47</sup> Warburton, *The Collected Works of Johann Christian Bach: Vol. 9*, pp. i–xix.

<sup>48</sup> *The Public Advertiser*, 17 April 1770. Quoted in Warburton, *The Collected Works of Johann Christian Bach: Vol. 9*, p. xii.

<sup>49</sup> Warburton, *The Collected Works of Johann Christian Bach: Vol. 9*, p. xiii.

<sup>50</sup> Warburton, *The Collected Works of Johann Christian Bach: Vol. 9*, p. xiv.

Tommaso Giordani. The libretto states: “The music by Signor Gluch, and several eminent composers, under the Direction of Signor Tomaso Giordani, a Neapolitan Composer”.<sup>51</sup>

In March 1773, there were two performances of *Orfeo* in what seems to have been its original form. The advertisement for the opera said: “Altered as it originally was performed at Vienna”.<sup>52</sup> The printed libretto for the performance presents Calzabigi’s text without any additions.<sup>53</sup> The lead singer was soprano castrato Giuseppe Millico and Patricia Howard has shown that the version that was performed was the Parma version from 1769 for soprano castrato, rather than the Vienna version for alto castrato.<sup>54</sup>

Later in the season there were advertisements of new performances of *Orfeo* in its reworked form:

As it originally was performed at this Theatre by Sig. Guadagni. The Music by Signor Gluch, Mr. Bach and Signor Guglielmi. With new Dances, Cloaths, and Scenes. Intermixed with grand Chorusses.<sup>55</sup>

No libretto for this performance has survived, however, so there are no details about the form of this version and how close it was to the 1770 and 1771 performances.

### Tenducci: from London to Florence

The Soprano castrato Giusto Ferdinando Tenducci (1735–1790) is the main link between the four different reworkings discussed in this thesis. Alongside Guadagni, Tenducci was one of the most famous singers in London around 1770. While he did not sing in the King’s theatre performances of *Orfeo* in 1770 and 1771, I argue that he must have been well aware of *Orfeo* and its London version before he departed to Italy in 1771.

Just like Guadagni, Tenducci had a long-standing relationship with the stages of the British Isles and some of their resident composers. Tenducci first went to London as a 23-year-old in 1758 and in the 1760s he became friends with Johann Christian Bach.<sup>56</sup> For example, he performed in Bach’s opera *Adriano in Siria* in 1765, and in some of Bach’s concerts as late as 1771.<sup>57</sup> He also lived for some time in Dublin and in Edinburgh, where he got to know and perform in Handel’s oratorios. For example, he performed arias from *Acis and Galatea* in a concert in 1764.<sup>58</sup> In the late 1760s, Tenducci was based in London, until he suddenly left for Italy on 11 March 1771, apparently in order to escape debt.<sup>59</sup> In *The Castrato and his Wife*, Helen Berry writes that “Tenducci appeared

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<sup>51</sup> *Orfeo ed Euridice* (London, 1771), p. 1.

<sup>52</sup> *The Public Advertiser*, 9 March 1773. Quoted in Howard, “For the English”, p. 13.

<sup>53</sup> *Orfeo ed Euridice* (London, 1773)

<sup>54</sup> Howard, “For the English”, pp. 13-15.

<sup>55</sup> *The Public Advertiser*, 25 May 1773. Quoted in Howard, “For the English”, p. 15.

<sup>56</sup> Roger Fiske and Dale E. Monson, “Tenducci, Giusto Ferdinando”, *Grove Music Online* (2001), <<https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.27660>>.

<sup>57</sup> Helen Berry, *The Castrato and His Wife* (Oxford, 2011), p. 161.

<sup>58</sup> Berry, *The Castrato and His Wife*, p. 63.

<sup>59</sup> Berry, *The Castrato and His Wife*, pp. 162–163.

occasionally at Covent Garden in the winter of 1769–70 and performed at the oratorios sung in the King’s theatre in 1770”,<sup>60</sup> and he sang as *primo uomo* at the King’s theatre in 1771. Charles Burney wrote in his *A General History of Music* that “During the next season of 1770 and 1771, in the few serious operas that were performed, TENDUCCI was the immediate successor of Guadagni”.<sup>61</sup> Despite his engagement at the King’s theatre this year, Tenducci did not sing in the 1771 revival of the *Orfeo*. The six performances of the opera began on the 30 April, and Tenducci had left England by that time. Even though he never sang in one of the King’s theatre performances of *Orfeo* in 1770 or 1771, his involvement with the theatre in this period strongly suggests that he knew the reworking well.

Besides his association with the King’s theatre at the time of the *Orfeo* performances, there is another piece of evidence for Tenducci’s knowledge of the opera before leaving for Italy. There exists a contemporary music print of “Che farò senza Euridice” entitled *A Favourite Song, Sung by Mr Tenducci at the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden*.<sup>62</sup> The print is not dated, but it is printed by “Welcker Gerrard Street Soho”. This means that it must have been printed earlier than 1775, since that year Welcker moved its printing to Haymarket.<sup>63</sup> Tenducci moved away from London in 1771 and did not return until 1777, so the print must have referred to a performance of the aria before his departure.

There is another significant detail that suggests an early date of the music print. In the print, the key of the aria is D major. In the original version of the opera in Vienna, “Che farò” was in C major, and Guadagni sang the aria in the same key in London, according to *The Favourite Songs*. However, in Gluck’s version for soprano castrato in Parma 1769, the aria was transposed to Eb major. The Parma version became the standard that all the subsequent versions of *Orfeo* for soprano castrato in Italy were based on,<sup>64</sup> and in Florence and Naples Tenducci performed “Che farò” in Eb major. That the aria was printed in D major in this case suggests that the Parma version of the opera was not known in London at the time, and that Tenducci simply transposed it to a more suitable key for his voice when he performed it in concerts, or perhaps inserted into another opera.

After Tenducci left the British Isles in the spring of 1771, he returned to his native Tuscany. There he sang in *Orfeo* in Florence in the autumn of 1771. Tenducci must have known about the London reworking, but it is less clear how involved Tenducci was in putting together the opera in Florence. In his own account fourteen years later, Tenducci declared that the reason behind the

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<sup>60</sup> Berry, *The Castrato and His Wife*, p. 154.

<sup>61</sup> Burney, *A General History of Music*, p. 497.

<sup>62</sup> *A Favourite Song Sung by Mr Tenducci at the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden* (London, [1769–1771]). The *Grove* article claims that Tenducci sang in *Orfeo* in London 1770 and that he helped popularising the aria “Che farò”. It is probably this printed aria that they are referring to, as I have not been able to find any other evidence of his performing the opera in London. See, Fiske and Monson, “Tenducci, Giusto Ferdinando”, *Grove Music Online*.

<sup>63</sup> *IMSLP Petrucci Music Library*, <<https://imslp.org/wiki/Welcker>>.

<sup>64</sup> Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*, p. 87.

performance of *Orfeo* in Florence at this time was his own presence in Tuscany and that the Grand Duke himself chose that Tenducci would sing the main role:

The Grand Duke of Tuscany was so pleased to make a point of it that my first performance as a singer in Italy should be in the Theatre of my own Country. He himself selected the Opera of Orpheus, in which he chose that I should sing. The effect of this performance, I must be permitted to say, was great, as can be attested by the many English people of distinction who were present.<sup>65</sup>

Tenducci presumably wanted to stress his own importance in this statement, but it nevertheless serves as an indication that he had an important role to play in the genesis of the production. There is no mention anywhere that Tenducci himself adapted *Orfeo* for Florence, but neither are there any attributions to anyone else in the printed libretto or in the manuscripts. Tenducci had put together adaptations and *pasticci* previously, for example *Amintas* at Covent Garden in 1769 and *The Revenge of Athridates* in Dublin 1767. He also composed songs and arias that were printed in the 1760s and 70s.<sup>66</sup> It is therefore definitely possible that he was involved in reworking *Orfeo* for Florence and did not just sing the main role. The Florence version includes some arias from the London version, including “Chiari fonti”, which means that whoever put together the performance knew of the London version. The Florence version also includes a Handel chorus from *Acis and Galatea*, set to a new text, which suggests that the adaptor must also have had some experience of Handel’s oratorios. Tenducci, then, seems a plausible candidate for having adapted *Orfeo* in Florence.

### Florence (1771): imitation and assimilation

The production of *Orfeo ed Euridice* in Florence 1771 stands out among eighteenth-century performances of the opera. It was performed at a public opera house and expanded in order to be long enough, but, in contrast to other contemporary performances of the opera, there was an attempt to imitate and accommodate the dramatic structure and, to some extent the musical style, of Gluck’s original. The scenes that were added alternate between chorus, arias and dances in a way that is characteristic of the original. All the added arias expand the roles for the three original characters Orfeo, Euridice, and Amore, and the two added characters, two happy ghosts, do not have their own arias and only sing solo parts within one of the choruses.

There are at least two music manuscripts of the Florence version, one in Florence and one in Parma, as well as the printed libretto.<sup>67</sup> In contrast to the London version, there is more information about the music, lyrics, and structure of the performance. On the other hand, there are no attributions to any composers other than Gluck in the libretto or in the manuscripts, nor is there anything like the statement of purpose that can be seen in the London libretto. There is more information about the music, including all the recitatives, but we know less of the reasons behind

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<sup>65</sup> *Orpheus and Eurydice* (London, 1785), p. 3.

<sup>66</sup> Fiske and Monson, “Tenducci, Giusto Ferdinando”, *Grove Music Online*.

<sup>67</sup> *L’Orfeo* (Florence, B.93.1-3); *Orfeo* (Parma, 172/I-III); *Orfeo, ed Euridice* (Florence, 1771).

the performances or the intention behind the reworking. The libretto simply gives us knowledge of the time and place and the patron of the performance:

ORFEO, ED EURIDICE  
DRAMMA PER MUSICA

Da rappresentarsi in Firenze nel Teatro di Via  
del Cocomero nell'Autunno dell'Anno [sic] 1771.

SOTTO LA PROTEZIONE DELL' A. R.  
DEL SERENISSIMO  
PIETRO LEOPOLDO  
PRINCIPE REALE D'UNGHERIA, E DI BOEMIA  
ARCIDUCA D'AUSTRIA, ec. ec. ec.  
GRAN DUCA DI TOSCANA.<sup>68</sup>

### *Opera culture and earlier reform opera in Florence*

The context in which *Orfeo* was performed in Florence can provide reasons for why this version is different from other contemporary performances. In Florence, there was not only a flourishing opera scene and previous performances of reform operas, but the Grand Duke of Tuscany, Peter Leopold, had probably attended the premiere of *Orfeo* in Vienna 1762, which was performed for his father, the Emperor Francis I, on his name day. All these factors must have contributed to the unique approach to reworking the opera in Florence.

Opera culture in Florence in the 1770s was particularly vibrant. In *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*, Alessandra Martina writes that opera was flourishing under the rule of the Grand Duke, and that “the operatic repertoire was extraordinarily rich and susceptible to avant-garde influences”.<sup>69</sup> For example, at the *Teatro della Pergola*, the big opera house in Florence, there had been performances of three of Tommaso Traetta’s reform operas in 1767–1768. There had also been performances of Handel oratorios in Florence. The very first performance of Handel’s *Messiah* in Italy took place at the *Palazzo Pitti* in Florence in 1768.<sup>70</sup> This was no avant-garde work, but it indicates that the Florentine public had had exposure to several different operatic styles leading up to the performance of *Orfeo*.

The Grand Duke Peter Leopold I was an important figure in the genesis of the Florence performance of *Orfeo*. According to Tenducci, it was the Grand Duke himself who suggested that *Orfeo* should be performed in Florence, with Tenducci in the main role.<sup>71</sup> It was also under his protection that the opera was performed.<sup>72</sup> Tenducci’s account indicate that Peter Leopold was

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<sup>68</sup> *Orfeo, ed Euridice* (Florence, 1771), p. 1.

<sup>69</sup> Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*, p. 95. The translation is my own. (“Viceversa il repertorio operistico-musicale si presenta straordinariamente ricco e sensibile agli stimoli d'avanguardia”).

<sup>70</sup> Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*, p. 98.

<sup>71</sup> *Orpheus and Eurydice* (London, 1785), p. 3.

<sup>72</sup> *Orfeo ed Euridice* (Florence, 1771), p. 1.

personally involved in this performance and instigated it himself. The Grand Duke was closely connected to reform opera in several ways. Born in 1747, he had grown up at the Viennese court, among the attempts to reform *opera seria* at the Imperial theatre under the direction of Count Giacomo Durazzo. The first performance of *Orfeo* in Vienna 1762 took place on the name day of Emperor Francis I, Peter Leopold's father, so it is probable that he attended the premier of the opera. One of the most famous writings in favour of operatic reform is the preface to the printed score of Gluck's and Calzabigi's *Alceste*, and the print was dedicated to Peter Leopold, the Grand Duke of Tuscany.<sup>73</sup> As such, he was intimately associated with the ideas behind reform opera. This must have been an important condition why the Florence production took a different form from other reworkings of *Orfeo*.

Considering the fertile soil for reform opera in Florence, it may come as a surprise that the opera was reworked at all. The most apparent explanation is that the opera still needed to be long enough for an evening at a public opera house, as was the case in London. The opera was performed at the *Teatro del Cocomero*. The theatre was founded by and still associated with an academy, "L'Accademia degli Infuocati", but open to the public.<sup>74</sup> Martina suggests that the reason *Orfeo* was performed at *Teatro del Cocomero*, rather than bigger *Teatro della Pergola*, was because even in its reworked form it was still very different to the *opera seria* that was usually performed at *Teatro della Pergola*.<sup>75</sup> The result, then, was a balance act between reform ideals and public opera tastes. A tension that was perhaps even more acute in Florence than in other cities.

#### *The Parma version as the basis for Gluck's music in Florence 1771 and other Italian performances*

Before going into the types of changes that were made to *Orfeo* in Florence, it is worth noting which of Gluck's versions of the opera was the basis of this performance. The original Vienna version had been written for alto castrato Guadagni in 1762, and when Gluck revived *Orfeo* for Parma in 1769, the music for the main role Orfeo was transposed in order to suit the soprano castrato Giuseppe Millico. In Florence, the music for the role of *Orfeo* needed to fit the range of Tenducci, a soprano castrato, so the music was derived from Gluck's Parma version. According to Martina, the Parma version was by far the most well-spread on the Italian peninsula during the 1770s, to the extent that it was considered the original.<sup>76</sup> Gluck's music in *Orfeo* in Naples *San Carlo* 1774 was also from the Parma version, and it is likely that it was used in London 1785 as well.

The only differences between the Vienna and Parma versions are transpositions, a few smaller changes in the vocal lines, and some re-orchestrations. The lyrics, music and the structure of the opera are otherwise intact between the two versions. In general, Orfeo's arias are transposed up a fourth, and when he sings with the chorus, the music is a tone higher than the original. Orfeo's

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<sup>73</sup> *Alceste* (Vienna, 1769).

<sup>74</sup> Caterina Pagnini, *Il Teatro del Cocomero a Firenze (1701–1748)* (Florence, 2017).

<sup>75</sup> Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*, p. 96.

<sup>76</sup> Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*, p. 87.

duet with Euridice, “Vieni appaga”, is a third higher than the original. The recitatives are accommodated in order to fit the new range, and to arrive in the new keys. The most noticeable change in the Parma version is the orchestration. The orchestra is reduced in general, and the originally intricate orchestration of “Che puro ciel” was simplified. There are also some smaller changes in the melodies some of the arias, such as “Deh placatevi” and “Che farò”.

Gluck’s music in the Florence version follows the Parma score very closely, but there are a few exceptions: “Che puro ciel” is shortened and “Che farò senza Euridice” is rather a transposed version of the aria as it appears in the Vienna score.<sup>77</sup> It is in Eb major, like in the Parma score, but without the changes in the vocal line that appeared in Parma. Perhaps the reason for this was that Tenducci had already sung the aria in London in the transposed Vienna version. These two diversions from the Parma score also appear in Naples *San Carlo*.

*How the opera was changed: imitation of Gluck’s dramatic structure*

The main feature of the Florence version of *Orfeo* is the addition of two new longer scenes. The first added scene comes at the end of Act I and is set at the shore of the Stygian river where Orfeo pleads to the dead souls to let him join them to the underworld. The second added scene takes place in the Elysian fields, between the underworld scene and Orfeo’s recitative “Che puro ciel”. The characters in the scene are Euridice, Amore, and two happy ghosts. Both of these two added scenes are made up of choruses, arias, and accompanied recitatives which alternate in a manner similar to that of Gluck’s original scenes in the opera. Outside of the two longer added scenes, there are also a few substitutions, and one added aria.

Table 3. The performance in Florence (1771). Additions and substitutions in bold.

<i>Florence 1771</i>	<i>Recitative</i>	<i>Aria</i>	<i>Composer</i>
		Overture	Gluck
Act I: Scene 1		Ah se intorno	Gluck
	Basta, basta		Gluck
		[Ballo]	Gluck
		Ah se intorno	Gluck
		Chiamo il mio ben	Gluck
	Euridice, Euridice		Gluck
		Cerco il mio ben	Gluck
	Euridice, Euridice		Gluck
		Piango il mio ben	Gluck
	Numi, barbari numi		Gluck
Scene 2	T’assiste Amore		Gluck

<sup>77</sup> Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*, p. 87.

		<b>Gli sguardi trattieni</b>	<b>Unknown</b>
	Che disse, che ascoltai		Gluck
		<b>La legge accetto</b>	<b>Unknown</b>
<b>Scene 3</b>		<b>Sciolto ognun</b>	<b>Handel</b>
	<b>Fermate anime illustri</b>		<b>Unknown</b>
		<b>No che alcun dal terreno</b>	<b>Handel</b>
	<b>Qual ripulsa è questa mai</b>		<b>Unknown</b>
		<b>Placate quel core</b>	<b>Unkown</b>
		<b>Ah non solca il torbo umor</b>	<b>Handel</b>
	<b>Anime al ciel gradite</b>		<b>Unknown</b>
		<b>Perché si ingrata</b>	<b>Unknown</b>
		<b>Sciolto ognun</b>	<b>Handel</b>
Act II: Scene 1		[Ballo di Furie]	Gluck
		Chi mai dell'erebo	Gluck
		[Ballo di Furie]	Gluck
		Chi mai dell'erebo	Gluck
		[Ballo]	Gluck
		Deh placatevi con me	Gluck
		Misero Giovine	Gluck
		Mille pene	Gluck
		Ah quale incognito	Gluck
		Men tiranne	Gluck
		Ah quale incognito	Gluck
<b>Scene 2</b>		<b>Anima amabile</b>	<b>Unknown</b>
		<b>Chiari fonti</b>	<b>Bach</b>
		<b>Anima amabile</b>	<b>Unknown</b>
	<b>Deh Lasciatemi in pace</b>		<b>Bach?</b>
		<b>Obbliar l'amato sposa</b>	<b>Bach</b>
		<b>Deh scaccia</b>	<b>Unknown</b>
<b>Scene 3</b>	<b>Non temete ombre</b>		<b>Bach?</b>
		<b>Avrà la pace</b>	<b>Unknown</b>
		<b>Deh scaccia</b>	<b>Unknown</b>
Scene 4	Che puro ciel!		<b>Gluck (shortened)</b>
		Vieni ai regni	Gluck
	Anime avventurose		Gluck
		Torna o Bella	Gluck
		[Ballo]	Gluck

Act III: Scene 1	Vieni segui i miei passi		Gluck
	<b>Orfeo? Sposa?</b>		<b>Unknown</b>
		<b>Lascia pur l'ingiusto affetto</b>	<b>Unknown</b>
	Qual vita è questa mai		Gluck
		<b>Barbaro tu vedrai</b>	<b>Unknown</b>
	Ecco un nuovo tormento		Gluck
		Che farò senza Euridice	<b>Gluck (Vienna but in Eb)</b>
	Ma finisca è per sempre		Gluck
Scene 2	Orfeo che fai		Gluck
	Che veggio a numi		Gluck
<b>Scene 3</b>		<b>Già sento</b>	<b>Unknown</b>

The Florence version opens with Gluck's music and the first scene is entirely in its original form. So, the first changes in the Florence version only appear towards the end of the second scene in which Amore's aria "Gli sguardi trattieni" is substituted for a new aria set to Calzabigi's original lyrics. This is followed by the recitative "Che disse?" from the Parma version, and then the added aria "La legge accetto", in which Orfeo responds to Amore's offer to let him go down into the underworld and bring Euridice back. In the aria, he triumphantly "accepts the law" that he must not look back at her. There is no indication of who composed these two new arias, but both of them are longer arias in a virtuoso style.

After this comes the first added scene. It starts with the chorus "Sciolto ognun" which is Handel's chorus "Oh, the pleasure of the plains!" from *Acis and Galatea*, set to a new text.<sup>78</sup> The scene, which alternates chorus, accompanied recitative and arias, is set at the banks of the Stygian river where souls are trying to cross the river and Orfeo tries to join them. The souls try to stop him from embarking the boat, but he soothes them with his singing, i.e. the two arias "Placate quel core" and "Perché sì ingrata". This scene is discussed in detail in the second chapter.

The next change is the second added scene. From the point of view of plot and character development, this scene is very similar to the scene set in the Elysian fields in London 1770. The happy ghosts and the chorus sing about the beauty and tranquillity of the Elysian fields, while Euridice is unhappy because her beloved Orfeo is not there. There are also similarities in the music. The two arias for Euridice are the same as in London 1770: Johann Christian Bach's "Chiari fonti" and "L'obbliar l'amato sposo". The lyrics for Euridice's and Amore's accompanied recitatives "Deh lasciatemi in pace" and "Non temete, ombre" are also the same as the corresponding recitatives in London. Since the lyrics are identical, it is likely that the music was taken directly from the London version. This is not possible to verify, however, since the recitatives do not appear in *The Favourite Songs*.

<sup>78</sup> Robinson, "The 1774 S. Carlo Version of *Orfeo*", p. 401.

While this scene in London and in Florence are similar, and have two arias in common, it also well illustrates the difference of approach between them. The use of choruses to structure the scene in the Florence version creates a scene that is more similar to Gluck's other scenes in the opera, such as the opening funeral scene, or the underworld scene. In Florence, the Elysian fields scene starts with a chorus with two solo voices, "Anima amabile", which is followed by Euridice's aria "Chiari fonti". By the end of the aria, the chorus "Anima amabile" returns. After that, there is another accompanied recitative and aria for Euridice, after which there is another chorus, "Deh scaccia". This is followed by Amores's recitative and aria, "Avrà la pace", and at the end of the scene, there is a reiteration of the chorus "Deh scaccia". In London 1770, on the other hand, the scene followed a more traditional recitative-aria structure, even though there is a smaller part for the chorus.

Table 4. The structure of the Elysian fields scene in Florence (1771).

<i>Act II: Scene 2 and 3</i>	
Anima amabile	Chorus
Chiari fonti	Euridice (aria)
Anima amabile	Chorus
Deh Lasciatemi in pace	Euridice (recitative)
Obbliar l'amato sposa	Euridice (aria)
Deh scaccia	Chorus
Non temete ombre	Amore (recitative)
Avrà la pace	Amore (aria)
Deh scaccia	Chorus

In the third act there are three substitutions. Orfeo and Euridice's duet, "Vieni appaga", is substituted with an additional accompanied recitative, "Orfeo? Sposa?", and a new duet, "Lascia pur l'ingiusto affetto". Warburton suggests that this duet is by Bach based on the musical style, but there is no further evidence of that.<sup>79</sup> Euridice's aria "Che fiero momento" is substituted by "Barbaro tu vedrai", and the final chorus is substituted by the chorus "Già sento". While some of the music and the lyrics were substituted in the last act, the plot and the structure are essentially the same as the original.

#### *Reception of the Florence version*

Just like the London production of *Orfeo*, the Florence performances were successful, and this review provides a description of a particularly well-attended evening:

<sup>79</sup> Warburton, *The Collected Works of Johann Christian Bach: Vol. 11*, p. x.

Although performed several times, it has always met the satisfaction of the public, and particularly on that evening when the first parts were so well performed both by the incomparable Sig. Giusto Tenducci, and by the excellent Sig. Anna Bianchi [...], encouraged by the presence of the LL.AA.RR and the attention of the numerous and noble audience that that evening concurred.<sup>80</sup>

Martina, who quotes this passage and other positive reviews, points out that Florentine newspapers usually portrayed the court in a positive light.<sup>81</sup> Still, there were thirty performances of *Orfeo* in Florence in the autumn of 1771, which is testimony to the popularity of the opera.

### Tenducci: the genesis of the Naples version

In 1774, three years after the Florence production, Tenducci sang in a version of *Orfeo ed Euridice* at the *Teatro di San Carlo* in Naples. In the intervening years he had been performing in Rome and Siena and sang in a concert version of *Orfeo* in Florence 1773–1774.<sup>82</sup>

The historiography of the genesis of the *San Carlo* version has been complicated by a lack of knowledge of the previous versions and a statement in the libretto that the music is by Gluck, with additions by Johann Christian Bach: “La musica è del celebre Signor Cabaliere Cristoforo Gluk, con aggiunte del celebre Signor Giovanni Cristiani Bach, Maestro di Cappella di S.M. la Regina della Gran Brettagna”.<sup>83</sup> This could suggest that all the added music is by Bach, or that Bach made the reworking, similarly to his contribution to the London version. In the introduction to the facsimile of the *San Carlo* version, Warburton assumes that the whole reworking was made by Bach, including his being responsible for the transpositions of Gluck’s music, which are actually derived from Gluck’s Parma version.<sup>84</sup>

Robinson proposes that whoever created the *San Carlo* version must have had access to both the London and the Florence score, and that the existence of the Florentine score can be easily explained by Tenducci’s participating in both the Florence and the Naples production. The London material could either have been sent to Naples from London by J.C. Bach or reached Naples via Florence. He concedes, however that Bach “seems to have played a very peripheral part” in the actual adaptation of the opera in Naples in 1774.<sup>85</sup>

Both Warburton and Robinson reference Ulisse Prota-Giurleo who in *La Grande Orchestra del R. Teatro S. Carlo nel Settecento* provide evidence that Bach was supposed to go to Naples in 1774 and

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<sup>80</sup> *Gazzetta Toscana*, 16 November 1771, VI/46, p. 181. Quoted in Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*, p. 96. The translation is my own. (“Quantunque più volte messo in scena, ha incontrato sempre la sodisfazione del Publico, e particolarmente in detta sera in cui furon sì ben eseguite le prime parti tanto dall’incomparabil sig. Giusto Tenducci, che dall’eccelente sig. Anna Bianchi..., incoraggiati dalla presenza delle LL.AA.RR e dall’attenzione della numerosa e nobile udienza che in quella sera vi concorse.”).

<sup>81</sup> Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*, p. 96.

<sup>82</sup> Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*, p. 97.

<sup>83</sup> *Orfeo, ed Euridice* (Naples, 1774), p. 16.

<sup>84</sup> Warburton, *The Collected Works of Johann Christian Bach: Vol. 11*, pp. vii–viii.

<sup>85</sup> Robinson, “The 1774 S. Carlo Version of *Orfeo*”, p. 403.

compose two new operas.<sup>86</sup> This means that there is a connection between Bach and *San Carlo* this year, even though he never arrived in Naples. While there is a possibility that Bach could have submitted this version “by post” for *San Carlo* with a knowledge of the Florence version, it seems more likely that Tenducci brought the scores for both London and Florence to Naples, which Robinson suggests as a possibility.

Martina, instead, points to the Viennese tastes at the Neapolitan court, especially as manifested by Maria Carolina, the queen consort of Naples and Sicily, who, just like Peter Leopold, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, had grown up at the Viennese court and probably seen the first production of *Orfeo* in Vienna 1762.<sup>87</sup> It was perhaps due to this connection that the opera was first performed earlier in 1774 in the court theatre at the *Palazzo Reale*. This version was close to the original, with only a few substitutions in the third act. After the performances at the palace, the opera was put on at the *San Carlo* in a form that would appeal to a larger audience, and which had been a success in both London and Florence.

### Naples *San Carlo* (1774): merging the London and Florence versions

This version of *Orfeo ed Euridice* was performed at the *Teatro di San Carlo* in Naples in November 1774. It could best be described as a synthesis between the London and Florence versions. In comparison to the reworking for Florence, the *San Carlo* version has more similarities with the London version and Johann Christian Bach is credited in the libretto. Other arias and scenes come from the Florence version. There are also a few recitatives and arias that do not appear in either of the earlier versions.

Among the early reworkings of *Orfeo*, the *San Carlo* performances have received the most previous attention. Michael Robinson discusses this production in the context of Neapolitan opera at large in *Naples and Neapolitan Opera* and describes some of its connections to the London and Florence versions in “The 1774 S. Carlo Version of *Orfeo*”. Alessandra Martina does not go into as much detail in describing this version, but writes extensively about the context behind the two different versions of the opera in Naples 1774, and the different manuscripts that have survived.<sup>88</sup> In this account, I focus on how it relates back to the London and Florence versions, and how it differs from them.

For the *San Carlo* version of *Orfeo*, I have had access to a music manuscript of the full score and a printed libretto, which provides a good sense of the content of the performance, but just like the Florence version, there is less information about reason and intent.<sup>89</sup> The libretto and the

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<sup>86</sup> Ulisse Prota-Giurleo, *La Grande Orchestra del R. Teatro S. Carlo nel Settecento* (Naples, 1927), pp.36–37.

Quoted in Robinson, “The 1774 S. Carlo Version of *Orfeo*”, p. 403; Warburton, *The Collected Works of Johann Christian Bach: Vol. 11*, p. viii.

<sup>87</sup> Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*, p. 104–105.

<sup>88</sup> Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*, pp. 103–117.

<sup>89</sup> *L’Orfeo* (Naples, 27.4.5-7); *Orfeo, ed Euridice* (Naples, 1774). Martina discusses another manuscript (Milan, Noseda F87) which I have not had access to. See Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*, p. 109.

manuscript correlate on all points except Plutone’s aria. In the manuscript, this aria is “Sulle sponde del torbido” which is derived from the London version in 1771 and appears in *The Favourite Songs*. In the printed libretto, there are other lyrics which begin with “Di Cocito nel torbido giro”. However, the texts are very similar, and Martina draws the conclusion that Bach’s aria from the London version was performed with the new text.<sup>90</sup>

*How the opera was changed in Naples: taking arias and scenes from London and Florence*

There are four main additions in the Naples *San Carlo* version. The additions are: 1) the opening scene with Eagro, Orfeo’s father, 2) a scene set at the bank of the Stygian river, 3) three scenes for Plutone and Proserpina in the underworld, and 4) two scenes in the Elysian fields with Euridice and Amore. Two of these additions, are based on scenes from London 1770–1771, one scene is based on a scene from Florence 1771, and the Elysian fields scene combine the Florence and London versions. No scene is identical to a scene in one of the earlier versions, but they appear in the corresponding places and with the same or similar characters and plot.

Table 5. The performance in Naples *San Carlo* (1774). Additions and substitutions in bold.

<i>San Carlo 1774</i>	<i>Recitative</i>	<i>Aria or chorus</i>	<i>Composer</i>	<i>Derived from</i>
		Ouverture	Gluck	Parma 1769
<b>Act I: Scene 1</b>	<b>Al cor di un padre</b>			
		<b>Non è ver</b>	<b>Bach</b>	<b>London 1770</b>
Scene 2		Ah se intorno	Gluck	Parma 1769
	Basta, basta		Gluck	Parma 1769
		[Ballo]	Gluck	Parma 1769
		Ah se intorno	Gluck	Parma 1769
Scene 3		Chiamo il mio ben	Gluck	Parma 1769
	Euridice		Gluck	Parma 1769
		Cerco il mio ben	Gluck	Parma 1769
	Euridice		Gluck	Parma 1769
		Piango il mio ben	Gluck	Parma 1769
	Numi barbari		Gluck	Parma 1769
Scene 4	T’assiste Amore		Gluck	Parma 1769
		Gli sguardi	Gluck	Parma 1769
Scene 5	Che disse		Gluck	Parma 1769
		<b>La legge accetto</b>		<b>Florence 1771</b>
<b>Scene 6</b>		<b>Sciolto ognun</b>	<b>Handel</b>	<b>Florence 1771</b>
<b>Scene 7</b>	<b>Fermate anime</b>			

<sup>90</sup> Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*, p. 112.

	Al silenzio, la pace			
		Se quel dolor	[Broschi]	
		Sebben vesti	Handel	Florence 1771
Act II: Scena 1	Gli elisi fortunati			
		Uno sposo così fido		
Scene 2	In van per lui			
		Spiegghi alle belle		
Scene 3	Del mio poter			
		Al cocito/Sulle sponde	Bach	London 1771
Scene 4		[Ballo]	Gluck	Parma 1769
		Chi mai dell'Erebo	Gluck	Parma 1769
		[Ballo]	Gluck	Parma 1769
		Chi mai dell'Erebo	Gluck	Parma 1769
		Deh placatevi	Gluck	Parma 1769
		Misero giovine	Gluck	Parma 1769
		Mille pene	Gluck	Parma 1769
		Ah qual incognito	Gluck	Parma 1769
		Men tiranne	Gluck	Parma 1769
		Ah qual incognito	Gluck	Parma 1769
Scene 5		Chiari fonti	Bach	London 1770
		Anima amabile		Florence 1771
	Deh lasciatemi in pace		Bach?	[London 1770]
		Obbliar l'amato sposo	Bach	London 1770
Scene 6	Non temete, ombre		Bach?	[London 1770]
		Accorda amico il fato	Bach	London 1770
		[Ballo]	Gluck	Parma 1769
Scene 7	Che puro ciel		Gluck	Florence 1771
		Vieni ai regni	Gluck	Parma 1769
		[Ballo]	Gluck	Parma 1769
	Anime avventurose		Gluck	Parma 1769
		Torna o bella	Gluck	Parma 1769
	Vieni, siegui			
	Orfeo? Sposa?			Florence 1771
		Lascia pur l'ingiusto		Florence 1771
Act 3: Scene 1	Qual vita è questa mai		Gluck	Parma 1769
		Che fiero momento	Gluck	Parma 1769
	Ecco un nuovo tormento!		Gluck	Parma 1769

		Che farò senza Euridice	Gluck	<b>Florence 1771</b>
	Ma finisca		Gluck	Parma 1769
Scene 2	Orfeo, che fai?		Gluck	Parma 1769
Scene 3		Trionfi amore	Gluck	Parma 1769

The first added scene is based on the opening scene in London 1770, but the context of the scene is somewhat different. Instead of interacting with Euridice's sister, Eagro talks to his army general Euristo about Orfeo's despair.<sup>91</sup> The text of the recitative is not the same as in London, so it was presumably newly composed, but Eagro's aria "Non è ver" originally appeared in London. This scene and aria did not appear in the Florence version.

Before the next added scene comes the added aria "La legge accetto". It appears in the same place as in the Florence version, i.e. after the recitative "Che disse?" and before the Stygian river scene. In contrast to Florence, Amore's aria "Gli sguardi trattieni" is in its original version. At *San Carlo*, it was transposed to A major, one note higher than the original G major. Presumably this was done in order to fit the range of a new singer.

The second addition, scene 6 and 7, is a shorter version of the scene set at the Stygian shores from the Florence version. The plot is roughly the same and the Handel chorus from *Acis and Galatea* with the text "Sciolto ognun" reappears. It starts with the chorus of souls who are crossing the river Styx, after which Orfeo pleads to be allowed to join the souls. His first attempt is the *secco* recitative "Fermate, Anime belle", which does not convince the souls to let him pass. He continues with the accompanied recitative "Il silenzio, la pace" and the siciliano aria "Se quel dolor", after which he is allowed to join them. This aria could be a modernized reworking of "Se al labbro mio non credi", originally written by Riccardo Broschi for the London revival of Hasse's *Artaserse* in 1734.<sup>92</sup> Regardless, it seems that the music in this scene is deliberately chosen to be in an older style. Perhaps the music is intended to depict Orfeo adjusting his music and singing in order to appeal to the dead souls, who themselves sing a chorus several decades old. While the aria has some melismatic virtuosic passages, it is predominantly syllabic and in that way is more similar to Gluck's style than some of the other additions. The act ends with the Handel chorus with another text: "Sebben vesti". Since it is shorter, it is on the whole a simpler version of the Florence scene. The chorus opens and ends the section, but there is less sense of the deliberate imitation of Gluck's alternation between choruses, accompanied recitatives, and arias.

The third addition comes at the beginning of the second act. It is a series of three new scenes with Plutone, Proserpina, and one of the furies, Erinni. This scene is loosely derived from Plutone's scene in London 1770. It appears in the same place and the plot is similar, but it is more elaborate.

<sup>91</sup> Robinson, *Naples and Neapolitan Opera*, p. 66.

<sup>92</sup> This attribution appears in the notes to the IMSLP publication of the digitized manuscript and I have not been able to confirm this, but the point that the music is in an older style than other added music in the production holds true. See, *IMSLP Petrucci Music Library*, <<https://imslp.org/wiki/Special:ReverseLookup/221152>>.

Plutone hears about the entry of a mortal into the underworld and urges the furies to attack him, despite Proserpina’s entreaty that he should be merciful. Apart from Orfeo’s aria “Se quel dolor” in the previous scene, Proserpina’s and Erinni’s arias at the opening of the second act are the only additional arias that cannot be derived from the two earlier *Orfeo* productions. They could be newly composed for the occasion or be borrowed from earlier operas, like “Se quel dolor”.

Just as the Elysian fields scene is a good example of the different approaches to the reworking in London and in Florence, the *San Carlo* version of the scene clearly exhibits the way in which it incorporates elements of both the London and Florence versions. Like the London version, the scene starts with “Chiari fonti”. This is followed by the chorus “Anima amabile” which is a shortened version of the same chorus in the Florence version. In the *San Carlo* version there are no soloists, and the piece is shortened in order to include only the chorus part. After the chorus, there are the recitatives and aria that appear in both London and Florence, “Deh lasciatemi in pace” and “Obbliar l’amato sposo”, followed by “Non temete”. The scene ends with “Accorda amico il fato” which was included in the London version, but not in Florence. Because the chorus is shortened and only appears once, this scene is more similar to the scene in London in terms of structure, but without the happy ghost, the scene is more focused on Euridice and Amore like it was in Florence.

Table 6. How the Elysian fields scene combined elements from both London and Florence.

<i>London (1770)</i>	<i>Naples San Carlo (1774)</i>	<i>Florence (1771)</i>
		Anima amabile
Chiari fonti	Chiari fonti	Chiari fonti
Del bel regno felice		
Sotto un bel ciel		
	Anima amabile	Anima amabile
Deh lasciatemi	Deh lasciatemi	Deh lasciatemi
Obbliar l’amato sposo	Obbliar l’amato sposo	Obbliar l’amato sposa
		Deh scaccia
Non temete	Non temete	Non temete
Accorda amico il fato	Accorda amico il fato	
		Avrà la pace
Ballo	Ballo	
		Deh scaccia
Dio d’amor		
Che puro ciel	Che puro ciel	Che puro ciel

In the *San Carlo* version, a couple of the substitutions at the end of the opera are kept from the Florence version: the recitative “Orfeo? Sposa?” and the duet “Lascia pur l’ingiusto affetto”. At

*San Carlo* this was the end of the second act rather than the beginning of the third act. Robinson suggests that there could be a dramatic reason for this. The change of scenery “creates a long time span between the start and end of the quarrel. This adds credibility to Orpheus’s final act of desperation”.<sup>93</sup> He also notes that a much shorter third act was normal in Neapolitan opera of the 1770s and thus the new arrangement adheres to this operatic convention. The third act is the same as the Parma version, with the only exception that “*Che farò*” is the same transposed Vienna version that had been performed in Florence 1771 and it is accompanied by pizzicato strings, which it had been earlier in the year in the *Palazzo Reale* performance in Naples.

It is striking just how much of the *San Carlo* version is derived from the two earlier versions. The London and Florence versions, while very different from each other, both seem to have much more internally consistent approaches. In the *San Carlo* version, virtually all numbers come from the two previous versions, except the arias in Plutone and Proserpina’s scenes. The way in which numbers are taken liberally from both suggests a lack of time, or even a certain carelessness, which was not the case in London and Florence.

#### *Reception of the Naples version*

Just as with the two previous versions, the main reason behind the reworkings must have been to make the opera longer. It also made it possible to add arias and numbers that were more similar to what was normally performed at the theatre. However, Robinson points out that the opera was still very different to typical productions at the time:

If anyone were to ask: were these concessions to local taste sufficient to turn *Orfeo* into a typical S. Carlo production? the answer is surely no. *Orfeo* remained, even in its pasticcio form, quite distinct from most contemporary *drammi per musica*.<sup>94</sup>

Some of the features that he points out as very unusual are that not all singers sang in all three acts, the story is based on a myth, it incorporated dance into the action, and the chorus had a prominent role.<sup>95</sup> He goes on to say that the public does not seem to have been enthusiastic about it since *Orfeo* was not performed again in Naples during the eighteenth century, nor was anything as unusual performed again in the ensuing years.

In contrast to how the reworking of the opera was received in both London and Florence, it seems that it was not as successful in Naples. However, the following quotation from a letter from ambassador Caracciolo to Padre Martini in 1777 suggests that *Orfeo* was well liked in Italy as a whole, and the only of his operas to be successful there:

It is true that *Orfeo* was liked in Italy, whereas Gluck’s other operas were not liked anywhere, but *Orfeo* was welcomed favourably in our theatres for its novelty, for a certain gentleness, the choruses framed by the dances, etc., it was not Gluck’s style nor his music that made it successful, but the

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<sup>93</sup> Robinson, *Naples and Neapolitan Opera*, p. 67.

<sup>94</sup> Robinson, “The 1774 S. Carlo Version of *Orfeo*”, p. 403.

<sup>95</sup> Robinson, “The 1774 S. Carlo Version of *Orfeo*”, p. 403.

competition of various things supported the music and the style. In fact, throughout Italy and also in London, *Orfeo* was sung with the addition of *Ariette* by other authors.<sup>96</sup>

This is also a remarkable contemporary comment of the value in adding arias and “various things” to an opera, since Caracciolo suggests that it was those additions that helped make Gluck’s *Orfeo* successful in Italy.

### Tenducci: bringing *Orfeo* back to England

It seems that the great interest *Orfeo ed Euridice* received in the early 1770s eventually faded. Martina lists 19 different productions of *Orfeo* between 1770–1776, but only 6 productions between 1777–1784.<sup>97</sup> One of the performances of *Orfeo* between 1777–1784 was an English translation of the opera in Dublin 1784, in which Tenducci again sang the main role. Tenducci was also responsible for the adaptation of the opera into English.<sup>98</sup>

Tenducci returned to Britain in 1777 and in the preface to the printed libretto to the 1785 performance, Tenducci wrote about his strong impulse to come back to England. It is significant that, according to his own account, Tenducci seems to have been instrumental in the instigation of the performance in 1785:

Yielding then to the strong impulses of my inclination, I returned to England, where, in the course of many and various turns of fortune, my obligations to the Nobility and the Public in general being much increased, to shew upon my part that I am not at all ungrateful, I have resolved humbly to present to them that same Orpheus, which was so much applauded at Florence, by persons of the first rank, and of the purest and most refined taste in Music.

Many noble personages of both sexes, to whom I have communicated my design, have generously deigned to approve of it, which has animated me to prosecute it, and bring it forth with greater confidence.<sup>99</sup>

There is no evidence, however, that Tenducci played a part in adapting the opera for this production. In the libretto, the “additions and alterations” are attributed to *Signor A. Andrei*.<sup>100</sup> As we shall see, though, some of those additions and alterations come from the Florence and Naples performances and were presumably brought back to London by Tenducci himself.

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<sup>96</sup> Letter, 10 March 1777. Quoted in Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*, p. 86. The translation is my own. (“Egli è vero piacque in Italia l’Orfeo, siccome le alter di Gluck non sono piaciute in niun luogo, però fu accolto l’Orfeo favorevolmente nei nostri Teatri per la sua novità, per una certa gentilezza, i cori frameschiati al ballo ecc., non fu lo stile di Gluck né la sua musica, che fece il buon successo, ma il concorso di varie cose sostennero la musica e lo stile. Di fatti in tutta l’Italia ed anche in Londra si è cantata l’Orfeo con la giunta di Ariette d’altro autore.”).

<sup>97</sup> Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*, pp. 363–369.

<sup>98</sup> Price, Milhous, and Hume, *Italian Opera in Late Eighteenth-Century London*, p. 331.

<sup>99</sup> *Orpheus and Eurydice* (London, 1785), p. 4.

<sup>100</sup> *Orpheus and Eurydice* (London, 1785), p. 2.

## London (1785): “A Concert of Ancient Music”

Just as Guadagni had written a preface to the opera in the original London production, there is an extensive preface written by Tenducci in the printed libretto for the 1785 performance of *Orfeo ed Euridice* in London. Because of this, we know of some of the reasoning behind the production, at least as it was presented to the public. It is striking how different the approach to performing and reworking the opera was 15 years after it was first premiered in London.

Works in themselves truly excellent, after the lapse of some years, come to be regarded anew with favourable attention, even by Fashion itself. Hence it is that their Britannic majesties, and so great a number of noble personages, take a delight in hearing frequently a concert of Ancient Music. In the Opera of Orpheus, which I have the honour to present, besides the Music of Gluck, of Bach and of some other famous masters, there are introduced several pieces by the immortal Handel, which I hope will delight you much more than many musical compositions which have nothing new but the name. If things are looked at with an attentive and discerning eye, many, many of them that are produced as new, are so only in some external changes. Varying a little the form of things, is sufficient to gain them the name of novelties. New I shall certainly appear to you upon the stage, where I am resolved to do all that I possibly can to please you.<sup>101</sup>

### *Concerts of Ancient Music in 1780s London*

*Orfeo* was now a much older work, but its age was also one of its selling points. As William Weber has described in *The Rise of Musical Classics in Eighteenth-Century England*, by the 1780s it had become common with public concerts with older music in London through the “Concert of Antient music”. A large part of the repertory was music by Handel, but also instrumental and vocal music by other composers, which had to be at least twenty years old. While some opera arias were performed, it was almost exclusively *opera seria* arias, and there was very little or no *opera buffa* or reform opera in the concerts.<sup>102</sup> Weber suggests that this phenomenon was able to develop in concerts and was adopted in the opera repertoire only much later, because opera tended to reflect contemporary aristocratic tastes. He claims that “In England no such repertory came about, because the nobility replaced the monarch as patron of opera and thereby kept repertory at the King’s Theatre up to date”.<sup>103</sup> This might be true if one looks at the repertory at the King’s theatre in the latter half of the century as a whole, but the 1785 performance of *Orfeo* is nevertheless a clear example of an attempt to present a whole opera in the spirit of the concerts of ancient music.

Despite its age, or thanks to it, *Orfeo* seems to have been a relative success in London this year. With 10 performances in 1785, it was the opera with the greatest number of performances that season at the King’s theatre.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> *Orpheus and Eurydice* (London, 1785), p. 4–5.

<sup>102</sup> William Weber, *The Rise of Musical Classics in Eighteenth-Century England: A Study in Canon, Ritual, and Ideology* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 168–197.

<sup>103</sup> Weber, *The Rise of Musical Classics in Eighteenth-Century England*, p. 9.

<sup>104</sup> Petty, *Italian Opera in London*, p. 261.

*How the opera was changed in London: fewer additions, more Handel*

One of the consequences of this antiquarian approach was a production that was comparably close to the original. Among the reworkings discussed so far, the London 1785 version has the least additions. There are no added characters and really only one added scene, even though there are also some cuts, substitutions, and additions to the existing scenes. Additions were now made not only to lengthen the opera but also to showcase arias by “famous masters” such as Handel and J.C. Bach. The result might be similar—a longer performance with arias and music from various sources alongside Gluck’s original—but the reasoning behind it was quite different and it shows the changing attitudes to *Orfeo* in particular as well as to older music in general.

The only knowledge we have of the structure and content of the 1785 performance comes from the printed libretto, since no manuscript or printed arias have survived. In the study of the libretto I have assumed that the arias or recitatives that have lyrics that correspond to a previous version are the same as in those previous versions, for example that “La legge accetto” in the 1785 performance was the same aria as in Florence and Naples *San Carlo*. It is of course possible that some of the lyrics from earlier versions received new music but considering that one of the intentions of the performance was to exhibit ancient music, that is unlikely. Consequently, I also assume that all of the original lyrics by Calzabigi retained Gluck’s music. Since Tenducci sang the role of Orfeo as a soprano castrato, Gluck’s music must have been from the Parma version, just as in Florence and Naples.

Table 7. The performance in London (1785). Additions and substitutions in bold.

<i>London 1785</i>	<i>Recitative</i>	<i>Aria</i>	<i>First appeared in</i>
Act 1: Scene 1		Ah se intorno	
	Basta, basta		
		[Ballo]	
		Ah se intorno	
Scene 2		Cerco il mio ben	
	Numi barbari numi		
	T'assiste amore		
		Gli sguardi trattieni	
	Che disse! Che ascoltai!		
		<b>La legge accetto</b>	<b>Florence 1771</b>
Scene 3		Chi mai dell'Erebo	
		[Ballo]	
		Chi mai dell'Erebo	
		Deh placatevi	
		Misero giovine	
		Men tiranne	

		Ah! Quale incognito	
Act 2: Scene 1		[Ballo]	
		<b>Chiari fonti</b>	<b>London 1770</b>
		[Ballo]	
	<b>Deh lasciatemi in pace</b>		<b>London 1770</b>
		<b>Se a un casto petto</b>	<b>New</b>
	Che puro ciel		
		<b>Guidatemi pietose</b>	<b>New</b>
		Vieni a' regni	
		<b>Alme belle se pietate</b>	<b>New</b>
		Torna o bella	
Act 3: Scene 1	Vieni, siegui i miei passi		
		<b>Laschia pur l'ingiusto affetto</b>	<b>Florence 1771</b>
	Qual vita è questa mai		
		Che fiero momento	
	Ecco un nuovo tormento		
		Che farò senza Euridice?	
	Mà finischa		
	Orfeo che fai?		
Scene 2		Trionfi amore	

The 1785 performance opens with the original scene “Ah se intorno” and the first part of the opera reflects the original, except that there is just one verse of Orfeo’s “Cerco il mio ben”. This verse was cut from the 1770 and 1771 versions, which instead included only the other two of the three verses of Gluck’s original.<sup>105</sup>

The first important change is the inclusion of the aria “La legge accetto” after “Che disse”. The aria appeared in the same place as in Florence and *San Carlo*. In the following underworld scene, there is another cut. “Mille pene” and “Ah qual incognito” have been left out. There was a similar cut in this scene in London 1770, but not in Florence or Naples. Perhaps due to these cuts, the acts have been rearranged so that the first act also includes the underworld scene. There are explanations to the ballets in the libretto, and according to this, Pluto and the furies appear in the *ballo* in the underworld scene, so Pluto as a character still makes an appearance in this version even though he does not have a singing role.<sup>106</sup>

<sup>105</sup> Price, Milhous, and Hume seem confused about this: “They retrieved Orfeo’s ‘Cerco il mio ben’ [...] Insertions by Bach and Guglielmi were cut (for example, ‘Piango il mio ben così’ in Act I, Scene ii)”. See Price, Milhous, and Hume, *Italian Opera in Late Eighteenth-Century London*, p. 331.

<sup>106</sup> *Orpheus and Eurydice* (London, 1785), p. 10.

The second act is set exclusively in the Elysian fields and the most extensive changes appear in this act. It starts with a ballet for the blessed spirits, or a “dance of happy ghosts”, so here too the characters of the earlier London version reappears but only in the ballet.<sup>107</sup> This is followed by “Chiari fonti”, another *ballo*, and the recitative “Deh lasciatemi”. Both “Chiari fonti” and “Deh lasciatemi” appear in all the four versions discussed here. After this come the new features of this version. One aria for Euridice and chorus “Se a un casto petto”, a shortened version of “Che puro ciel”, and two for Orfeo that precede the choruses “Vieni ai regni” and “Torna o bella” respectively. Adriana Ferrarese who sang the part of Euridice received accolades for “Se a un casto petto” in this review which also describes how the chorus and solo singing interacted in this number:

[...] both as to the acting and singing part she is truly above encomium. She was on the second representation of this Opera, as she had been on the first, unanimously and most deservedly encored in the aria of the second act, Se a un casto petto. This song derives peculiar merit from the excellent delivery, and from the chorus joining in the repetition of the Burthen, D’Ogni, Diletto, &c.<sup>108</sup>

The music of the performance is credited to Gluck, Bach, and Handel. It is never specified, however, which pieces are by which composer, so it is not clear which arias were by Handel. It is most likely that at least one of the additions in the second act were Handel arias, but with a new text. “Se a un casto petto” with its chorus sections is perhaps the most likely candidate, but one or both of Orfeo’s arias “Guidatemi pietose” and “Alme belle se pietate” could also be Handel arias. Martina suggests that it is “Se a un casto petto” which is by Handel, whereas Price, Milhous, and Hume suggest that it is “Guidatemi pietose” but none of them provide any reasons for those guesses.<sup>109</sup>

In the third act, the duet “Lascia pur l’ingiusto affetto” substitutes “Vieni appaga” just as it had done in Florence and Naples. This is the only change in the third act.

Even though Tenducci’s involvement in the adaptation of the opera in 1785 is uncertain, the inclusion of “La legge accetto” and “Lascia pur l’ingiusto affetto” must be connected to his singing the main role. These numbers appear in Florence 1771 and *San Carlo* 1774, but in no other *Orfeo* versions as far as I have seen. They are intimately associated with Tenducci. Another interesting correlation between Florence, *San Carlo*, and London (1785), is the presence of music by Handel. In Florence and Naples this was not advertised in the libretti, or noted in the scores, and was just deemed appropriate by whoever compiled the reworking.

## Gluck’s Paris reworking and other performances of *Orfeo ed Euridice* in the early 1770s

The reworkings of *Orfeo ed Euridice* discussed so far were not the only productions of the opera in the 1770s and 1780s. Neither are they representative of all the ways in which the opera was

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<sup>107</sup> *Orpheus and Eurydice* (London, 1785), p. 29.

<sup>108</sup> 16 May 1785. Quoted in Petty, *Italian Opera in London*, p. 269.

<sup>109</sup> Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*, p. 207; Price, Milhous, and Hume, *Italian Opera in Late Eighteenth-Century London*, p. 333.

performed. These reworkings exhibit significant changes to the original, but this was not always the case. There are a number of examples of *Orfeo* being performed in versions close to the original, either in its Vienna or Parma version. In Bologna 1771, *Orfeo* was performed in its Parma version at the public opera house *Teatro Comunale*.<sup>110</sup> In Stockholm 1773, the opera was performed with a Swedish translation and with the role of Orfeo adapted for tenor, but the structure and the music were the same as the original Vienna version.<sup>111</sup> At *Palazzo Reale* in Naples 1774, a few months before the *San Carlo* version, the opera was performed in the Parma version, but with some substitutions in the final act.<sup>112</sup> In London 1773, there were two performances of the opera “altered as it was originally performed at Vienna”.<sup>113</sup>

However, the most famous reworking of *Orfeo ed Euridice* in the 1770s is of course Gluck’s own adaptation of the opera for Paris in 1774.<sup>114</sup> The changes that Gluck made to the opera in Paris put the reworkings in London, Florence, and Naples in perspective. Even when Gluck made quite radical changes to the opera in his Paris version, they are still modest in comparison. Nevertheless, there are also some similarities to where and how new music was added. Gluck’s additions often serve similar dramatic purposes as the additions in London, Florence, and Naples.

When discussing the changes made to *Orfeo* in Paris, Patricia Howard points out that the main reason for changing the opera was to make it longer and more suitable to a public opera house, just as we have seen in the other versions: “Gluck’s principal task in creating *Orphée* was to transform a short and intimate court opera—almost a chamber opera—into a full-length entertainment for a public opera house. The changes in scale between *Orfeo* and *Orphée* all derive from this necessity”.<sup>115</sup>

In the production of *Orphée et Eurydice*, the lyrics were translated into French and the lead role of Orphée was transposed in order to fit the range of the haute-tenor Joseph Le Gros. Transposing the music in order to fit new singers had a precedence in Gluck’s Parma version, as well as in the Stockholm 1773 performances.

If the Paris version is compared only to the Vienna and the Parma versions, the additions and changes in Paris may seem big, but compared to the London, Florence, and Naples versions, the changes are in fact quite modest. Gluck does not add any new characters to the opera, but the added arias are given to the existing characters. There is only one new aria for each of the three characters. There are some new recitatives, but the majority of the additions are ballets. There are new dances in the first scene, a dance for the furies at the end of the underworld scene, new dances

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<sup>110</sup> Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*, pp. 88–95.

<sup>111</sup> Kathleen Kuzmick Hansell, “Gluck’s ‘Orpheus och Euridice’ in Stockholm: Performance Practices on the Way from ‘Orfeo’ to ‘Orphée’ 1773–1786”, *Gustavian Opera: an Interdisciplinary Reader in Swedish Opera, Dance and Theatre 1771–1809*, ed. Inger Mattsson (Stockholm, 1991), pp. 258–260.

<sup>112</sup> Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*, pp. 103–108.

<sup>113</sup> Howard, “For the English”.

<sup>114</sup> *Orphée et Eurydice, Tragédie, Opera en trois Actes* (Paris, 1774).

<sup>115</sup> Howard, *Cambridge Opera Handbooks*, p. 68.

in the Elysian fields, and more dances at the end of the opera. This was an accommodation for the French audience which expected plenty dance numbers at the opera, but ballets also interfere less with the drama, which means that Gluck might have preferred added ballets to arias.

There is one similarity between the Paris version and the reworkings for London, Naples, and Florence, and that is where in the drama there are added scenes. There are two added scenes in the Paris version. The first added scene comes at the end of the first act. This is where Amour gives Orphée the offer to visit the underworld and bring back Euridice. In this scene, Amour sings “Soumis au silence”, i.e. “Gli sguardi trattieni” in the original Italian, as well as a new aria called “Si les deux”. The act ends with Orphée’s aria “L’espoir renaît”. Both new arias are *bravura* arias in contrast to the other music of the opera. “L’espoir renaît” comes in the same place as “La legge accetto” in Florence, Naples, and London (1785). The second added scene is in the Elysian fields, where there are some added dances and an aria for Euridice and chorus in the Elysian fields, “Cet asile aimable”. Here too, Bach added “Chiari fonti” for Euridice which was retained in all the versions in London, Florence, and Naples. Perhaps these two places are well suited for additions from a dramatic point of view, because in the original, Orfeo does not get a chance to express his emotions for the sudden turn of events, but only a recitative, and Euridice has no chance to express her emotions in the Elysian fields, and only gets to sing in the third act.

A knowledge of the London, Florence and Naples reworkings of *Orfeo* is not only relevant as part of the reception of the opera, or as expressions of contemporary opera culture, but also sheds light on the various features of Gluck’s own revisions. The tension that he experienced between the reform opera ideals that he had helped realise, and the demands and expectations of the public opera house, was probably even more acute for Gluck than in the productions of the opera elsewhere. The types of changes he made show his awareness both of the opera conventions in Paris, but also an integrity in his approach to reworking his opera.

## Conclusion

The productions of *Orfeo ed Euridice* in London (1770 and 1785), Florence (1771), and Naples *San Carlo* (1774) exhibit four quite different approaches to reworking the opera, even though they are connected. All four seem concerned with the short length of the original. This means that the type of changes are generally additions of new arias and numbers, as well as new characters or scenes. Music that is added are by composers other than Gluck, and many of the additions are in a more virtuoso style than Gluck’s music, although some additions are in an even older style than Gluck’s own, such as the music by Handel or Riccardo Broschi. As outlined above, however, each of these versions have their own particular approach to reworking the opera. In London 1770, the additions were clearly indicated and in a contrasting style to Gluck’s music. In Florence 1771, there seems to have been an attempt to imitate Gluck and Calzabigi’s dramatic structure. The added music is in different styles but there is an attempt to imitate the style of the original as well, which will be discussed in the next chapter. In Naples *San Carlo* 1774, they took elements of both the previous

versions, for an even longer and more varied mixture of music. In London 1785, the intention was to put on an opera in the style of the concerts of ancient music and present a work that was by then more than 20 years old.

How these performances are connected has not previously been clear, and Tenducci's role has been overlooked. I hope to have been able to show that there are obvious links between these four reworkings of *Orfeo ed Euridice*, and that Tenducci had more agency in their formation than what has previously been acknowledged. Furthermore, I have shown that even though these performances of *Orfeo* may look similar on the surface, with their *pasticcio*-style additions to the original opera, there is much more nuance and diversity in the approach and intention behind these different reworkings. This shows that there were many ways to solve the problem of the length of the opera, and in all of these versions there was a negotiation between the reform ideals and the fame of the opera on one hand and the operatic conventions and norms of the public opera house on the other.

## 2. The contrasting attitudes to musical style and dramatic structure in London 1770 and Florence 1771

As shown in the previous chapter, the London, Florence and Naples performances of *Orfeo ed Euridice* exhibit quite different approaches to reworking the opera. This chapter presents a closer examination of the musical style and the dramaturgy of two scenes from the first acts of *Orfeo* in London 1770 and in Florence 1771. These two scenes clearly showcase the two different solutions to reworking and lengthening the opera in London and Florence. In London, new characters and new scenes are added outside of the main plot, in a distinctly different style to Gluck's music and dramatic structure. In Florence, on the other hand, the added arias and scenes remain more closely within the main plot and include arias for the main characters. The scenes imitate the structure of Gluck's original, and there is an attempt to imitate Gluck's musical style.

The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate the stylistic differences between Gluck's music and the additions, as well as the different stylistic choices of the two reworkings and how they play out in individual arias. In *Style and Music*, Leonard Meyer argues that musical style, or stylistic development, "[...] results from a series of choices made within some set of constraints".<sup>116</sup> Florence (1771) and London (1770) exemplify significantly different choices being made within a similar set of constraints, i.e. the need to make the opera longer and with more virtuoso pieces. This chapter, then, compares these choices in order to suggest what options were available to someone reworking the opera in the early 1770s.

There is to my knowledge no previous music analysis of the style and dramatic structure of the *Orfeo* reworkings in London, Florence, or Naples. Alessandra Martina makes some comments about style and the form of individual arias in the reworkings she discusses, but she does not go into detail about the music.<sup>117</sup> Michael Robinson and Ernest Warburton discuss style, but only in relation to Naples *San Carlo* (1774).<sup>118</sup> Among music that was added to *Orfeo* in these performances, Guadagni's version of the arioso "Men tiranne" in London has received the most detailed discussion of style and dramaturgy. The song appears in *The Favourite Songs of the opera Orfeo* and seems to have substituted Gluck's arioso in the later performances of the opera in London in 1770 and 1771.<sup>119</sup> Daniel Hertz points out the weaknesses of this aria in his article "Orfeo ed Euridice", such as the "awkward" connections between phrases and the "metric pattern of alternating weak and strong measures".<sup>120</sup> Further he notes that "What Guadagni's little insert Air does to the musical drama is horrible to contemplate", since it disrupts the key scheme of the underworld scene by inserting F major into the scene, a key that otherwise does not appear until the Elysian fields

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<sup>116</sup> Leonard Meyer, *Style and Music* (Philadelphia, 1989), p. 3.

<sup>117</sup> Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*.

<sup>118</sup> Robinson, "The 1774 S. Carlo Version of Gluck's *Orfeo*"; Robinson, *Naples and Neapolitan opera*; Warburton, *The Collected Works of Johann Christian Bach: Vol. 11*.

<sup>119</sup> Warburton, *The Collected Works of Johann Christian Bach, Vol. 9*, p. xii.

<sup>120</sup> Daniel Hertz, "Orfeo ed Euridice: Some Criticisms, Revisions and Stage-Realizations during Gluck's Lifetime", *Chigiana* 29-30 (1972-73), p. 392.

scene: “This most carefully calculated use of light and shade, this chiaroscuro, is the single most impressive effect in the whole opera. No one before Gluck used tone painting on so grand a scale, so vast a canvas.”<sup>121</sup>

In response to Hertz, Patricia Howard defends the aria’s merits and downplays the centrality of the key scheme in the scene:

Heartz’s criticism seems to me to be wrong-footed. Guadagni’s phrase structure plays elegantly with six-bar phrases, a common metrical unit of the galant style [...] It is difficult, however, to justify labelling this [i.e. the changes of keys] as an act of vandalism when we contemplate the transpositions Gluck had already made in Parma to accommodate the title role to Millico’s soprano register. [...] In the changed context of the pasticcio score, Orfeo’s F major air has its own logic, defining the contrast between the minor-key furies and his own major-key world.<sup>122</sup>

A comparative music analysis of the music in London 1770 and in Florence 1771 has not been done before and provides insights into the craft of reworkings, as well as the operatic styles in the late eighteenth century.

## An overview of style and drama in opera in the second half of the eighteenth century

The focus in the analyses of this chapter is on the musical style and dramatic structure of the reworkings, compared to Gluck’s original. In this section there is an overview of the main features of Gluck’s style, as well as of the general trends in the music of *opera seria* in this period, in order to give a background to the arias and scenes discussed further down.

### *Gluck’s musical style*

In their respective studies of the emergence of the classical style in the latter half of the eighteenth century, Charles Rosen and Eric Weimer both point out that Gluck, although one of the most important composers of the mid-eighteenth century, was not representative of the mainstream musical styles at the time, as he was “highly individual”<sup>123</sup> and “aggressively individualistic.”<sup>124</sup> One reason for this was Gluck’s extensive travels and assimilation of several different national styles.<sup>125</sup>

In *Orfeo*, the individuality of Gluck’s style is most obvious in the dramatic structure. The following observations are based on my own analysis of the most salient stylistic features of *Orfeo* compared to *opera seria* and is not an exhaustive description of his Gluck’s musical style in general. Firstly, there is an unusual degree of continuity in the drama. The alternation of choruses, accompanied recitatives, and shorter arias creates a dramatic flow in larger scenes. This is further assisted by harmonic devices such as open-ended pieces which lead on to the next one. One example of this is the arioso “Mille pene” in act II which ends on the dominant in order to lead

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<sup>121</sup> Hertz, “Orfeo ed Euridice”, p. 392.

<sup>122</sup> Howard, *The Modern Castrato*, p. 140–141.

<sup>123</sup> Charles Rosen, *The Classical Style* (New York, 1972), p. 47.

<sup>124</sup> Weimer, *Opera Seria and the Evolution of Classical Style*, p. 4.

<sup>125</sup> Weimer, *Opera Seria and the Evolution of Classical Style*, p. 4.

onto the following chorus. Just as Hertz pointed out, the underworld scene, of which “Mille pene” is part, is in the Vienna score part of large-scale tonal planning which starts in C minor and Eb major. When Orfeo manages to persuade the furies, the music moves to F minor, first temporarily, and then finally ends in F minor. Secondly, Gluck’s dramatic style involves a blurring of the clear distinction of kinetic recitatives and static arias, which is so characteristic of Baroque *opera seria*. In *Orfeo*, recitatives can be contemplative and expressive of emotion, such as the “Euridice” recitatives which divide the verses in “Chiamo il mio ben”, or rich in word painting and orchestration, such as “Che puro ciel”. Something can happen on stage while there is a chorus that comments on the action, such as Orfeo’s grieving in the opening scene and exclaiming “Euridice” while the chorus mourns in the background. An aria, on the other hand, can influence or be part of the action, such as Orfeo’s appeasing of the furies in the underworld. Thirdly, Gluck and Calzabigi’s choice to limit the number of characters and avoid any subplots adds to the sense of dramatic coherence in *Orfeo*.

In Gluck’s musical style, there are a number of features that stand out in *Orfeo*. Firstly, his text setting is mostly syllabic. There is some melismatic ornamentation in the vocal line, but in comparison to most of the arias that will be looked at in this chapter, it is very modest or restrained and rarely longer than two or three notes on emphasised syllables, and there are no long coloratura passages. Secondly, Gluck liberally uses dissonances, minor inflections, diminished seventh chords, and Neapolitan sixths in a way that emphasises dramatic action, the emotional expression, or the ambivalence or resolve of one of the characters. An example of this is “Men tiranne”, where such dissonances and harmonies emphasise central words, and supports Orfeo’s plea to the furies in this moment. The vocal line includes non-harmonic notes such as accented lower appoggiaturas on the words “tiranne” and “sareste”, as well as dissonant melodic intervals. There is also a Neapolitan sixth chord on the final “cosa sia languir d’amor”. Thirdly, his texture does not resemble Baroque counterpoint, nor the “classical counterpoint” described further down. It tends to be homophonic with clearly defined roles for the melody, accompaniment, and bass. Yet, there are many examples of interlocking parts and phrases. In “Chiamo il mio ben” the melody starts in the violins, but after one bar, seemingly in the middle of the phrase, the vocal line joins the violins. The bass line overlaps the phrases of the melody by finishing phrases one bar later, when the melodic line starts the next phrase, which means the phrases are connected by the bass line.

#### *Musical style in opera seria*

By contrast, *opera seria* in the second half of the eighteenth century maintained the dramatic conventions of the first half of the century. In *Opera Seria and the Evolution of Classical Style: 1755–1772*, Eric Weimer describes the gradual decline of *opera seria* in the 1760s and 1770s: “The inevitable alternation of weighty da capo aria and secco recitative, the unrelieved earnestness and high moral tone assumed by all characters, the conventions of the exit aria and *lieto fine*—all

contributed to a slowness of pacing and plot which seemed increasingly artificial and stilted to an audience seeking greater vivacity, naturalness, and a variety of subject matter.”<sup>126</sup>

Nevertheless, Weimer argues that much musical stylistic developments took place within *opera seria* during this time: “[...] while the text and large-scale musical organization of opera seria retained much that seems archaic, the music itself—the arias first and foremost, but also the sinfonias, accompanied recitatives, and occasional ensembles—continued to evolve stylistically.”<sup>127</sup>

In his study of the operas of Johann Christian Bach, Niccolò Jommelli, and Johann Adolph Hasse, Weimer distinguishes three areas of stylistic development which herald the classical style: the continual expansion of the harmonic rhythm, the development of a new type of texture that he calls “classical counterpoint”, and the increasing use of independent wind instruments. The first two of these are particularly relevant for the analysis of the added music in the *Orfeo* reworkings.

The harmonic rhythm gradually expanded over the course of the eighteenth century. According to Weimer, this contributed to many of the crucial stylistic developments of the mid-eighteenth century.<sup>128</sup> One consequence of the expansion of harmonic rhythm over the course of the century was the appearance of the so-called “modified da capo aria”. In a traditional da capo aria, the A section starts and ends in the tonic, but as the harmonic rhythm slowed down, the A sections would become longer and longer. One solution to this was to end the A section in the dominant key. This type of modified da capo aria started to become more common in the 1760s and 1770s. The modified da capo is structurally similar to a sonata form: the A section ends in the dominant, the B section would include melodic and harmonic contrast and end in the dominant, and the return of the A section coincides with the return of the tonic and is modified in order to end in the tonic.<sup>129</sup> As we shall see, this type of aria is common in the added arias in *Orfeo* in London and Florence.

There were other stylistic developments in the mid-eighteenth century that were a result of the gradual expansion of harmonic rhythm. One of them was the so-called *Trommelbass*, where the bass line repeats the same pitch in a fast tempo. Another was the increased use of woodwinds, which thanks to a slower rhythm could be used more freely as a harmonic accompaniment, as well as having a more independent melodic role.<sup>130</sup> Another feature was that, while harmonies would last for several bars, even dissonant chords such as the cadential 6/4 chord could last for a full bar at climactic structural moments. Weimer writes that this was rare before the 1760s, but typical of J.C. Bach in his operas.<sup>131</sup>

Perhaps most important for this discussion is what Weimer identifies as the development of “classical counterpoint” around 1770. He borrows the term from Charles Rosen who recognises it

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<sup>126</sup> Weimer, *Opera Seria and the Evolution of Classical Style*, p. 1.

<sup>127</sup> Weimer, *Opera Seria and the Evolution of Classical Style*, p. 1.

<sup>128</sup> Weimer, *Opera Seria and the Evolution of Classical Style*, p. 27.

<sup>129</sup> Weimer, *Opera Seria and the Evolution of Classical Style*, p. 16-17.

<sup>130</sup> Weimer, *Opera Seria and the Evolution of Classical Style*, p. 27.

<sup>131</sup> Weimer, *Opera Seria and the Evolution of Classical Style*, p. 40.

in Haydn's music from around 1780.<sup>132</sup> Essentially, it is a type of texture in which the function of each part is clearly defined and unequal, i.e. melody, accompaniment and bass, but in which each part can move between different functions at different points in the piece. The second violin can play an accompaniment which turns into a melody. The viola can play the bass line which turns into an inner part. It is a lighter-sounding texture, which is also characterised by a bass line that may only play on metrically strong beats, as well as accompaniment figures that start on the offbeat, or are syncopated. Weimer argues that this new development of style happened around 1770 in several different places and genres more or less simultaneously and gives examples from Jommelli's and J.C. Bach's operas, and Haydn's early symphonies.<sup>133</sup> Weimer finds that in J.C. Bach's operas there is a clear difference in texture between *Carattaco* in 1767 and *Temistocle* in 1772.<sup>134</sup> J.C. Bach's arias for *Orfeo* in 1770, then, appear in the midst of this development.

### London (1770)

In the London reworking of *Orfeo* in 1770, there are contrasts in musical style, not just between Gluck's music and the additions, but also between the additions themselves. The aesthetic and stylistic choice made in putting together this production was one of contrast and diversity. In this section, I discuss the two arias in the first scene, "Non è ver" and "Contenta assai", their different styles, and what they tell us about the approach of the J.C. Bach and Guglielmi to reworking *Orfeo*.

The opening scene in the London version was an added scene for the two new characters Eagro, Orfeo's father, and Egina, Euridice's sister. In the scene, Eagro tries to console Egina who is grieving by Euridice's tomb. Rather than being an integral part of the drama, it introduces the plot by describing that Euridice has died and how Orfeo is out of himself with grief.

The scene has a traditional dramatic structure where recitatives and arias are clearly differentiated. The interaction between the two characters and their comments about Orfeo and Euridice is limited to the recitatives, where we learn more about the characters and the story, whereas both arias are "generic" exit arias that could be used in a number of different operas. It is no understatement to say that the structure of this scene is very different to Gluck's dramatic structure. It is in many ways a typical example of the type of dramaturgy that Gluck and Calzabigi tried to reform. The clear division between recitative and aria, the long arias that do not contribute to the action, the long *ritornelli*, and the virtuoso coloraturas, were all in stark contrast to the style and the form of *Orfeo*. In this scene, then, there is no attempt at all to imitate or accommodate the original opera.

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<sup>132</sup> Weimer, *Opera Seria and the Evolution of Classical Style*, p.47.

<sup>133</sup> Weimer, *Opera Seria and the Evolution of Classical Style*, pp. 45–94.

<sup>134</sup> Weimer, *Opera Seria and the Evolution of Classical Style*, p. 70.

Table 8. The first scene in London (1770)

Italian lyrics	Original translation in the printed libretto
Scena 1	Scene 1
<i>Ameno solitario Boschetto d'Allori e Cipressi, che circondano un piccolo piano, ov' è la Tomba di Euridice.</i>	<i>A delightful solitary grove of laurel and cypress-trees, surrounding a little plain, upon which stands the tomb of Eurydice.</i>
<i>Eagro ed Egina si allontanano lentamente dalla Tomba. Guardie, e Donzelle.</i>	<i>Eagrus and Egina slowly withdrawing from the tomb. Guards, and Damsels</i>
<p><i>Ea[gro].</i> È giusto il tuo dolor. Ma deggio ognora  Donna real, trovarti in queste sedi  E di morte e di pianto,  In questo orrore, a questa Tomba accanto?  <i>Eg[ina].</i> Da questa Urna onorata  Più non mi lice allontanarmi. In pace  Lascia Egina infelice.  Al cenere diletto d'Euridice  Vicina vo' spirar. <i>Ea[gro].</i> Ah, non parlarmi  Più d'un funesto mal, che non avendo  Un riparo per no, sempre più acerbi  Si rende all'alma nostra. Anch'io d'Orfeo  Con paterna afflizion le smanie proco  In esso più non trovo  Di sua Lira divina, e del suo canto  I ben noti prodigi. Altro pensiero  Ora non ha, non cura,  Che il pensier d'Euridice. A giove,  Al crudo Rè delle Ombre, ognor la chiede  In guisa tal, che crede,  Che possa nell'Averno e in Radamanto  Pietà trovar, a lor dispetto, il pianto.  Ma qual'util per lui? Già è divenuta  Euridice sua sposa  Eterna preda degli eterni affanni.  Tregua adunque al dolor. <i>Eg[ina].</i> Prence, t'inganni.  Vo', che il mio duol presente esempio sia  Di germana amistà. Vo', che si sappia  Che in due natura ci distinse, ed una  Di due fece la fè. <i>Ea[gro].</i> Non più. M'opprime  Meraviglia e pietade. Ip porto altrove  Il mio sorpreso affetto  Frà tanto dubbio a sospirar costretto.</p>	<p><i>Ea[grus].</i> Just is thy grief; but I am never, O royal  maid, to see thee, unless when seated near  this awful tomb, you add new horrors to the gloomy  scene, and make the abode of death more dismal by  your wailings?  <i>Eg[ina].</i> From this much honour'd urn, I never can depart.  Leave t'unfortunate Egina to indulge her grief  and until death lament the ashes of Euridice.  <i>Ea[grus].</i> No more, no more; Oh! talk not to me of the  fatal story. Your griefs renew my sorrow for a  loss, which cannot be repair'd. my son too, Or-  pheus – Oh! dire remembrance! What do I fell for  him? – His lyre unstrung, and that sweet voice which  sooth'd my every care, dumb with distraction–Eu-  rydice alone employs his thoughts–Pale gried and  sallow care attend his steps, and desperation marks  him for her own–Cruel Jove, relentless Pluto, re-  store to him Eurydice. But what avail or tears,  or supplications? Eurydice has cross'd the Stygian  flood, and cannot be recall's–Cease then, fair  maid, your unavailing tears, nor urge the Gods too  far. <i>Eg[ina].</i> No, Prince, it cannot be; I would  have my present grief become a lasting instance of a  sister's friendship; I would have it known, that tho'  nature form'd us two, yet friendship made us one.  <i>Ea[grus].</i> No more. Astonishment and pity oppress me by  turns. I will carry elsewhere my amazed tender-  ness, forced to sigh as I am amidst so many doubts.</p>
<p>Non è vero il dir talora,  Che può sempre un'alma forte  Frà gli sdegni della sorte  La sua calma conservar.</p>	<p>It is not always possible for even a magnanimous  soul to preserve its tranquillity amidst  the furious struggles of cruel Fate.</p>
<p>Se ogni esempio il male avvanza  Non ha forza la costanza  Ogni affetto a superar</p>	<p>When disasters reach beyond the bounds of  our strength, our constancy is unable to  withstand the passions that oppress our minds.</p>
<i>Parte colle Guardie</i>	<i>Exit with Guards</i>
<p><i>Eg[ina].</i> Delizia de' viventi,  O divina Amistà! Se l'innocenza  Regnasse ancor nel mondo, ancor saresti,  Ne' suoi primieri onori,  Il più dolce piacer de' nostri cori.  Tu quella sei, che il mio dolor affidi:  Quella sei tu, che qui mi fermi e guidi.  Ecco la Tomba là, dove riposa  Dell'estinta germana il cener caro.</p>	<p><i>Eg[ina].</i> O divine friendship, light of the living! if inno-  cence still prevailed in the world, thou would'st, as  the sweetest pleasure of which life is susceptible, be  promoted to the foremost ranks of honour. 'Tis  thou that assuagest my griefs; 'tis thou that fixest  me here, and guidest my steps. Behold yonder tomb,  wherein li the dear ashes of my deceased sister. There  will I spend the remainder of my days in complaints</p>

Ecco, ove in pianto amaro Il resto de' miei dì finir vogl'io. Deh, Numi, secondate il voto mio.	and mourning. Ye divine Powers, that protect the just, be propitious to my vows!
Contenta assai son'io se dell'affanno mio Ritrovo in'alma sola Che senta almen pietà.  Dell'amistà, che ho in seno Parli a ragione appieno Nel giudicar sincera Ogni lontana età  <i>Parte colle Don[<sup>zelle</sup>].</i>	Oh, that I could meet with a sympathizing soul that would be moved with pity at the excess of my pangs.  Let remotest posterity, righteous in its judgments, commemorate and praise the sincere friendship I bear in my bosom.  <i>Exit with Damsels.</i>

### *The recitatives*

Since no full score has survived from the London versions of *Orfeo*, we do not know how the recitatives in this scene were performed. Neither have the recitatives of this version received any attention in previous literature. Nevertheless, it is possible to draw some conclusions about the recitatives from the full scores of the Florence and Naples *San Carlo* versions. One possibility is that the recitatives in this scene were *secco* recitatives, since they are *secco* in the parallel first scene in Naples *San Carlo*. This scene is not identical to the first scene in London, but it involves Eagro and the aria “Non è ver”, so it was likely based on the London score.

However, there are indications that some of the other added recitatives in London were accompanied. Two of the recitatives in the Elysian fields scene, “Deh, lasciatemi in pace” and “Non temete, ombre”, reappear in Florence and Naples with identical lyrics and with accompaniment, which makes it likely that these recitatives were borrowed from the London version. It is not impossible, then, that one or both of the recitatives were accompanied in this scene. Perhaps the first recitative, on which the Naples version was based, was *secco*, whereas the second recitative, which is a more pathetic monologue, was accompanied.

Regardless of whether the recitatives were *secco* or accompanied, they have a function within the structure that was typical to *opera seria*.

### *“Non è ver” by Johann Christian Bach*

The first aria in the London version was the tenor aria “Non è ver” (Appendix 2). This is the only aria for the character Eagro in the original London version, and the only aria for the singer *Signor Bianchi* in the opera. The aria is buoyant, and the repeated eighth-note bass line and the sixteenth-note scale runs in the string drives the music forwards. It is a lively opening of the opera, but a world apart from the solemn opening chorus of Gluck’s original.

The structure of “Non è ver” is that of a modified da capo aria, and it has some interesting structural features. The aria starts with a 23-bars long *ritornello* where two themes are introduced. The subsequent A section consists of two parts, where the first theme from the *ritornello* is used in

the first part and the second theme in the second part. The first part includes the first theme and the whole first stanza of the text and ends with a V/V caesura. The second part of the A section, after the caesura, comprises the second theme and the last three lines of the first stanza. The second part of the A section ends in the dominant key. The division of the A sections into two parts and two themes, separated by a V/V caesura, makes this aria resemble a sonata form very closely. At the end of the short B section there is a divergence between the recapitulation of the text and that of the tonic and the main theme. The first line of the aria returns already at the end of the B section, before the arrival of the tonic. This plays with the structure of the da capo aria and overlaps the end of the B section, and the return of the A section. In the repetition of the A section, the ending is changed in order to finish in the tonic. At the end, there are further repetitions of the final lines of the text and a four-bar *coda*.

There are a number of features which sets this aria apart from Gluck's musical style, not just on the structural level. These features suggest a typical virtuoso style: the long *ritornello*, contrasts between forte and piano sections, a virtuoso sixteenth-note accompaniment in the violins, word repetitions, and long coloraturas. The style of this aria most closely corresponds to what Weimer describes as J.C. Bach's musical style before 1770.<sup>135</sup> The continuous repeated eighth notes in the bass, i.e. the *Trommelbass*, is the most distinctive feature of this style, as well as the fixed functions of each individual part. However, there are also features that suggest newer stylistic developments. One of them is the cadential 6/4 chord that lasts a full bar at the end of the first A section. There are also some examples of classical counterpoint. Instead of being a feature of the aria as a whole, Bach uses this type of texture as a contrast at structurally significant points, such as at the end of the *ritornello* and the A section, as well as in the B section. The first instance is in the closing section of the *ritornello* and the corresponding second part the A section. Here, the bass line is no longer continuous eighth notes and instead consists of every other quarter note, and the oboes and horns have interlocking parts. At the end of the A section, there are syncopations in the violin accompaniment, another feature of the new type of texture that evolved at this time, according to Weimer.<sup>136</sup> The B section most clearly displays what could be described as classical counterpoint. There is an interlocking, or even imitative texture, where violins and oboes alternate with the violas and basses. The vocal line is mostly syllabic, which also adds to the sense of contrast between the A section and the B section.

In *Opera Seria and the Evolution of Classical Style*, Weimer shows how J.C. Bach in his settings of aria texts tended to prioritise the musical structure and form of the aria over the syntax of the text, especially in the repetition of whole phrases.<sup>137</sup> In "Non è ver", this can be seen in the repetition of the second half of the first stanza in the second part of the A section, where the repetition of this segment of text coincides with the second theme. This is very different to Gluck, who in *Orfeo*

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<sup>135</sup> Weimer, *Opera Seria and the Evolution of Classical Style*, p. 70.

<sup>136</sup> Weimer, *Opera Seria and the Evolution of Classical Style*, p. 55–56.

<sup>137</sup> Weimer, *Opera Seria and the Evolution of Classical Style*, p. 18–20.

used word repetition and melismas sparingly, and most often in order to emphasise important words. The structure of individual ariosi is most often subservient to the structure of the whole scene. There are some individual numbers in *Orfeo*, such as “Che fiero momento” and “Che farò senza Euridice” in the third act, but other songs are part of a larger block of music, such as “Chiamo il mio ben”, where the three verses are interpolated by recitatives, or “Mille pene” and “Men tiranne” in the second act which start in one key and ends in another as Orfeo tries to appease the furies. The structure of individual arias in Gluck’s music then, is often part of the long-term planning and dramatic effect of the whole scene, whereas Bach’s “Non è ver”, and other arias in the London version, are stand-alone pieces with an internal structural rhetoric, i.e. two themes with opposing tonalities, the contrast and development in the B section, and the reconciliation of the two themes at the end of the aria.

*“Contenta assai” by Pietro Alessandro Guglielmi*

The second aria in this scene, “Contenta assai” (Appendix 3), was written by Pietro Alessandro Guglielmi. Guglielmi contributed two arias for his wife Lelia Acchiappati, *Signora* Guglielmi, in the London version of *Orfeo*. The other one is “Sotto un bel ciel sereno”, an aria for a happy ghost, which can be found in the Elysian fields scene in the second act.

Not only is there a great contrast between Gluck’s music and the additions in the London version, but the two additions in the first scene by Bach and Guglielmi are also very different to each other. The difference between them might be a result of the composers’ individual styles, as well as the different types of arias. Guglielmi’s aria is in a slower tempo, ornamented, and with some chromaticism, whereas Bach’s aria is a *bravura* aria.

Just as Bach’s aria above, and in contrast to most of Gluck’s music, this is a free-standing and structurally independent aria. The structure is a type of binary form, rather than a da capo aria. Perhaps as a consequence of its more pathetic and introspective topic, this aria features ambiguous tonalities and mediant relationships, which are introduced already in the opening bars of the *ritornello*. There are also more elements of classical counterpoint in this aria, compared to “Non è ver”, which suggests a somewhat more modern style.

Table 9. The structure of “Contenta assai”

[ <i>Ritornello</i> ]	A	B	A'	B'	A'
I	I	V	I	(III)	I

The *andantino* aria starts off with ambiguity. While the key of the aria is D major, the *ritornello* opens with an F# minor third in the violins and the violas. On the third beat of the bar, there is a B major chord with the third, D#, in the bass, leading to an E minor chord at the opening of the second bar. This ambiguity is only momentary, since there is an imperfect cadence in D major in bar 7 which strongly suggests the tonality. However, it is followed by a repetition of the uncertain

opening and it is not until bar 14 that there is a perfect authentic cadence in D major, almost at the end of the 16 bars-long *ritornello*. Throughout the *ritornello*, the violins have an ornamented *cantabile* melody, and the texture is relatively light. The violin melody is supported by sustained notes in the viola, as well as a bass line that is silent on the two first beats of the bar, then comes in on the upbeat and the first two beats of the following bar and then is silent again on the two first beats of the following bar. Further into the *ritornello*, the pattern of the bass line changes, but the frequent rests in the cello creates a lighter texture, and it means that the viola has a bass function when the cello is silent. This is typical for classical counterpoint. There is also a part for unspecified transposing wind instruments in D. They are probably clarinets, since they are specified in other of the added arias, such as “Chiari fonti”. For most of the aria, the wind instruments support the accompaniment at cadential points.

The A section, i.e. the first stanza of the aria, is essentially a shortened repetition of the *ritornello* where the vocal line joins the violins in the embellished melody of the opening. The A section of “Contenta assai” ends in the tonic, in contrast to the modified da capo aria of “Non è ver”, where the A section ends in the dominant.

Just like in “Non è ver”, the B section is set with a contrasting texture. In contrast to the embellished vocal line of the opening, here the song is syllabic until the end of the stanza, where there is a coloratura on the repetition of “lontana età”. In the accompaniment, the bass and viola have eighth notes on every beat and there is an off-beat accompaniment figure in upper strings, i.e. 1 eighth-note rest, 5 repeated eighth-notes. In the middle of the B section, there is a short *ritornello*, in which the wind instrument part is more independent than previously, with an off-beat accompaniment figure when the melody is silent. The B section ends with a short repetition of the two first lines of the stanza and a fermata on the dominant, before the return of the A section and the tonic.

The repetition of the second stanza (B') in the recapitulation is only 8 bars long. There is more chromaticism in the bass here, as well as an augmented sixth chord that precedes the F# major on the fermata just before return of A section. The F# major here suggests the dominant of B minor, the tonic parallel, but instead the F# is the pivot note back to the opening of the A section. In this way, Guglielmi uses the ambiguity of the F# at the beginning to get back from the F# at the end of the B' section.

In comparison to Bach's “Non è ver”, there are more elements of classical counterpoint throughout the aria. The texture in “Contenta assai” is lighter and more varied.

It is clear from this scene that Bach and Guglielmi were working with very different aesthetic ideals and musical styles compared to Gluck, and that there seems to be no attempt to reconciling them in the London version. Instead, they exist side by side, clearly differentiated, not only in the musical styles, but also in the clear separation of the scenes and of characters.

*The style and structure of other additions in London*

After the first scene, the remainder of the first act of the London version is close to Gluck's original. There are no additions or substitutions, but there is a cut and a restructuring of the cavatina "Chiamo il mio ben". After the two first arias of the first scene, there must have been a great contrast both in musical style and in dramatic conventions, even though some of those, such as the interaction between the chorus and the soloist may have been familiar to the audience from Handel's oratorios.

Structurally, among the other additions in the opera, some correspond to those of the opening scene, and some diverge. The next added scene is the opening scene of act II with a recitative and aria for Plutone. This scene looks similar to the first scene. It has a traditional structure: it opens with a recitative and is followed by an aria after which Plutone exits by ascending his throne. It is somewhat more woven into the main plot, but the Plutone is an added character which only appears in this scene, just as Eagro and Egina only appears in the first scene. The music of the aria "Per onor dell'offeso" does not appear in *The Favourite Songs*, so the music cannot be analysed. The two scenes in the Elysian fields are more different. There is a short section for chorus, and there is some evidence that the recitatives were accompanied, since they appear as accompanied recitatives in Florence and Naples. The music is in a similar style, however. They are modified da capo arias in a virtuoso style.

In the remainder of the music that appears in *The Favourite Songs*, Bach and Guglielmi's musical style, and especially their use of textures, is similar to the first scene. Bach's other arias have elements of classical counterpoint, but it is mostly used as a contrast in B sections, and the arias as a whole correspond to Bach's musical style in the 1760s. Guglielmi's other aria, "Sotto un bel ciel", on the other hand, displays a more varied texture. It is an *allegro moderato* aria with some *Trommelbass* passages, but it is also full of off-beat accompaniments, rests in the bass line, independent wind parts, and syncopation. The respective styles of the two arias of the first scene, then, are representative of the musical style of the two composers in the rest of the opera as well.

There were great contrasts in style between the additions in London 1770 and Gluck's music. This is true both in the dramatic structure of the added scenes, as well as the structure of individual arias. The choice here was not to maintain "unity, simplicity, and dramatic excellence",<sup>138</sup> to quote Burney, but perhaps to create contrast and variety, through keeping different styles side by side. The added arias in London are also examples of the evolving musical style in 1770s. Gluck's music, and Calzabigi's libretto, are very radical in terms of dramatic structure, but Bach's and Guglielmi's music was at the forefront of stylistic development.

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<sup>138</sup> Burney, *A General History of Music*, p. 496.

## Florence (1771)

Even though both versions include a number of additions, the Florence production of *Orfeo* is very different to the London version in 1770. In contrast to the London version, the added scenes in Florence replicate the structure of Gluck's original scenes. Most of the added arias are in a virtuosic modern operatic style, but one of the arias in the first act, "Placate quel core", seems to be an imitation of the style of Gluck's music. If the result of the choices made in London in 1770 was contrast and diversity, here the result is much more dramatically unified, even though there are still contrasts in the musical style. This is extraordinary. The Florence production is unique among early performances of *Orfeo* in its attempt to assimilate the style of the original. Presumably, this was also exceptional among operatic reworkings at large at this time, since very rarely were reform operas like *Orfeo* revived in public opera houses.

The Florence performance of *Orfeo* has received very little attention in general, and even less has been written about its unusual structural and stylistic features. Alessandra Martina discusses some of them in her dissertation but focuses on how Amore and Euridice are developed as characters, and the structure of individual arias.<sup>139</sup> The following analysis of the Stygian river scene in Florence, then, adds new understanding to this production and how differently *Orfeo* was adapted in Florence compared to London the year before.

### *The context and structure of the scene*

When looking through the first part of the score for the performance in Florence 1771, it is easy to assume that one was looking at the score for Gluck's Parma 1769 version. Up until Amore's aria "Gli sguardi trattieni", the music is entirely like Gluck's version for soprano castrato. The lyrics for "Gli sguardi trattieni" in the Florence version are Calzabigi's original, but the music is substituted. It is a five-part da capo aria in a virtuoso style, and Martina describes it as the most traditional piece in the production.<sup>140</sup> The new aria is followed by the original recitative "Che disse?", and the added aria "La legge accetto". These two new arias are not attributed to any composer in the printed libretto, or the manuscript score.<sup>141</sup> They follow the pattern for London that the added arias are in an operatic style very different to Gluck's style, but in contrast to the opening scene in London, the arias are part of the main plot and sung by the main characters. This is a place in the opera where Gluck himself introduced new arias in the Paris version.

After Orfeo's aria "La legge accetto", there is a change of scene. Here, Orfeo is at the bank of the Stygian river where he is trying to embark on a ship that will take him to the underworld. The

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<sup>139</sup> Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*, pp. 95–103.

<sup>140</sup> Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée du Gluck*, p. 100.

<sup>141</sup> Warburton, who assumes that all additions in Naples *San Carlo* were made by J.C. Bach, says of "La legge accetto" that it is "not very characteristic of Bach". See, Warburton, *The Collected Works of Johann Christian Bach: Vol. 11*, p. ix.

souls that are crossing the river try to stop him from joining them since he has not yet died. After a number of attempts he succeeds in persuading the souls to let him join them.

Table 10. The structure of Act I: Scene 3 in Florence 1771

<i>Act I: Scene 3</i>		
Sciolto ognun	Chorus	Bb
Fermate anime illustri	Recitative	Final cadence in Eb
No, che alcun col terreo vel	Chorus	Bb
Qual ripulsa è mai questa	Recitative	Final cadence in G minor
Placate quel cuore	Aria	Eb
Ah non solca il torbo	Chorus	Eb
Anime al ciel gradite	Recitative	Final cadence in Bb
Perché sì ingrata, oh Dio!	Aria	Eb
Cinto ancir dal terreo vel	Chorus	Bb

This whole scene is a new addition, but it shares features with some of Gluck's original scenes, especially the opening scenes of both act I and act II in the Vienna version, where the music alternates between the chorus and solo recitatives and arias for Orfeo. Just like he tries to persuade the furies to let him pass in Gluck's underworld scene in act II, in this scene Orfeo persuades the dead souls to let him join them on the Stygian river to the underworld, and the chorus of souls responds to Orfeo's singing and vice versa. As we shall see, there is even a dramatic trajectory of the scene where the music reflects Orfeo's increasingly eager attempts to persuade the souls. The first music for Orfeo in this scene is a simple recitative, and throughout the scene, his music becomes more and more elaborate.

However, there are ways in which the person who put together the scene failed to fully imitate Gluck's dramatic structure. Firstly, the chorus is the same each time it reappears. The music and the tonality remain the same, while the text changes in order to reflect the drama. Even though the chorus of souls are completely different in their attitude towards Orfeo in the beginning and at the end of the scene, the music stays the same. Secondly, there is no large-scale tonal planning in the scene, in the way that the keys play a part in the overall structure of the underworld scene in Act II. The Stygian river scene in Florence is tonally coherent, since the choruses are in Bb major and Orfeo's two arias in Eb major, but in contrast to the subtle changes of keys as Orfeo persuades the furies in the Gluck's original Vienna version, there is no dramatic development supported by the use of tonalities in this scene. Even after Orfeo has persuaded the souls to let him join them, they continue to sing in their original key.

*The chorus: "Sciolto ognun"*

The scene opens with a chorus sung by the souls who are travelling to the underworld (Appendix 4). The chorus has been identified by Michael Robinson as a *contrafactum* of "Oh the pleasure of the plains" from *Acis and Galatea* by Handel.<sup>142</sup> It is curious to find music by Handel from 1718 in an opera in Florence in 1771, and from a stylistic point of view, it introduces music that is in a much older style than the rest of the opera. There may be several reasons for this.

While this production took place in Florence, under the auspices of the Grand Duke of Tuscany Peter Leopold I, it also had some important ties to England, which may account for the presence of Handel in this performance. Firstly, Tenducci, who may even have been involved in putting together the adaptation, had just arrived in Italy after several years in Britain, where he had performed Handel oratorios in the 1760s in London, Dublin, and Edinburgh. Secondly, there may also have been a significant number of English people in the audience. If we are to believe Tenducci's account from 1785, there were many "English people of distinction" present at the performance in Florence, who may very well have recognised the music, and for whom it was included.<sup>143</sup>

Another reason may have been the association between Gluck and Handel that existed in this period. Martina has pointed out that Handel runs as a theme through the early reworkings of the opera, especially in London, but also elsewhere.<sup>144</sup> Guadagni had written in the preface to the London libretto the year before that Gluck "followed the example of my great master Handel, the phoenix of our age".<sup>145</sup> Some of the unusual features of Gluck's music, such as the ample use of choruses, may have been familiar to parts of the audience from Handel's oratorios. That was probably the case in London, and for those from England who might have been in the audience in Florence. Making the connection between Handel and Gluck, either in the preface, or, as in this case, by introducing Handel's music into the opera, related *Orfeo* to a genre which it might have had more in common with than *opera seria*.

The older style of Handel's chorus may also have been included for dramatic reasons. The style of the chorus must have appeared old, or at least very different, both to other additions and to Gluck's own music. Perhaps this was intentional as the chorus portrays the souls of those who have recently died. It makes sense that they would sing music in the style of a few decades earlier, and in an older style than the still living Orfeo.

*Orfeo's recitatives*

Orfeo's music in this scene is at first simple and becomes more and more elaborate as the scene progresses. This can be seen clearly in the recitatives. They are all accompanied, but in the second

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<sup>142</sup> Robinson, "The 1774 S. Carlo Version of *Orfeo*", p. 401.

<sup>143</sup> *Orpheus and Eurydice* (London, 1785), p. 3.

<sup>144</sup> Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*, pp. 248–256.

<sup>145</sup> *Orfeo ed Euridice* (London, 1770), p. 2.

and third recitatives, the accompaniment is more extensive, and the vocal line is more melodically expressive.

In Orfeo's first plea to the souls, the short recitative "Fermate anime illustri" (Appendix 4, p.17), the accompaniment is simple with sustained notes in the strings for one or two bars. The vocal line moves mainly in stepwise movements, and the consonant skips upwards are balanced by stepwise movements downwards. The only dissonant melodic interval, an ascending augmented fourth, appears towards the end of the recitative on the word "insiem", in the phrase "possiam compagni insiem passare a Dite", i.e. "let us travel to the underworld together".

In the longer second recitative, "Qual ripulsa è mai questa" (Appendix 4, p. 35), there are interludes in the strings in between phrases, each of which is made up of varied fast rhythmical figures with an active bass line. The vocal line is accompanied solely by the bass line. The vocal line does not only have more leaps than in the previous recitative, but also some dissonant melodic intervals. The most noticeable dissonant leap is the diminished fifth leap from C to F# on the word "amore" in the final line. The recitative ends with a cadence in G minor.

The final recitative, "Anime al ciel gradite" (Appendix 4, p. 69), immediately precedes the aria "Perché sì ingrato". This recitative is shorter than the previous one, but it includes a longer interlude of not only strings, but also horns. The vocal line also has some big leaps, such as a falling major sixth on "amaro pianto", or "bitter tears".

The three recitatives, through becoming more and more elaborate and expressive, support the dramatic trajectory of the scene, where the music becomes more complex as the scene progresses. This can also be seen in the two arias in this scene.

*The aria "Placate quel core"*

Table 11. The lyrics of "Placate quel core"<sup>146</sup>

Italian text	English translation
Placate quel cuore, Calmate lo sdegno: Dell'ombre nel regno Sol vive l'amore, Che inganni – non teme, Che affanni – non ha	Soften that heart, calm the anger: among the shadows in the kingdom, only love is alive. Don't fear deception, don't be worried.

The *andantino* aria "Placate quel core" (Appendix, p. 39) is one of the most unusual of any of the additions to the opera in the 1770s reworkings of *Orfeo*. This is because it features many stylistic elements of Gluck's music. It seems therefore to be a conscious attempt to imitate at least some aspects of his style.

Many of those stylistic features are obvious already in the first bars. Firstly, it has no *ritornello*, but starts immediately after the preceding recitative. This is different from all the other added arias

<sup>146</sup> *Orfeo, ed Euridice* (Florence, 1771), p. 14. The translation is my own.

discussed in this chapter, which all have long *ritornelli*. There are preludes to several of Gluck's arias or cavatinas in the opera, such as "Gli sguardi trattieni" or "Che farò senza Euridice", but they are very short in comparison, no longer than an 8-bar phrase. There are also examples of no prelude, or just one bar, before the voice starts, such as "Chiamo il mio ben" or "Men tiranne". Secondly, "Placate quell core" is syllabic, with only minor ornaments. This is an important feature of Gluck's style in *Orfeo* where most of the text setting is syllabic but stressed syllables may have two or three notes. In "Placate quel core" there are some longer melismas, as well as fermatas implying improvised cadenzas, towards the end of the song, but they are still much shorter than the long written-out coloraturas in other added arias. Thirdly, Gluck's harmonic rhythm seem to have influenced the movement of the bass line. The bass line moves on every beat for most of the A section, and the harmonic rhythm is relatively quick. The harmony changes once every bar and more often towards cadences. At the end of the first A section, and in the B section, there are dissonant chords which are used in a similar way to Gluck. Fourthly, there are some similarities in the use of dissonance. Just as Gluck used dissonant chords to emphasise important words, the composer of "Placate quel core" uses diminished seventh chords on the word "affanni" towards the end of the A section. "Inganni" and "affanni" are similarly emphasised in the B section where it is accompanied by repeated sixteenth notes in the bass and a chromatic ascending line in the melody. However, these effects also emphasise important structural points of the aria. The diminished seventh chord ending serves as V/V before the arrival of the dominant at the end of the A section. Similarly, in the B section, the chromatic passage precedes the dominant caesura at the end of the B section, highlighting the imminent return to the tonic.

There are also aspects in this aria which stand out as foreign to Gluck's music. In "Placate quel core", this is most obvious in the form of the aria and in the text setting. It is a modified da capo aria. The A section ends in the dominant, the B section begins in the dominant, provides some harmonic development and chromaticism, and the tonic returns at the beginning of the repetition of the A section. This does not resemble the form of any of Gluck's arias or cavatinas in *Orfeo*. Regarding the text setting, the aria is monostrophic and the whole text is repeated in each section of the aria. This means that the B section repeats the whole text, rather than any contrasting or complementing text. Perhaps as a consequence of the combination of a syllabic setting and the da capo aria form, the word repetition is quite obsessive, since instead of drawing out any words or lines by using long melismas, words or lines are repeated. Another feature of Gluck's style that the composer of "Placate quel cuore" does not fully manage to imitate is the texture. It is similar to Gluck's use of texture, since it is homophonic and there is an independent bass line, but there are no overlapping phrases or interlocking parts that one can see in "Chiamo il mio ben".

Leonard Meyer has suggested that it is when trying to imitate another style that a composer's style becomes most apparent: "The fundamental stylistic proclivities of a composer may be revealed when he or she seeks to employ alien stylistic means or orchestrate a work by another composer

who wrote in a style remote in time or place.”<sup>147</sup> In this aria, it is clear that the structure and form of arias were integral to the unknown composer, and that form was prioritised over word setting, in a manner that would have been alien to Gluck in his reform operas. Nevertheless, while there are ways in which Gluck’s style is not fully replicated, the aria is a striking and likely unique example of an attempt to imitate the style of another composer’s music in this period, where in all other reworkings of this opera this was deemed unnecessary, or perhaps even inappropriate.

*The aria “Perché s’è ingrata”*

Table 12. The lyrics of “Perché s’è ingrata”<sup>148</sup>

Italian text	English translation
Perché s’è ingrata, oh Dio!	Why are you so ungrateful, oh God!
Con voi non partirò?	Can I not depart with you?
A che a dolor s’è rio	What wicked sorrow
Resistere non può	cannot resist
La mia costanza.	my constancy.

Orfeo’s final aria in the scene, “Perché s’è ingrata” (Appendix 4, p. 71), is in contrast to “Placate quel cuore” a traditional *opera seria* aria. It is a *largo* aria, with a substantial opening *ritornello* and long virtuoso passages. It also involves modern stylistic features such as classical counterpoint and independent wind parts.

Even though they are stylistically very different, the form of this aria is similar to “Placate quel core”. They are both modified da capo arias and monostrophic. In “Perché s’è ingrata”, the *ritornello* introduces the opening theme, which is repeated in the voice at the opening of the A section. The A section presents the whole text without repetition, but with a five-bar coloratura at the word “costanza” at the end of the section, pausing on the dominant. The B section opens in the dominant and is not a full repetition of the whole text. Instead it repeats a condensed version of the stanza: “Oh Dio, con voi non partirò. Oh Dio, resistere non può. La mia costanza”. Just as in “Non è ver” from London, the first line of text is recapitulated before the return of the tonic and the main theme, at the end of the B section.<sup>149</sup> The A’ section includes both the full text of the original section, as well as a repetition of the text in the B section, and a *coda* at the end.

Many stylistic features of this aria are similar to those seen in Bach’s and Guglielmi’s arias in London, but they are used even more extensively. The bass line is not a *Trommelbass* but is an independent and rhythmically varied bass line. The accompaniment is similarly varied, with some accompaniment figures starting on an eighth-note offbeat, some syncopated accompaniment, as well as instances of the bass line and accompaniment interlocking.

<sup>147</sup> Meyer, *Style and Music*, p. 55.

<sup>148</sup> *Orfeo, ed Euridice* (Florence, 1771), p. 15. The translation is my own,

<sup>149</sup> The peculiar recapitulation and some stylistic features of this aria is not dissimilar from J.C. Bach’s style. I have tried to find out whether this aria could have been written by Bach. It does not occur in any of his other operas, however, so it has not been possible to verify.

In general, this is an aria which is more similar to those discussed in London 1770, than Gluck's music in *Orfeo*, or the other numbers in this scene, despite the similarities in form with "Placate quel core". Despite the attempts to imitate Gluck's dramatic structure and musical style in this scene, there is nevertheless a wide range of contrasting styles.

From a dramatic point of view, it is interesting how the Orfeo's first, somewhat simpler, aria does not persuade the dead souls to let him join them on their crossing of the Stygian river. It is after this much more elaborate and virtuosic aria that the souls finally give way to Orfeo and let him join the boat to the underworld. Despite the adherence to Gluck's style in the structure as a whole in this scene and in this reworking, it is the more modern, virtuosic aria which wins over the souls. Is this an argument in a stylistic debate, or just an aria that Teneducci already knew? Perhaps it was both.

There is no indication of who wrote this scene or any of the added arias. Considering the similarities with Gluck's style, and the suiting text, it is likely that "Placate quel cuore" was composed for the occasion, whereas "Perché sì ingrato" could have been taken from somewhere else and was inserted here. There is a possibility that Teneducci himself composed one or both of these arias, since he is known to have composed and published songs.<sup>150</sup>

#### *The significance of this scene*

This scene is one of the two main additions to the opera in Florence. The other one is set in the Elysian fields, and it has a similar structure. A chorus with two "happy ghost" soloists alternates with arias and recitatives for Euridice and Amore. While there are also some substitutions and insertions in the first and third act, the Florence version as a whole is more dramatically unified than the London version.

Nevertheless, this scene includes numbers in three significantly different styles: Handel's chorus "Sciolto ognun", the syllabic shorter aria "Placate quel core", and the longer virtuosic aria "Perché sì ingrato". It is a unique example of how it was possible to rework *Orfeo* and incorporate the dramatic structure of the original, but it is still a product of an aesthetic which allowed for great stylistic contrast and variety within one operatic performance. There was no contradiction between creating a scene which assimilates Gluck's dramatic structure and introducing music into this scene in a range of different styles.

Besides the overall structure of the scene, what is most remarkable is that it is possible to interpret the use of different styles as a dramatic effect. The older style of the chorus may have been chosen deliberately in order to depict the dead souls, and both the recitatives and the arias for Orfeo are progressively longer and more elaborate, as he has to try harder to assuage the dead souls with his music, when they do not initially respond. Whether this was intentional or not, it is

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<sup>150</sup> Fiske and Monson, "Teneducci, Giusto Ferdinando", *Grove Music Online*.

still noteworthy, since it is much harder to make a similar dramatic interpretation of the additions in London.

## Conclusion

These two scenes represent two very different solutions to reworking *Orfeo*. In London, there was no attempt at appropriating and developing Gluck's and Calzabigi's style and structure, so that different styles and different types of opera are performed side by side. It was nevertheless a great success in terms of attendance and number of revivals, even if someone like Charles Burney did not appreciate the enterprise. In Florence, there was an attempt to imitate the dramatic structure of the original, and sometimes even the musical style, but there were also new arias in a variety of styles.

This shows that even within public opera houses, there was a wide range of possibilities in how to approach an opera like *Orfeo*. There was not just one way to add music to an existing work, and these two scenes illustrate clearly that very different choices could be made.

### 3. The *Orfeo* reworkings as examples of competing and changing aesthetic ideals in the eighteenth century

In the first two chapters I have shown that the approaches to reworking Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* varied considerably from one place to another. In this chapter I take a broader look at the performances of the opera in the 1770s and 1780s and the social, cultural, and aesthetic context in which the *Orfeo* reworkings took place. Looking at the various factors and conditions that were important in shaping the performances and the reworkings, this investigation is an attempt to answer the question of why the opera was performed with such variety. This is by no means an exhaustive account of all the factors involved, but an outline of certain trends among the performances and the important conditions behind them.

Perhaps the most important factor behind how the opera was performed was what type of theatre and the social context in which it was produced. Generally, there were much fewer changes made to the opera in court theatres. Another important factor was the previous exposure to reform opera ideals or reform opera performances in a particular place. Underpinning both those elements is the budding idea of the musical work, and composer-centredness, which seems to have influenced both the way the opera was performed and advertised, as well as how it was received.

#### The contrast between court theatres and public opera houses

There is a clear correlation between how many changes were made to *Orfeo* in the 1770s and 1780s and whether it was performed at a court theatre or a public opera house. The original performance of *Orfeo* in Vienna in 1762 was at the Burgtheater for the name day celebrations of Emperor Francis I, and as such was an occasional work in a court setting. Several scholars, such as Raymond Monelle and Kathleen Kuzmick Hansell, have pointed out that some of the unusual features of *Orfeo* were genre-specific and related to its being an *azione teatrale*, an occasional chamber opera and a type of *serenata*. Some of these features are the limited cast and the liberal use of the chorus.<sup>151</sup> At other court theatres in Europe, then, the opera could be performed under similar circumstances without much change. This was the case in, for example, Parma (1769), Naples *Palazzo Reale* (1774), and St Petersburg (1782). The biggest changes to the opera can be seen in public opera houses, such as London (1770), Naples *San Carlo* (1774), or Paris (1774). This seems to have been the most important factor in how many and what changes were made to the opera, even though there are several exceptions to this.

There are both general and specific reasons for why *Orfeo* was reworked in public opera houses. Generally, it was standard practice in the eighteenth century to make changes to imported or revived operas, in order to adapt the work to suit the demands of a new set of singers and the expectations of the audience. Extensively altered revivals and imports constituted the vast majority

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<sup>151</sup> Monelle, "Gluck and the 'Festa Teatrale'"; Kuzmick Hansell, "Gluck's 'Orpheus och Euridice' in Stockholm: Performance Practices on the Way from 'Orfeo' to 'Orphée' 1773–1786".

of the Italian operas performed at the King's Theatre in London in the late eighteenth century.<sup>152</sup> It should not come as a surprise, then, that changes were made to an opera like *Orfeo* when it was revived.

It is also important to consider the financial situation in certain public opera houses. In London, the King's Theatre was not supported financially by the royal family, and relied solely on the income from subscribers and ticket sales.<sup>153</sup> This did not mean that an opera always needed to be changed, but it meant that the opera management needed to adhere to public tastes, and what they were willing to pay for. An avant-garde work like *Orfeo* could not be put on solely in order to educate the public, or satisfy the tastes of an erudite minority, which was possible in cases where the theatre was sponsored by the ruling family, or the performance was limited to a smaller circle of people. So, changes were made in public opera houses in order to accommodate the opera for the current context and for financial reasons.

The specific reasons why *Orfeo* was reworked have already been discussed in the first two chapters. The main reason why the opera was reworked in public opera houses was that it was too short. This is clear from the libretto for the performances in London 1770, where the opera was adapted in order to “make the Performance of a necessary length for an evening's entertainment”.<sup>154</sup> In other performances where this is not made clear, there are still generally more additions than cuts or substitutions, which means that the opera was consistently made longer when reworked for public opera houses. The other reason for making additions and substitutions in public opera houses was in order to add music in a more virtuoso style. The majority of the additions to the opera in public opera houses were in a style that was contrasting to Gluck's style. This was even the case in Florence 1771, where an effort was made to imitate some of Gluck's style and dramatic structure.

The success of the reworking of the opera, especially in London, shows that these changes were well considered. The attempt to perform the opera in its original shape in London (1773), only lasted two performances, and after this, the earlier London version returned.<sup>155</sup> The *Orfeo* reworkings was the third most performed serious opera at the King's theatre during all of the second half of the eighteenth century and the thirteenth most performed opera overall.<sup>156</sup>

It is important to note, however, that even though there is a trend that court theatres perform *Orfeo* in versions closer to the original and the performances in public opera houses have more changes, this is not the case for all performances of the opera. There are examples of performances at a court theatre or at close connection with the court with significant changes. This was the case in Munich 1773, and to some extent in Florence 1771. There are also performances in public opera houses that had fewer changes. The most conspicuous example of successful performances of the

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<sup>152</sup> Price, Milhous, and Hume, *Italian Opera in Late Eighteenth-Century London*, pp. 27–29.

<sup>153</sup> Price, Milhous, and Hume, *Italian Opera in Late Eighteenth-Century London*, p. 6.

<sup>154</sup> *Orfeo ed Euridice* (London 1770), p. 1.

<sup>155</sup> Howard, “For the English”, p. 15.

<sup>156</sup> Petty, *Italian Opera in London*, p. 390.

opera without extensive changes is at *Teatro Comunale* in Bologna in 1771. The demands of the public opera house, then, was not the only reason why the reworkings of the opera varied from one place to another.

### The importance of previous exposure to reform ideals

It seems that there is also a correlation between the previous experience of reform opera or exposure to reform ideas, and how many or what changes were made to *Orfeo*. This factor is of course more difficult to trace and to pin down than the social context in which *Orfeo* was performed, since how much an idea was “in the air” is impossible to prove. Neither is it possible to fully separate this from the types of theatre in which the opera was performed, since reform opera ideals seem to have spread mainly in well-educated, aristocratic circles.

When I talk about the spread of “reform opera ideals” in this section, I mean something relatively loose. I refer both to familiarity with reform ideas, as proposed by for example Francesco Algarotti in his *Saggio sopra L’Opera in Musica* (1755) or by Gluck and Calzabigi in their preface to the printed score of *Alceste* (1769), as well as exposure to the various attempts at reformed operas such as those by Traetta, Jomelli, and Gluck. It was also more likely to be performed in places that had a connection to Gluck, Vienna, or earlier reform operas.

This section shows that there are a number of connections, both social and familial, as well as ideological, that influenced the different approaches of the reworkings and performances of the opera. The spread of reform opera ideals was not only a factor for how many changes there were, but also for its being performed at all. A performance of *Orfeo*, in any form, was an indication of the spread of the fame of the opera, as well as some of the operatic ideals it embodies. I suggest that there are three different ways in which reform ideals influenced the reworkings: a performance with extensive changes, a performance with some changes, and a performance with very few changes. It is not so straightforward that there was always less knowledge of reform operas in places where there were more extensive changes, but a connection to reform opera ideals seems to be an important element in those performances that were closer to the original.

The first way in which reform ideals influenced a reworking was that it was performed at all, but with big changes. The clearest example of this is the performances in London. Even though there were substantial additions made to the opera, there are several signs of knowledge of the reform opera ideas, and *Orfeo* in its original form. Firstly, there was a personal connection to the premiere of the opera. Gaetano Guadagni had sung the main role in Vienna eight years earlier and his presence in London seems to have been instrumental in the London 1770 performance. In the foreword to the libretto, he reveals that he proposed the opera to the management at the King’s theatre, and makes a case for the particular merit of the opera by pointing out how the music perfectly reflects the poetry: “The original Composer made himself a perfect master of the authors

meaning; and infused the genius of the poetry into his own music”.<sup>157</sup> Secondly, there are several indications that there was some knowledge of the original opera, at least in certain circles, in London. The explanation in the libretto of why there were additions made to the opera suggests that there were people who would wonder about it. Charles Burney would not have been able to criticise the London performances in the way he did, had he not known of the original. The two performances of *Orfeo* in 1773 “altered as it was originally performed at Vienna”, followed by new performances later in the year “as it was originally performed at this theatre”,<sup>158</sup> suggest that there was at least some awareness of the different versions and a desire in some quarters to perform it “as it was originally performed”. Thirdly, Algarotti’s *Saggio sopra L’Opera in Musica* had been translated into English and published in London in 1767, only three years before the first performances of *Orfeo*.<sup>159</sup> This suggests that there was an interest in the ideas and the criticism of *opera seria*. The production of the opera in London exhibits an awareness of the reform ideals and the original opera, but changes were made in order to make it viable and successful at a public opera house. This suggests an obvious tension between these two ideals in London at the time.

Another way in which reform ideals influenced the reworkings of *Orfeo* is when it was performed with changes, but changes that accommodates and assimilates the original to a larger degree. This is a relatively small difference compared to the previous example, but it indicates a very different approach. Two such cases are the productions in Florence (1771), as well as Gluck’s own version for Paris (1774). The ways in which the performances in Florence represent a different approach to that in London has already been covered in the first two chapters. Some of the reasons why such a production was possible could be, firstly, that Florence was a town with a long-standing opera tradition and with exposure to a wide range of styles in the previous years, from Traetta’s reform operas as well as some of the first performances of Handel oratorios. Secondly, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, Peter Leopold I, had not only grown up at the Viennese court at the same time as Gluck, Calzabigi, Count Durazzo, and other propagators of reform were active, he was also the dedicatee of the preface to the print of *Alceste*. *Orfeo* was performed in Florence in 1771 on his initiative and under his auspices, and it is not unlikely that it was under his influence that the Florence additions imitated the original to a much larger extent than in London the year before.

The production of *Orfeo* in Paris 1774 is of course unique because it was done by Gluck himself, and adapted the opera for a public theatre in a way that presumably was acceptable to his own sensibilities. Some elements of reform opera were also more in line with French opera traditions, such as the choruses and ballets.<sup>160</sup> Both the Florence and Paris versions, however, balance adding more scenes, arias and ballets, in a way that is more in agreement with some of the structure and style of the original.

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<sup>157</sup> *Orfeo, ed Euridice* (London, 1770), p. 2.

<sup>158</sup> Howard, “For the English”, p. 15.

<sup>159</sup> Algarotti, *An Essay on the Opera Written in Italian* (London, 1767).

<sup>160</sup> Howard, *Gluck and the Birth of Modern Opera*, pp. 26–28.

Finally, there were places in which *Orfeo* was performed more or less in its original form and where reform ideals or previous exposure to reform operas seem to have played an important role. Two examples of this is Bologna (1771) and Stockholm (1773). In Bologna 1771, *Orfeo* was performed as it had been in Parma 1769, i.e. for soprano castrato in the main role, and as a one-act opera side by side other shorter works. In Bologna, the other act was *Aristo e Temira* by Salvioli-Monza. According to Martina, double bills like this one were very unusual, and that the opera was performed like this at a public opera house is extraordinary. Even more extraordinary is the fact that it was a very successful production with 27 performances at the *Teatro Comunale* from the 19 May to the 30 June 1771. The reasons why this was possible seems to have been a combination of a prestigious and thriving opera culture in Bologna, as well as previous exposure to reform operas. The *Teatro Comunale* had previously presented productions by Jomelli, Traetta and Gluck, whose Metastasian *Trionfo di Clelia* had premiered in 1763.<sup>161</sup> On the subsequent performance of *Alceste* in Bologna in 1778, Margaret Butler too brings up the particularly dynamic opera scene in Bologna and previous reform operas, as to why one of the few performances of *Alceste* in Italy in the eighteenth century took place in Bologna.<sup>162</sup>

In Stockholm 1773, the opera was performed in a production that was very close to the Vienna version. The music for Carl Stenborg in the main role was adapted to suit his tenor voice, but the keys were the same as in the original, and the text was translated into Swedish. The Italian writer and historian Domenico Michelessi was important for bringing Gluck's *Orfeo* to Sweden, as well as for propagating Algarotti's and Gluck's aesthetic of opera there. He was a close friend of Algarotti and knew and supported Gluck and Calzabigi. He met Gustaf III in 1771 and joined him back to Sweden, where he learnt Swedish and oversaw the translation of *Orfeo* to Swedish just before his death in 1773.<sup>163</sup> There were only a handful of Metastasio operas performed in Sweden in the eighteenth century so the Swedish audience was less used to those conventions, and presumably more open to this aesthetic. Gustaf III seems also to have appreciated the aesthetic of more and longer recitatives and less virtuosic arias because that meant there would be more focus on the text, which he could use as propaganda, like in the opera *Gustaf Wasa* in 1786.<sup>164</sup>

Even though there are some connections to reform ideals in all places where *Orfeo* was performed in the 1770s, there seems to have been particularly fertile soil for the opera in Bologna and Stockholm, where previous exposure and conscious introduction played an important role in why it was performed with so few changes to an audience that seems to have been receptive to it.

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<sup>161</sup> Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*, p. 88–89.

<sup>162</sup> Margaret Butler, "Gluck's *Alceste* in Bologna: Production and Performance at the *Teatro Comunale*, 1778", *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 65/3 (2012), pp. 727–776.

<sup>163</sup> Kuzmick Hansell, "Gluck's 'Orpheus och Euridice' in Stockholm: Performance Practices on the Way from 'Orfeo' to 'Orphée' 1773–1786".

<sup>164</sup> Michael Burden, "Twittering and Trilling": Swedish Reaction to Metastasio", *Early Music* (1998), p. 617–19.

## Reworkings and the “work” Orfeo

In the essay “The Dramaturgy of Italian Opera”, Carl Dahlhaus writes that “it is difficult for historians *not* to interpret them [reform operas] as solutions to problems unsolved in the older *dramma per musica* or as attempts to compensate for its deficiencies.”<sup>165</sup> Likewise, it is difficult for historians *not* to interpret the performances of *Orfeo ed Euridice* in London, Florence, and Naples as in some way a corruption of the original work and the aesthetic ideals that it represents. Price, Milhous, and Hume write that this is a persistent problem in the study of eighteenth-century opera in general:

The pasticcio remains a bugbear to an objective assessment of the nature and quality of Italian opera in eighteenth-century London. It is antithetical to all modern notions of authorial control, structural integrity, and originality. [...] Adaptation, revision, and substitution were not forms of corruption, but rather unavoidable features of the production process of the time.<sup>166</sup>

In relation to *Orfeo*, this can be seen both in outright dismissals, such as Terry’s description of the London version as a “mutilation of a classic”,<sup>167</sup> as well in the persistent usage of the term *pasticcio* or *pasticcio* versions to describe these performances of *Orfeo*, in virtually all the secondary literature.<sup>168</sup> However, when judging the reworkings of *Orfeo*, it is important to bear in mind that the performances of the opera in this period imply an interest in the music, dramaturgy, and style of the reform operas, as well as the intention to present the work in an accessible form to a wider public. Despite the significant changes made to the work, I argue that in the libretti, scores, and contemporary comments, it is possible to discern an increasing concern with the original work that foreshadows the emergence of the work concept.

This growing concern with the original work overlaps with the spreading of reform ideals as described in the previous section. The more reform opera was valued, the more *Orfeo* was likely to be performed closer to the original, but independently of this, there was also a tendency to value the original work, even when there were greater changes made. The changing perception of the work did not necessarily impact one specific performance, but I argue that it underpins contemporary descriptions of the reworkings. This is an important perspective to bring up, since it contradicts the assumption that the reworkings of *Orfeo* only represent the traditional mindset of *opera seria* and the *pasticcio*.

In the following discussion, I first describe some of the previous debate about the work concept in eighteenth-century music and in opera and continue to show what aspects of the work concept it is possible to find in the *Orfeo* reworkings.

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<sup>165</sup> Dahlhaus, “The Dramaturgy of Italian opera”, p. 114.

<sup>166</sup> Price, Milhous, and Hume, *Italian Opera in Eighteenth-Century London*, p. 30-31.

<sup>167</sup> Terry, *John Christian Bach*, p. 117.

<sup>168</sup> This is the case in, for example, Petty, *Italian Opera in London*; Robinson, “The 1774 S. Carlo Version of *Orfeo*”; Martina, *Orfeo-Orphée di Gluck*; Howard, *The Modern Castrato*. However, Price, Milhous, and Hume admit that the 1785 version of *Orfeo* “was not so much a pasticcio as a reconstruction with substitutions”. See Price, Milhous, and Hume, *Italian Opera in Late Eighteenth-Century London*, p. 29.

### *The work concept before 1800*

In *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works*, Lydia Goehr argues that the work concept is a historical construction that started to appear around 1800. The work concept that she describes is an autonomous work that is composed independently of a specific performance, and which is expected to be performed with faithful adherence to the properties indicated in the score. By contrast, she argues that the attitudes to composing and performing music in the eighteenth century were very different. She draws out two features of pre-1800 music culture as particularly salient: the primacy of the performance and the importance of the functionality of music. According to Goehr, music was primarily composed to suit a particular occasion and a certain set of performers, and tended to have an extra-musical function to fulfil: “The idea of a work of music existing as a fixed creation independently of its many possible performances had no regulative force in a practice that demanded adaptable and functional music, and which allowed an open interchange of musical material”.<sup>169</sup>

It is clear that the reworkings of *Orfeo* are very typical examples of the eighteenth-century attitudes towards performing music, as described by Goehr. They are adapted to suit the singers of the occasion, both in terms of voice ranges and musical style, as well as to fulfil extra-musical functions, such as a long enough evening at the opera.

Furthermore, it is generally problematic to discuss the work concept in relation to opera, both before and after 1800. In “The Operatic Work: Texts, Performances, Receptions and Repertories”, Nicholas Till shows that the operatic work or text as an idea only started to appear much later in the nineteenth century, since opera as a performing art has tended to value adaptability in every specific performance over authenticity.<sup>170</sup> Dahlhaus too has argued that the operatic score can best be thought of as a prototype, rather than as a fixed text:

Until the middle of the 19th century, however, an opera score was only a prototype or a ground plan for the work to be realized in performance. The degree of elaboration required was an index of the difference between text and prototype, but the essence of the difference was more a matter of aesthetic understanding [...]. As a prototype, however, a score could be changed, and in most unlimited ways, dependent on conditions that varied from place to place [...] the sole purpose of a score was to provide the substratum for a performance—and just the specific, imminent performance at that.<sup>171</sup>

A prototype not only suggests a score that is adaptable, but that the score is a pretext for performance and that the score is adapted to fit the performance, rather than the other way around:

As Reinhard Strohm has pointed out, it is precisely the variability of all the factors, not their immutable relationship in an intact work of art, that is the condition of a unity which was always new and differently realized on each occasion. Neither the libretto nor the score was inviolable, and

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<sup>169</sup> Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works*, pp. 185–186.

<sup>170</sup> Nicholas Till, “The Operatic Work: Texts, Performances, Receptions and Repertories” in *The Cambridge Companion to Opera Studies* (Cambridge, 2012).

<sup>171</sup> Dahlhaus, “The Dramaturgy of Italian Opera”, p. 98.

it was accepted as aesthetically legitimate that the work—as a prototype—was adapted to suit the singers, and not that singers adjusted their performance to suit the singers.<sup>172</sup>

This shows that music before 1800 in general, and opera in particular, does not easily fit with notions of the work, authorial intention, or authenticity. The eighteenth-century reworkings of *Orfeo* are no exception.

However, in response to Lydia Goehr's influential writings, several musicologists have argued that her description of musical culture pre-1800 lacks nuance and that elements of the work concept can be found in Western art music much earlier.

In the article "Looking Back at Ourselves: The Problem with the Musical Work-Concept", Reinhard Strohm questions Goehr's premise that there is a clear watershed between attitudes towards the musical work before and after 1800. He makes his point by showing ways in which there were works and classics much earlier, for example in the music by Palestrina and Handel.<sup>173</sup> Similarly, in *A Theory of Art*, Karol Berger proposes that all Western art music falls somewhere between the two poles of functional and autonomous music. In his survey of music history, he describes ways in which music was autonomous during the Italian Renaissance, and functional in nineteenth-century Germany. They both argue that there are elements of autonomy and work concept much before 1800, and that those concepts are central to Western art music and notated music in general.<sup>174</sup>

In "The Work-Concept and Composer-Centredness", on the other hand, Michael Talbot accepts that there is a change in perception of the musical work in the late eighteenth century, but he argues that the difference lies in what defined the work, not that there was no work concept at all before 1800. He argues that before the nineteenth century, music was classified and conceived of in terms of what genre it belonged to, or who performed it, rather than who had composed the music. Talbot calls these different attitudes "genre-centredness" and "composer-centredness".<sup>175</sup>

In response to Reinhard Strohm's article in particular, Goehr acknowledges in her article "'On the Problems of Dating' or 'Looking Forwards and Backwards with Strohm'", that she treated the work-concept as "very thick, as carrying a lot of baggage"<sup>176</sup> and that there may be elements of the work concept in earlier music, but writes that her claim was that the work-concept *emerged* "with its full regulative force around 1800",<sup>177</sup> not that it *originated* then.

This is the premise of my discussion of the work concept in the *Orfeo* reworkings. I accept that the attitudes towards the musical work changed radically towards the end of the eighteenth century,

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<sup>172</sup> Dahlhaus, "The Dramaturgy of Italian Opera", p. 114.

<sup>173</sup> Reinhard Strohm, "Looking Back at Ourselves: The Problem with the Musical Work-Concept" in *The Musical Work: Reality or Invention?*, ed. Talbot (Liverpool, 2000).

<sup>174</sup> Karol Berger, *A Theory of Art* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 108–161.

<sup>175</sup> Michael Talbot, "The Work-Concept and Composer-Centredness" in *The Musical Work: Reality or Invention?*, ed. Talbot (Liverpool, 2000).

<sup>176</sup> Lydia Goehr, "'On the Problems of Dating' or 'Looking Forwards and Backwards with Strohm'" in *The Musical Work: Reality or Invention?*, ed. Talbot (Liverpool, 2000), p. 237.

<sup>177</sup> Goehr, "'On the Problems of Dating' or 'Looking Forwards and Backwards with Strohm'", p. 238.

but that elements of the work concept appeared much earlier. Presumably, this change in perception around 1800 did not happen overnight, and there would have been an accumulation of “work elements” in the mid- and late eighteenth-century, even though all the “baggage” that Goehr associates with the term had not yet occurred.

Even though the *Orfeo* reworkings in London, Florence, and Naples, are typical examples of the importance of adaptability and functionality of the operatic performance, particularly before 1800, they nevertheless exhibit several aspects of the emerging work concept. It can be seen in the respect for the original version that is shown in contemporary commentaries, as well as in the classical status that the opera received relatively early. Perhaps most clearly it can be seen in the composer-centredness in descriptions of the opera in both libretti, advertisements, and contemporary comments.

#### *Elements of the emerging work concept in the Orfeo reworkings*

The respect for the original work that can be seen in the performances and reworkings of *Orfeo* has already been mentioned at several places in this thesis. Many of the examples of this overlap with those that show an awareness of the reform ideals, as seen in the previous section. That such an unusual operatic work was performed very close to the original version in several places, and even in some public opera houses, indicates that that was valued. Even the London 1773 performances “as it was originally performed at Vienna” show that there was an awareness of the original and a willingness to perform it, even though it was not performed for more than two evenings. There are also ways in which the reworkings with bigger changes show respect for the original work. Examples of this is the explanation of why the additions were made and Guadagni’s praise of the work in the London 1770 libretto, or the imitation of the style and structure original in Florence 1771. The care shown in these reworkings is not the same as “authenticity”, but they indicate a regard for the original work.

The emerging classicism in relation to *Orfeo* is most obvious in the London 1785 production, where the performance was described as a “concert of ancient music” in the libretto. As described in the first chapter, this connects it to the movement in London at the time to perform music that was at least twenty years old in concerts, and the increased value put on older works, as well as the creation of a classical repertoire.<sup>178</sup> Even though opera continued to be a form of music where many adaptations were made for the specific performance, classical operatic works that were performed without major changes began to appear. Price, Milhous, Hume mention two operas which were performed regularly in its original form on the London stages and across Europe in the late eighteenth century: Piccinni’s *La Buona Figliuola* and Paisello’s *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*.<sup>179</sup> As we have seen, this was not the case with *Orfeo*, primarily because it was too short to perform in its original form in most places.

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<sup>178</sup> Weber, *The Rise of Musical Classics in Eighteenth-Century England*.

<sup>179</sup> Price, Milhous, and Hume, *Italian Opera in Eighteenth-Century London*, p. 31.

Nevertheless, according to Dahlhaus, *Orfeo* was one of the first operas to become accepted as a text, and to receive a classical status.<sup>180</sup> An important reason why this could happen was likely the early printed score of the opera. The Vienna version of the opera was printed in Paris in 1764, only two years after the premiere, and the score of the Gluck's Paris version was printed in 1774.<sup>181</sup> A printed score of an Italian opera was extremely unusual in this period and continued to be very rare far into the nineteenth century.<sup>182</sup> The existence of the score, then, was a sign of the unusual status of the opera, and might have played an important part in spreading the knowledge of the original version.

Perhaps the most important way in which the *Orfeo* reworkings exhibit the work concept is the “composer-centredness” of the contemporary commentary. The performances of *Orfeo* in the late eighteenth century clearly show a concern for the composer and author of the work, as opposed to the genre of the work. Firstly, it is worth noting that genre seems to have been of little importance in the case of *Orfeo*. In Vienna, it was originally conceived of as an *azione teatrale*, i.e. a type of *serenata* that involved a definite plot and simple staging.<sup>183</sup> The genre is specified differently in some of the later performances. In Florence and Naples *San Carlo*, it was described as a *dramma per musica* in the libretti, whereas in London it was simply called an “opera”. *Dramma per musica* was the most common term for an *opera seria*, and the changes made to them made it more similar to such a type of opera. For *Orfeo* in the 1770s then, the genre was fluid and it was possible to make changes that changed the genre of the work. This is very different to how Talbot describes genre-centredness. Secondly, Gluck's authorship of the original opera seems to be a significant part of the identity of the work, and his name is clearly stated as the composer of the music in all the reworkings studied here. In London and Naples, the names of other composers were included, but in Florence he is the only composer mentioned. Despite additions, substitutions and fluidity of genre, it is still considered *Orfeo ed Euridice* by Gluck.

Following on from this, none of these reworkings are called a “*pasticcio*” or an “adaption” in the advertisements, reviews or libretti in London, Naples or Florence. This is in sharp contrast to modern scholarship which has consistently called the *Orfeo* performances in London, Florence, and Italy *pasticcio* versions of the operas. Even though it is unclear how specific these subgenres of reworkings were at the time, both “adaptation” and “*pasticcio*” were terms that were used in this period, at least in England, to describe certain types of stage performances. It is notable, then, that this vocabulary is not used at all to describe *Orfeo*. For example, “adaptation” was used in London in relation to *Amintas* for Covent Garden in 1769, which was adapted by Tenducci and translated into English.<sup>184</sup> “*Pasticcio*” was originally a derogatory term, and I have found no examples of the

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<sup>180</sup> Dahlhaus, “The Dramaturgy of Italian Opera”, p. 98.

<sup>181</sup> *Orfeo ed Euridice* (Paris, 1764); *Orphée et Euridice, Tragédie, Opera en trois Actes* (Paris, 1774).

<sup>182</sup> Till, “The Operatic Work”, p. 230.

<sup>183</sup> Michael Talbot, “Azione teatrale”, *Grove Music Online* (2001), <<https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.01633>>.

<sup>184</sup> *Amintas, an English opera. As perform'd at the Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden* (London, 1769).

use of it in newspaper advertisements before the end of the 1770s in London.<sup>185</sup> Nevertheless, there is evidence that the term was used neutrally much earlier, for example Horace Walpole, according to Curtis Price “a keen consumer and severe critic of Italian opera”, wrote in a letter in 1742 that “our operas begin tomorrow with a pasticcio, full of most of my favourite songs”.<sup>186</sup>

There are several possible explanations for why these definitions were not used to describe the reworkings of *Orfeo*. Perhaps it was possible to change a significant portion of an original opera without it being conceived as an adaptation or a *pasticcio*. This would mean that even with changes it was still considered the original work. If this is correct, it is of course a far cry from any notions of authenticity, but it is an interesting perspective of a possible way of perceiving an operatic “work”. Another possibility is that there was an interest on behalf of the opera managements in describing the reworking as *Orfeo ed Euridice* by Gluck and not as an adaptation or a *pasticcio*. Maybe this relates to the spread of the reform ideals and the fame of the opera, if downplaying the changes could attract a larger audience. Regardless, both interpretations point towards the importance of the original work and of Gluck as a composer of that work.

Another aspect of the composer-centredness in the reworkings of *Orfeo* comes from Tenducci’s foreword to the libretto in London 1785. There he describes not only that the opera to be performed is *Orfeo ed Euridice* by Gluck with some additions, but that this *Orfeo* is the same as he performed in Florence in 1771: “I have resolved humbly to present to them that same *Orpheus*, which was so much applauded at Florence”.<sup>187</sup> This is surprising since they are quite different versions of the opera, but just as above, it suggests that he must either have conceived of them as being the same despite their apparent differences, i.e. some substitutions did not change the essence of the work, or that he was eager to present them as the same, which suggests that there was a value in the work being the same in several places.

In “Looking Back at Ourselves: The Problem with the Musical Work-Concept”, Strohm comments on one of his earlier writings in which he characterises “the status of late Baroque opera music as event-like rather than work-constituted”.<sup>188</sup> He thinks that there is a dialectic between the text and the event in the eighteenth century: “I see more of a dialectic now between the ‘writtenness’ and work-character of this genre and the transient aspect of the performance event. To be sure, contemporary documents other than librettos—scores, archival entries, narrative accounts—very often speak of opera as a work created by a certain composer.”<sup>189</sup> My conclusion in studying the *Orfeo* reworkings from the point of view of the work concept is similar. While there are obvious elements of performance and functionality in the ways in which the opera was performed in

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<sup>185</sup> *Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Burney Newspapers Collection*, <<https://www.gale.com/intl/c/17th-and-18th-century-burney-newspapers-collection>>.

<sup>186</sup> Quoted in Price, “Unity, Originality, and the London pasticcio”, p. 20.

<sup>187</sup> *Orpheus and Eurydice* (London, 1785), p. 4.

<sup>188</sup> Strohm, “Looking Back at Ourselves”, p. 148.

<sup>189</sup> Strohm, “Looking Back at Ourselves”, p. 148.

London, Florence, and Naples, the reworkings also exhibit awareness of and concern for the original text and its composer.

Considering how easy it is to dismiss the reworkings as a mutilation or a corruption of the original, it is important to have a more nuanced discussion about where the early performances fit into the changes that were taking place in this period in opera and in music. The ambivalent attitude towards the reworkings in contemporary commentaries show the unusual status of *Orfeo*. This final section has attempted to show that this is not just a question of reform ideals versus *opera seria* conventions, but also of originating views about work and authenticity.

## Conclusion

The four productions of Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* in London (1770) and (1785), Florence (1771), and Naples (1774) have many similarities. They were performances in public opera houses, and they all included a number of additions in order to make the opera longer. The additions were most often in contrasting styles to the original: da capo arias with long *ritornelli*, virtuoso coloratura passages and word repetition. These four performances also have some of those additions in common. For example, Euridice's aria "Chiari fonti" appears in all four performances, and Orfeo's aria "La legge accetto" appear in three of these versions. The performances are all connected by the soprano castrato Giusto Ferdinando Tenducci, who would have known of the performances in London 1770, and sang the main role in the three performances in Florence, Naples, and London (1785).

Yet, despite their similarities, what stands out in this study is rather their distinctly different approaches to reworking the opera. In London 1770, scenes, characters, and arias were added in a contrasting virtuoso style, but these changes by Johann Christian Bach and Pietro Alessandro Guglielmi were clearly attributed and explained in the libretto. In Florence 1771, scenes were added that imitated the dramatic structure of the original. The style of the added arias and choruses varied from Handel choruses, to virtuoso arias, and arias that emulate the style of Gluck's music. In Naples *San Carlo* (1774), scenes, arias, and characters were taken from the two previous versions in London and Florence, in order to create an even longer and more diverse performance, that as much as possible adhered to the local conventions at the Neapolitan opera house. In London 1785, there were fewer additions, but it included arias from the previous versions, as well as music by Handel, in order to create a "Concert of Ancient Music".

These four performances of *Orfeo* show that there were many ways to adapt the opera to local situations, and many different solutions to the same problem: performing a short opera with an unusual dramatic structure and musical style. If we take other contemporary productions of the opera into account, such as Bologna (1771) or Stockholm (1773), the approaches to performing *Orfeo* in the 1770s and 1780s are even more varied and distinct. This variety in how the opera was performed suggests that opera culture in general, and the reception of *Orfeo* in particular, were complex and diverse. Social conditions and aesthetic ideals varied and shifted from one place to another, and over the course of some years.

Rather than seeing the reworkings of *Orfeo* as compromises to the reform opera ideals within an *opera seria* culture, I have tried to show that the fact that these operas were performed at all in public opera houses is a sign of the esteem that the work enjoyed. The performances took place within a context where functionality and adaptability were valued over authenticity, but they nevertheless disclose an openness to reform opera and to Gluck's music. There is a certain respect for the original and for Gluck in the reworkings and how they are described, from the clear attributions and explanations in the London 1770 libretto, to the imitation of Gluck's dramatic structure and style in Florence 1771.

In order to understand eighteenth-century opera and opera culture, it is important to go beyond the notion that these reworkings were simply *pasticcio* versions of the original. Not only were they never considered *pasticci* at the time, but using such a generic, and to some extent derogatory, term, obscures the fact that there was more than one way to change and adapt an opera at this time, and especially one as unusual and controversial as Gluck's *Orfeo*. These nuances tell us something about the richness and variety of operatic culture in this period, as well as the complex history and reception of reform opera and of *Orfeo*. Opera in the eighteenth century was never just one thing.

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