

Paganini

The first issue of *Paganini; periodico artistico musicale* appeared in Genoa in February 1887. It was published by the Tipografia del Regio Istituto Sordo-Muti. When the new music journal appeared, the catalogue of this important Genoese publisher, whose activities began in 1840, already included works of fiction, poetry, history, economics, and science. Initially *Paganini* was an eight-page monthly with an attached *hors-texte* supplement (*Collezione musicale del Paganini*) containing four pages of previously unpublished music "written expressly [for the journal] by distinguished composers." As a result of the journal's success, its publication frequency was increased during 1888-1889 to two issues per month, the first unchanged in size and content, and the second consisting of only four pages of text. During 1890 music was also published in the second issue with the purpose of offering space to new composers chosen through special competitions. Because of the poor quality of the submitted compositions, the original monthly publication rhythm was restored in May 1890 until the final issue. The last number, dated December-January 1891-92, did not announce or explain the sudden termination of publication.

The five years of *Paganini* comprise eighty-six issues in a format of 24 x 34 cm., each with a four-page jacket. The masthead, a table of contents, and a list of the music in the *Collezione musicale del Paganini* appear on the first jacket page; advertising appears on the remaining three (with the exception of a few numbers in which the text of the articles runs over onto the third jacket page). At the end of 1887, the *Strenna musicale del periodico Paganini*—a volume of 132 pages in a format of 17 x 24 cm. including thirteen pages of music—was offered to new subscribers. In 1888 and 1889 the *strenna* or gift was published as no. 23 of each year doubling the normal issue size to sixteen pages of text and eight of music. In 1888 a close collaboration was established with the publishing house of Giudici e Strada in Turin which became the principal advertiser in the Genoese periodical and which from 1890 also participated in the campaign for subscriptions.

From the beginning the principal animator of *Paganini* was the composer, theorist, and critic, Lorenzo Parodi (Genoa, 1856-1926), who in 1891 officially became the director and almost sole editor. After completing courses at the Istituto di Musica in Genoa, Parodi continued his studies in Paris with Massenet and Giraud, where he developed a strong interest in French music which is reflected in the pages of *Paganini*. Music critic for many years of *Caffaro*, a Genoese daily, Parodi began teaching music history and aesthetics at the Civico Istituto Musicale Paganini in Genoa in 1906, and in 1908 founded the still appreciated *Rassegna internazionale di musica*.

To almost the end of the century, *Paganini* collected and reflected the culmination of three decades of work to modernize musical life in Genoa begun by a circle of professional musicians and music scholars including Giuseppe Novella, Carlo Andrea

Gambini, Adolfo Pescio, Giuseppe Bossola, Camillo Sivori, Angelo Mariani, Angelo Lavagnino, Emilio Bozzano, Giovanni Rinaldi, and Pier Costantino Remondini. Responsible for the most important musical initiatives enacted in the leading city of Liguria, their goal was the expansion of knowledge and the performance of instrumental music as reflected in the chamber concerts of the *Società del Tunnel* in 1858-59, the *Mattinate Lavagnino*, the *Società del Quartetto* and the first *Concerti Popolari* in 1867, the construction of the *Sala Sivori* in 1869, and the *Esperimenti archeologico-musicali* in 1875. Presented as a journal engaged in the process of revitalizing musical culture and oriented toward positions of moderate modernism, *Paganini* responded to the demands of a public desiring to become better informed about contemporary European musical culture.

The first number appeared without programmatic declarations, which were not delineated until no. 7 of July 1887 in an article titled "Arte" signed by Partecipazio (pseudonym of the writer Giovanni Minuto):

. . . not even today, as in the beginning, do we intend to carry out a program. . . . Those who will want to follow us on our path, as they have up to now, will be easily persuaded that our ideal is as far from the muddled excesses of the over eager innovators, as it is from the obstinate stubbornness of the eternal *laudatores temporis acti*.

In the invocation of a living art as a genuine image of the age in which it is expressed, the author refused both the aesthetics based on slavish imitation of the old, and that which searches for innovation at all costs without regard for "the time necessary for the gestation of new ideas." Inspired by this program, *Paganini* demonstrated equal interest in Wagner, with analyses of many productions of his music dramas (foreshadowing a larger diffusion of these works in Italy), for new French composers, from d'Indy to Debussy, for the nascent Italian *giovane scuola*, and for late Verdi, who for many years loved to spend the winter months in Genoa and who during these years revealed unexpected creative energy and unsuspected renewal with *Otello* and *Falstaff*. (In a thank you note to the administration of *Paganini* for the gift of the journal, the maestro declared his admiration of its goals "provided it doesn't exceed them.")

The five years of *Paganini* cover a span of time relatively brief, but full, nevertheless, of artistic events in Italian musical life, promptly reported by the journal: these are the years of the affirmation of a new generation of Italian composers including Franchetti, Catalani and Puccini, of the introduction of Mascagni and of a new model for melodrama: *opera verista*. The journal gave just as much if not more attention to French musical life, demonstrated by the critical and frequently penetrating appraisals of, among others, Chabrier, Bizet, D'Indy, Gounod, Massenet, Saint-Saëns, and

Bourgault-Ducoudray (see, for example, Leonardo Parodi's 1890 discussion of the cantata *L'Enfant prodigue* which foresaw the greatness of Debussy). The journal's modern orientation is attested to by its constant attention to instrumental music through detailed reporting of concert activities, reviews of published music, reviews of symphonic performances, and a few critical investigations (for example, the articles by Cesare Cui on music in Russia and the series of lectures by Anton Rubinstein on keyboard literature). Finally, the journal decisively sustained reform projects concerning sacred music and did not undervalue the importance of apparently marginal questions such as those relating to band repertory. In accordance with a broad nineteenth-century concept of Italian culture which did not allow rigid classifications of artistic fields, *Paganini*, although primarily musical in focus, allotted well-defined space to the spoken theater following the Genoese tradition of artistic-musical periodicals of high quality such as *Vittorio Alfieri* (1866), *La Musica* (1868), and *La Platea* (1875), which was continued into the twentieth century by the *Rassegna internazionale di musica* (1908) and by *Melodia* (1923).

Paganini maintained an almost constant structure: it opened with a critical-biographical article about a contemporary composer (sometimes including a musical selection), or a review of an important artistic event (usually the première of an opera), or the treatment of theoretical questions. In this opening part which is described in *Paganini's* advertising as *medaglioni e delle biografie*, we often find analyses of the music and libretto of new lyric works and original contributions on the most widely debated musical questions of the day. Frequently the opening article is accompanied by one or more articles of music criticism of equal importance. Several regular rubrics follow: "La nostra musica" (a presentation of the musical selections), "Teatri di prosa" (reserved, above all, for Genoese theater), "Nostre corrispondenze" (from the major Italian cities and from Paris, with ample space for news of opera and drama, for concerts, for activities of music conservatories, and for competitions). Three rubrics that alternated with one another—"Teatri di Genova," "Concerti," "Cronaca artistica cittadina"—were reserved for Genoa's musical life: the journal "kept watch" over the activities of the largest Genoese theater, the Carlo Felice, frequently criticizing the program which showed little interest in innovation, and urging impresarios and administrators toward higher quality stagings; it treated any performance presented on the city's stages (operas, operettas, dramas, comedies, variety shows, etc.) with particular attention to the innovations of dramatic companies (frequently discussed also in separate articles); it reviewed the concerts held in the *Sala Sivori*, in the theaters, in private residences, and in other locations; it offered advice and suggestions to the Istituto Musicale, especially at the time of the annual performances presenting its students; it advocated modernizing the repertory and working methods of the civic band; and it proposed the establishment of a music section in the civic library.

Another regular rubric, "Nuove pubblicazioni," commented on the music of Italian composers usually published and announced by small publishing houses (including, during the last year of publication, French composers and publishers), critically investigating much piano literature, chamber compositions, and band music. Separate articles review the most important methods and theoretical works. An occasional rubric titled "Musica sacra" was dedicated to the problem of the decadence of ecclesiastical music and its reform. Treatment of this subject extended to the organ with descriptions of new instruments, especially those made by the English organ builder established in Genoa, W. G. Trice, and constructed according to the rules suggested by the Cecilian movement. At the close of each number appeared the rubric "Cronaca," usually divided into two parts, "Lirica" and "Drammatica," offering brief news of events in the world of musical and dramatic performance. This rubric was often enriched by the "Echi dalla stampa artistica" containing news, reviews, and curiosities collected from the Italian and foreign press.

Notable interest surrounded the musical selections, almost always previously unpublished, very often composed expressly for the journal, and part of the *Collezione musicale del Paganini*. Altogether this collection contained eighty-four pieces of music by fifty-nine composers, with their selection revealing a net prevalence for those either born or adopted by Genoa. Also represented, however, are Italian composers of the stature of Puccini (who dedicated a composition to *Paganini*, "Sole e amore" that he later used in *La Bohème*), of Catalani (who in the same number presented a piece for piano "A sera," later used in *La Wally*), of Luigi Mancinelli, Franchetti, Cesi, Longo, not to mention a few foreign composers, French above all, such as Saint-Saëns, Dubois, Maréchal, and Salvayre. Almost all of the pieces can be described as "salon" music (many album leaves, dances, songs and romances, and more rarely chamber music or pieces for organ), inspired by romantic poetics, and typical of the period's wide-spread taste for the elusive, of a descriptive or "sentimental" type. This genre of composition was cultivated with interesting results by many composers including some important ones.

Among the principal collaborators of *Paganini* deserving mention are Odoardo Damele (composer and music critic), Tito Damele (writer and drama critic), Achille De Marzi (music critic and composer), Ernesto Ferrettini (music critic), Napoleone Cesi and Alessandro Longo (both pianists and composers, correspondents from Naples), Giovanni Minuto (pseudonym Partecipazio), P. Pagani (correspondent from Reggio Emilia), G.B. Pollini (composer and pianist, correspondent from Siena), Lello Ricciardi (writer and music critic), Lionello Spada (poet and drama critic), Giovanni Tebaldini (composer, musicologist, correspondent from Milan and from Germany), Teofilo Toledano (composer, correspondent from Florence), and also the unidentified author of the abundant correspondence from Paris signed J. H. (also frequently I. H. and J. K.).

Identified signatures

Cidno	Giovanni Tebaldini
Filoteo	Teofilo Toledano
G. B. B.	Giovan Battista Bergamini
G. T.	Giovanni Tebaldini
L. P.	Lorenzo Parodi
lp.	Lorenzo Parodi
P. P.	P. Pagani
Partecipazio	Giovanni Minuto
Pery	G.B. Pollini
Scriba Giovanni	Belgrano Tommaso Luigi

Probable attributions

Giulio	Giulio Ferrarini
Iustus	Lorenzo Parodi
L. M.	Luigi Montaldo
L. S.	Lionello Spada
M.	Luigi Montaldo
P.	Lorenzo Parodi
P. L.	Lorenzo Parodi
T. D.	Tito Damele
td.	Tito Damele