

Rassegna Dorica (1929-1942)

The *Rassegna Dorica* [RAD] (subtitled *Cultura e Cronaca Musicale*) was founded by Vincenzo Di Donato (Rome, 15 August 1887—Sassoferrato, Ancona, 17 September 1967), a young composer, director of the Scuola di Musica dei Ciechi as well as of the orchestra and chorus of the Accademia Filarmonica Romana. The *Rassegna* was published in Rome without interruptions in thirteen annual volumes, from November 1929 to December 1942. It was suspended due to the war, and since then did not resume publication.

The title of the *Rassegna* derives from *dorico*, a term used in the lyric choral, and born as an emanation of *Dorica*, a collection of musical works edited for Edizioni F.lli De Santis in Rome by the “Gruppo Dorico”, comprising young composers, such as Di Donato himself, and, among others, Giorgio Nataletti, Mario Peragallo, Goffredo Petrassi, Attilio Poggi and Ennio Porrino.

The journal’s publication year runs from November to October during which ten or eleven issues appear. At times it is not printed in September and, occasionally, not in October. From 1940 to 1942 the publication run corresponds with the solar year. RAD is printed throughout in book format (24 x 17 cm.) with a variable number of pages ranging from sixteen pages of the first yearly issue to twenty-four pages of the second issue, to more than thirty-two pages of the fourth issue. Due to a governmental ordinance that required all periodicals to economize in the use of paper, starting from November of the seventh volume the number of the *Rassegna*’s pages is reduced first to sixteen and then to twelve.

Initially, the editorial board is composed of Vincenzo Di Donato, Mario Saint-Cyr and Battista Travasi. In 1931 Giorgio Nataletti is added to the board. From November 1932 onward Di Donato assumes the direction of the periodical, assisted by Mario Saint-Cyr as editor-in-chief. But the most substantive support to the *Rassegna Dorica* with respect to topics of informative and critical interest is provided by Mario Rinaldi (Rome, 1 October 1903—Rome, 26 June 1985), a young musicologist who made his debut in January 1931 with an essay on Wagner and Nietzsche¹; Rinaldi’s precious collaboration and obvious enthusiasm resulted in a series of essays on Pizzetti, Corelli, Bellini, the operas of the Verismo school and the article “Verdi e Shakespeare,”² that appeared in 1933 in three successive issues (published as well as a separate booklet). Rinaldi also wrote numerous reviews of operatic premières as well as—from 1933 to 1935—the column “Rassegna mensile di musicologia,” the correspondence from the Biennale di Venezia (1934 and 1936), from the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino (1937), from the Festival in Siena of the two Scarlattis. Rinaldi is also responsible for reports of musical events in Rome: actually conceived as a diary of the concert and operatic activities of the Teatro Reale dell’Opera, the Accademia di Santa Cecilia and the Accademia Filarmonica Romana, with particular attention given to new compositions.

The *Rassegna Dorica* is published in the midst of a fascist dictatorship and is therefore conditioned by the totalitarian policy aiming at the submission of all cultural and artistic activities. In the first issues the political aspect is seemingly circumscribed mostly to the notices; but from 1936 onward the submission to the fascist regime is much more evident, following the racial laws of 1938 (on this topic see the article by Federico Cândia, “Razzismo nel settore musica. Italianità,”³ and

¹ Mario Rinaldi, “Contradizioni nietzschiane” RAD II, no. 4 (20 January 1931): 65-68.

² _____, “Verdi e Shakespeare,” RAD IV, no. 4 (20 February 1933): 86-95; IV, no. 8 (20 June 1933): 185-96; IV, no. 10 (20 October 1933): 237-55.

³ Federico Cândia, “Razzismo nel settore musica Italianità,” RAD IX, no. 10 (20 October 1938): 181-86.

continuing with a total adherence to fascist ideology by numerous musicians—explicitly expressed by Pizzetti⁴ in particular—and as a result of Italy entering the war as an ally of Nazi Germany.

The structure of each issue remains, in the main, identical from the first issue onward: the first two or more major articles are dedicated to musical topics, such as biographical sketches of Italian contemporary composers—generally signed by Saint-Cyr—music history, folk music (Giorgio Nataletti, Giulio Fara, Luigi Neretti), music bibliography (Federico Ghisi), historical librettos (Ulderico Rolandi), sacred music, musical instruments (Eugenio Albini), unknown composers and pre-Paganinian instrumentalists from Liguria (Mario Pedemonte), and jazz (also Saint-Cyr). There are also reviews of significant musical events and the results concerning the three referenda introduced by the periodical: on the study of composition (1933-34); on music criticism (1935); and, on concert activities in Italy (1941). The authors of the articles belong for the most part to the young generation of Italian music critics, who will play a major role in post-war critical writings; in addition to those already named the following merit mention: Guglielmo Barblan, Angiola Maria Bonisconti, Adelmo Damerini, and Paolo Fragapane.

Thereafter, each page is printed containing various rubrics in two columns: “I giovani” (present in almost all issues: a series of short biographies of young Italian artists), “La musica a Roma” (monthly reports of current activities promoted by the Accademia di S. Cecilia and the Accademia Filarmonica Romana, written by Rinaldi), “Musica e musicisti” (Italian and foreign correspondence), a “Notiziario” (then titled “Notizie”), and “Musica e libri ricevuti” (devoted to reviews). The correspondence is from Brescia (Johanann), Genoa (Mario Pedemonte), Florence (Gastone Grangini), Milan (Enzo Greco), Naples (Jacopo Napoli), Siena (Baldo Brandi), Pesaro (Ernesto Paolone), Turin (Celso Simonetti, then Angiola Maria Bonisconti), Venice (Sandro Nadin), Verona (Enrico Kraus), Dresden (Walter Schaufuss-Bonini), Vienna (Giuseppe Reiss), and also from the United States (Saint-Cyr) and Germany (Elisabeth Luin).

The following rubrics are regularly published: “Cultura e didattica” (from 1933 to 1938: professional advices to young concert performers), “Vita corale” (signed by Arnaldo Boreggi), “*Rassegna mensile di musicologia italiana*” (1933-35), then transformed into “*Battute d’aspetto*” (1937-38), signed by Mario Rinaldi.

Particular attention is given to the compositions of Mario Peragallo – a composer belonging to the “Gruppo Dorico”—in particular to his operas *Ginevra degli Almieri* and *Lo stendardo di S. Giorgio*, and to Goffredo Petrassi, also a “Doric” composer.

The issue entirely devoted to Ildebrando Pizzetti (20 September 1940), is worthy of attention, as well as some articles published in successive issues: in addition to the already mentioned “Verdi e Shakespeare” by Rinaldi, the significant “Ricordi verdiani” by Giovanni Tebaldini⁵ (1940), the Rossini celebrations held in Pesaro in 1864 and 1868⁶ reconstructed by Paolone from the correspondence of Angelo Mariani (1935-36), and the interesting series of articles on Roman music chapels signed by falsetto singer Alessandro Gabrielli.⁷

⁴ Mario Rinaldi, “Pizzetti, musicista italiano” XI, no. 7 (20 September 1940): 143-47.

⁵ Giuseppe Tabaldini, “Ricordi verdiani” XI, no. 1 (20 January 1940): 4-8; XI, no. 3 (25 March 1940): 49-55; XI, no. 4 (25 April 1940): 73-79; XI, no. 5 (25 May 1940): 93-99; XI, no. 6 (25 June 1940): 118-23.

⁶ The seven parts of Ernesto Paolone’s “Appendice” are published in RAD VI, no. 10 (20 October 1935) to VII, no. 9 (20 July 1938).

⁷ Twenty-three parts of Alessandro Gabrielli’s article “Reassunto delle conversazioni sulla storia delle Cappelle musicali romane” are published in RAD from IX, no. 7 (20 May 1938) to XII, no. 2 (25 February 1941).

The rubric devoted to current events gives little attention to obituaries [necrologie] (amazing is the failure to report Ottorino Respighi's death on 18 April 1936) reserved almost exclusively to composers and performers belonging to the "Gruppo Dorico".

Translated by Elvidio Surian