

# INTRODUCTION

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*Artaserse* (Warb G 1), Johann Christian Bach's first opera for an Italian theater, seems to have taken shape under a dark cloud.<sup>1</sup> It was plagued by delays, illnesses, and cancellations, and it ran for only seven performances. During at least one of these performances almost all of the arias—those that remained after the excision of others—might have been shortened by about half their length. It was indeed an inauspicious beginning for one of the era's most successful Italian opera composers. On the bright side, *Artaserse's* production at Turin's Teatro Regio (see figure 1) is exceptionally well documented. The extant sources include administrative records produced by the theatrical management, numerous copies of the printed libretto, multiple manuscript scores and arias in the hands of the copyists employed by the theater, and the incomplete autograph score, among other materials. Ernest Warburton, whose introduction to the 1986 facsimile edition of the score surveys the work and its context, draws on Marie-Thérèse Bouquet's seminal history of the theater. Bouquet cited much, but not all of the voluminous related archival material.<sup>2</sup> Some of Warburton's claims are apparently based on misreadings of Bouquet's citations. Unfortunately, these form much of Daniel Hertz's overview of the work in his magisterial book *Music in European Capitals: The Galant Style, 1720–1780*, the only other study to consider Bach's Turinese opera in any detail.<sup>3</sup> These points are

in need of revision, in order to place historical research on the opera in the context of a richer complex of sources and evidence. Revisiting the archival material permits the reconstruction of the circumstances surrounding the opera's production and sheds new light on its presentation to the public for which it was composed.

Giovanni Michele Graneri, in a painting from the mid-1750s (now a widely reproduced image), immortalized Turin's opulent Teatro Regio and its vibrant social life.<sup>4</sup> The theater was run by a group of forty Piedmontese noblemen, the Nobile Società dei Cavalieri. These men, appointed by the sovereign, elected five directors from among their ranks to oversee different sectors of production.<sup>5</sup> The directors worked collaboratively, carrying out the traditional duties of an impresario: they hired artistic and technical personnel, decided on repertory, and kept records of income and expenses.<sup>6</sup> Their administrative documents are unusually well preserved and relatively complete, facilitating an understanding of the institution that is not possible to achieve for most Italian theaters.

The libretto that Turin's directors assigned to Bach was the most highly regarded of Metastasio's works, the one set to music most often throughout Europe. While a few Metastasian libretti received two settings in Turin, only *Artaserse* received three, testifying to its popularity. By convention, leading singers were hired first for a given season, often before libretti were chosen. The internationally known Gaetano Guadagni sang the *primo uomo* role of Arbace, one he had sung four times before in settings of the libretto for other cities. His engagement probably led Turin's directors to choose *Artaserse* in particular.

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1. This introduction, with slight modification, is based on Margaret R. Butler, "Artaserse," in *Operas of JCB*, 21–32. For a fuller view of the production and the circumstances around it, see Butler, "The Misadventures of *Artaserse* (Turin, 1760): J. C. Bach's First Italian Opera from Production to Performance," in *Theatrical Heritage: Challenges and Opportunities*, ed. Bruno Forment and Christel Stalpaert (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2015), 89–104, reprinted in *J. C. Bach*, 405–22.

2. Ernest Warburton, introduction to CWJCB, vol. 1, ix–xiv; Marie-Thérèse Bouquet, *Il teatro di corte dalle origini al 1788*, vol. 1 of *Storia del Teatro Regio di Torino*, ed. Alberto Basso (Turin: Cassa di Risparmio di Torino, 1976). Archival collections from Turin's Archivio storico della città di Torino (hereafter I-Tac) documenting the administration of Turin's Teatro Regio are described and summarized in Butler, *Operatic Reform at Turin's Teatro Regio: Aspects of Production and Stylistic Change in the 1760s* (Lucca: Libreria Musicale Italiana, 2001), Appendix A.

3. Daniel Hertz, *Music in European Capitals: The Galant Style, 1720–1780* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2003), 888–91.

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4. The painting, formerly attributed to Pietro Domenico Olivero and incorrectly dated to 1740 (*Interno del Teatro Regio di Torino, 1740*, Turin, Palazzo Madama, Museo Civico di Arte Antica, inv. 534/D; see [palazzomadamatorino.it](http://palazzomadamatorino.it)), is the subject of Margaret R. Butler, "Olivero's Painting of Turin's Teatro Regio: Toward a Reevaluation of an Operatic Emblem," *Music in Art* 34 (2009): 137–51.

5. On the Nobile Società dei Cavalieri, see Bouquet, *Il teatro di corte*, 109–26.

6. On this type of organizational system, see Franco Piperno, "L'impresariato collettivo e strategie teatrali: Sul sistema produttivo dello spettacolo operistico settecentesco," in *Civiltà teatrale e Settecento emiliano*, ed. Susi Davoli (Reggio Emilia: Il Mulino, 1986), 346–56.

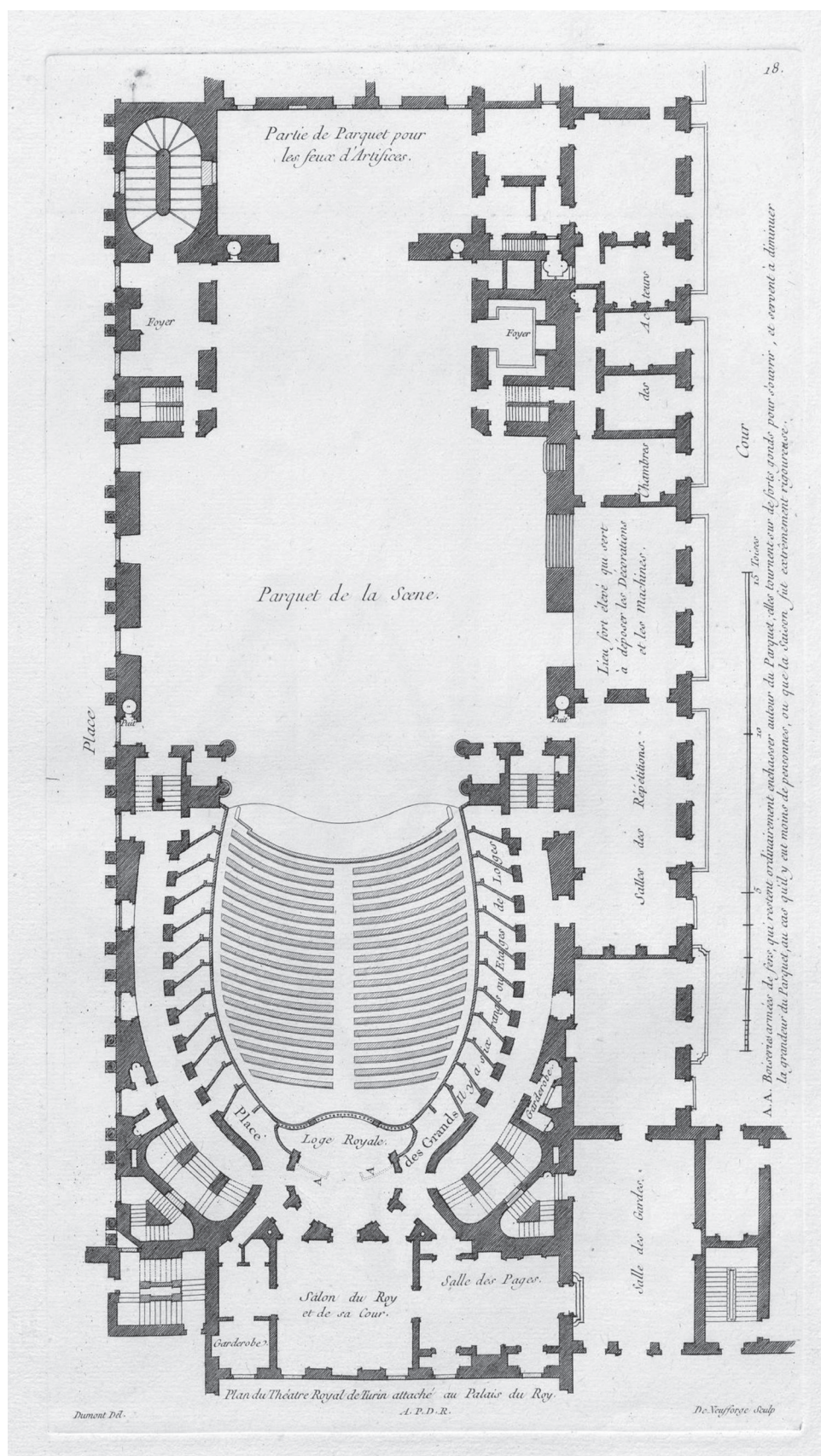


FIGURE 1. Plan of the Teatro Regio, Turin. From Gabriel-Martin Dumont, *Parallèle de plans des plus belles salles de spectacles d'Italie et de France, avec des détails de machines théâtrales* (Paris, [1774]). Zürich, ETH-Bibliothek, Rar 9827, fol. 20r, fig. 18 (scan available at [www.e-rara.ch](http://www.e-rara.ch))



The duration of the 1761 carnival season and the position of Bach's opera within it determined certain aspects of the work's content and production. Carnival lasted from 26 December through Shrove Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday. The number of available evenings for opera performances during any carnival was thus determined by the calendar. The Teatro Regio gave two consecutive opere serie every season. First operas usually featured a setting of a Metastasian or another familiar libretto by a lesser-known composer. Second operas, by contrast, were more prestigious, and their composers were generally those with established international reputations. Turin's directors would never have initially hired a composer like Bach, who had not yet composed a full-length opera seria, for a second opera. Bach's *Artaserse*, the first opera in carnival 1761, preceded *Tigrane*, whose libretto was set by Niccolò Piccinni, a prominent Neapolitan composer.

The run of each opera during a season in Turin was variable, lasting between twelve to twenty nights for first operas and twenty-two to twenty-eight for second ones.<sup>7</sup> Finances played into the decision on how long each opera was to run. The directors budgeted for a complete season, deciding what they could afford to spend on each opera. Their greatest expenses were the leading singers and dancers, who were chosen first, followed by the lower-ranking performers and composers.<sup>8</sup>

The original cast of *Artaserse* featured:

Singer's Name	Role
Carlo Nicolini	Artaserse
Maria Maddalena Parigi	Mandane
Pietro De Mezzo	Artabano
Gaetano Guadagni	Arbace
Teresa Mazzoli	Semira
Antonio Gotti	Megabise

Second operas usually generated more income, not surprisingly, given their higher status. Not only was attendance higher, but also gambling tables, a crucial source of a public theater's revenue, were open for more evenings during second operas. And more of them were followed by masked balls, extending the entertainment into the early

morning hours of the next day.<sup>9</sup> The length of a first opera's run seems to have depended on the time remaining after the run of the second was planned.

Easter came early in 1761, on 22 March. Therefore, carnival was extraordinarily short, lasting from 26 December to just 3 February—only about five and a half weeks compared to the normal eight to ten. The second opera was scheduled for a healthy run of twenty-two performances, meaning that the first could run for only about a week and a half with a few, obligatory masked balls in between. A perfect storm of calamities ensued, including illness of the sovereign and two leading performers (the *primo uomo* and *primo ballerino*), and a dearth of available understudies, all of which resulted in Bach's *Artaserse* having received an unprecedentedly minuscule total of seven performances (27–29 December and 3–6 January).<sup>10</sup> Turinese audiences had little time to get to know Bach's opera, clearly because of unfortunate circumstances and not due to any lack of success with the public.

Turin's directors tried to engage the most sought-after composers of the era, but in an era of stiff competition among theaters for leading creative personnel, they did not always succeed. In fact, Bach was Turin's second choice, with him receiving the commission only after Johann Adolf Hasse had declined.<sup>11</sup> After inviting Hasse, the Cavalieri prepared a contract for Bach as a backup (see appendix to introduction), but planned to delay sending it until they had heard from Hasse.<sup>12</sup> How Bach came to the attention of Turin's directors still remains an open question. Although it is possible that Hasse recommended him, as Hertz asserts,<sup>13</sup> the evidence from

9. Margaret R. Butler, "Time Management at Turin's Teatro Regio: Galuppi's *La clemenza di Tito* and its Alterations, 1759," *Early Music* 40 (2012): 285.

10. Although Warburton, introduction to CWJCB, vol. 1, x, reported that the performances on 28, 29, and 30 December were all canceled, the first two of these were not, since the season's account books report income for 28 and 29 December (I-Tac, Coll. IX, Libro conto, XLI, 1760–1761, 13). The account books give performances, corresponding weeknights, nightly intake for admissions sold for each area of the theater, and total revenue. Other supporting details and related evidence appear in Butler, "Misadventures," 92–95.

11. Reports of correspondence with Hasse appear in I-Tac, Ordinati, V, 8 (3 May 1760).

12. I-Tac, Carte sciolte 6242. Two copies of the contract survive, one unsigned. 30 May (which appears on both copies) is the date on which the contract was prepared, not the date it was sent.

13. Hertz, *European Capitals*, 888; see also 884 and 889. Hertz's assertion presumably comes from his reading of Warburton's citation of the Turin documents. Although the directors mention Hasse and Bach in the same entry, nowhere do the documents confirm that

7. Runs of operas are detailed in the theatrical account books for each season (I-Tac, Coll. IX, Libri conti della Nobile Società dei Cavalieri, hereafter "Libri conti"); total numbers of performances are given in Marie-Thérèse Bouquet, Valeria Gualerzi, and Alberto Testa, *Cronologie*, vol. 5 of *Storia del Teatro Regio di Torino*, ed. Alberto Basso (Turin: Cassa di Risparmio di Torino, 1988), 75–77.

8. These priorities are discussed in Butler, *Operatic Reform*, chap. 1.

Turin suggests otherwise. The directors did not usually mention composers recommending other composers in their deliberations; much more often, referrals came from highly ranking singers, from other directors in Turin, or officials in other cities with whom the directors were in communication. Bach's close proximity in Milan probably played an important role. There was frequent contact between Turin and Milan during the century, with theatrical personnel often trafficking between the two cities; among these were the famous brothers Fabrizio and Bernardino Galliari, who designed *Artaserse's* stage sets (discussed briefly below) and those of many other operas. One of the Hapsburg representatives in Milan at that time, or Bach's patron there, Count Agostino Litta, might have recommended him. Bach's close proximity and relative inexperience as an opera composer probably worked to his advantage, given the circumstances and time frame of his commission: at the end of May 1760, by which time they had still not heard from Hasse, the directors knew that they would have to find a composer available, willing, and nearby to take the job on short notice and come to Turin to mount the production.<sup>14</sup>

Perhaps one of the singers had actually recommended Bach. If so, it was probably not Maria Maddalena Parigi (the *prima donna*) or Teresa Mazzoli (the *seconda donna*), since Bach did not know them: he traveled to Reggio in June 1760 specifically to hear those singers and to become familiar with their voices, as he wrote to his teacher in Bologna, Padre Martini.<sup>15</sup> It was more likely Guadagni: the directors had on other occasions taken suggestions for composers from leading singers,<sup>16</sup> and Guadagni had been in Turin earlier, singing the *primo uomo* roles in the 1758–59 season. During or after the run of the second opera the directors engaged Guadagni for carnival 1761, which signals his success with the Turinese public and the pos-

sibility that he might have influenced their decision as to a future composer. Furthermore, a substitute text for one of Guadagni's arias, "Vivrò se vuoi così," appears in settings of *Artaserse* by Baldassare Galuppi that Guadagni sang in the years preceding his Turin engagement.<sup>17</sup> The fact that Bach set the same aria text for Turin (aria no. 21) suggests some contact between them. Moreover, it strengthens the possibility that Turin chose *Artaserse* because of Guadagni's numerous earlier successes in the role of Arbace.<sup>18</sup>

Bach received the standard contract offered to composers, which stipulated that music for acts 1 and 2 be sent in advance, about two months early, in order to maximize the time for copying. Composers were to bring music for act 3 with them when arriving in Turin, which was to occur no later than about a month before opening. Although the date on which Bach's contract was sent is unknown, he must have had it by 17 June, when he wrote to Martini about his trip to Reggio. Once hired, Bach obviously hastened to prepare, composing acts 1 and 2 in about five months, between early June and late October, according to his contract. He had more time for act 3, since he brought it with him when he arrived in late November or early December. By the terms of his contract, he directed the first three or four performances from the harpsichord—half of the total run, as it turned out.

An extant receipt lists rehearsals (*prove*) for Bach's *Artaserse* (see appendix to introduction). As the receipt shows, the eight rehearsals, held between 17 and 26 December, were organized according to genre (arias, recita-

Hasse recommended Bach to Turin. Connections between the Bach family and Hasse are explored in Heinz Gärtner, *John Christian Bach: Mozart's Friend and Mentor*, trans. Reinhard G. Pauly (Portland: Amadeus, 1994), 118–19, and Laurine Quetin, *L'opera seria de Johann Christian Bach à Mozart* (Geneva: Minkoff, 2003), 34.

14. The absence of Bach's first name in the main text of both extant copies of his contract further attests to his status as an unknown quantity.

15. Letter from Bach to Padre Martini, 17 June 1760 (I-Bc, I.24.78) as excerpted and cited by Warburton, introduction to CWJCB, vol. 1, x, where it is incorrectly dated 19 June, and translated and cited by Heartz, *European Capitals*, 887. Bach does not name the singers in his letter; Heartz determined which singers Bach must have intended.

16. Gaetano Ottani recommended Antonio Sacchini to the directors in 1764; Sacchini was engaged for the 1765–66 season, to cite one example.

17. Margaret R. Butler, "From Guadagni's Suitcase: A *Primo Uomo's* Signature Aria and Its Transformation," *COJ* 27, no. 3 (2015): 239–62. The substitute aria text "Vivrò se vuoi così" was set by various composers a number of times throughout the century, as I show in this article. Laura Buch recently discovered another appearance of the text, in Carlo Goldoni's libretto for *La ritornata di Londra*, set by Domenico Fischietti (Bologna, 1757; act 2, scene 2). The aria, absent from Goldoni's original libretto (Venice, 1756), could have been added in the Bologna production by its singer, Pietro Santi. Guadagni's performances of Galuppi's setting of the aria in *Artaserse* (beginning in August 1756 in Vicenza, and continuing through autumn 1757 in Lucca and later) both pre- and postdate the Bologna production of *La ritornata di Londra* in carnival 1757. Perhaps Santi sought to emulate Guadagni in the adoption of this aria text, resulting in yet another phase in this popular aria's transformation including its migration from opera seria to *dramma giocoso* and back again.

18. Bach and Guadagni might have crossed paths in Parma, in 1760 (see Butler, "Misadventures," 98). Filippo Elisi, Turin's *primo uomo* in 1760 and dedicatee of Bach's aria "Misero pargoletto" (1759), which according to the composer was so popular that Elisi had to perform it nightly in Milan, could also have played a role in Bach's Turinese engagement. I thank Bruno Forment for suggesting the Elisi connection to me.

tives, and *musica*, which could mean any musical component, possibly excerpts that needed additional work, or instrumental pieces or passages) and took place either in a chamber (*camera*) or onstage (*palco*). Rehearsals involving recitatives also involved groups of supernumeraries (*comparsa*), who participated in crowd scenes. Rehearsals gradually became more complex toward opening night, with recitatives, supernumeraries, and *scene* (scene changes) occurring late in the series, with the last two rehearsals comprising perhaps a run-through of the entire work (*prova Generale*) and a run-through of the dances (*prova Generale de Balli*). Although their duration is unknown, eight rehearsals to put together a large-scale opera seria might seem surprisingly few. However, such a brief period was conventional for Italian theaters at this time and highlights a central reality of opera seria's theatrical practices: a production typically came together quickly, with what might appear to us as astoundingly little time for collaboration and coordination. Whether or not Bach participated in these rehearsals is unknown, although he could have, since he would have arrived before mid-December.<sup>19</sup>

According to Hertz, "the opera was a success, as confirmed by many invitations that followed, including one from Turin to compose another opera in 1763. Bach was by then becoming established in London and did not accept."<sup>20</sup> The Turinese documents provide no strong evidence as to its reception with local audiences, whether positive or negative. The directors did think of inviting Bach again in 1763, but this time only as third choice, after Tommaso Traetta and Galuppi.<sup>21</sup> Traetta declined, Galuppi accepted, and Bach never actually got another invitation from Turin that year. Records of nightly entrance

19. Other documents suggest that additional rehearsals, involving the entr'acte dances only, were held separately. These seem to correspond, at least in part, to the significantly larger number of rehearsals cited by Bouquet (*Il teatro di corte*, 304), who observes dates for these rehearsals in the "Libri ordinati" and "Libri conti" that conflict with those in the *Carte sciolte*. The "Libri conti" do not specify type of rehearsal, while the *Carte sciolte* do; the "Libri ordinati" report plans that were made (with dates and rehearsal type) but give dates that conflict with those in the other two collections. Bouquet provides rehearsal schedules for other Turin operas (*Il teatro di corte*, 218–19), drawn from the "Libri ordinati," which correspond roughly to what we see in the receipt given above (between five and eight or nine rehearsals was typical).

20. Hertz, *European Capitals*, 889.

21. I-Tac, Ordinati, V, 214 (26 February 1763): "Il Sig[no]r Marchese di Barolo ha fatto relazione che il Maestro di Cappella Traetta non può comporre l'Opera del Carnevale prossimo; Epperò si è stabilito scrivere alli Maestro Galuppi e Bach." (The Marquis di Barolo reported that the *maestro di cappella* Traetta is not available to compose the opera of the coming carnival season; therefore it has been decided that we will write to Galuppi and Bach.)

fees suggest that *Artaserse* enjoyed a positive reception in Turin during its short run, although so few performances occurred that this data is inconclusive. But good news of *Artaserse* must have traveled quickly, regardless of the production's brief run, resulting in commissions from Naples and, later, London.

In keeping with theatrical convention, the top-ranking singers earned high fees while composers decidedly did not. Bach's fee for *Artaserse's* composition, 130 *zecchini gigliati* (less than half of what Guadagni earned for his performance in that opera alone) was on the low side for composers—perhaps a testament to Bach's lack of experience, or his nationality, or both, and certainly to his lesser reputation within Italy. His fee was equal or near to those of two other foreign-born composers: Josef Mysliveček in 1767 and Vicente Martín y Soler in 1783. By way of comparison with other leading composers, Turin's top-range fee (a sum equal to about 175 *zecchini*) was earned by Ignaz Holzbauer in 1757, Galuppi in 1764, Gianfrancesco de Majo in 1765, and Pasquale Caffaro in 1768.<sup>22</sup>

What did the Turinese public see and hear at a performance of *Artaserse*? The sources each tell a different, incomplete story. Of the numerous extant exemplars of the Turin libretto, I consulted nine.<sup>23</sup> The libretti survive in three distinct states: two lacking Bach's name with the cavatina intact (I-Tn, F VII. 363/1 and I-Tr, pp. 5 (45)); two including Bach's name and the cavatina (I-CHRC, C. 3120 and US-Wc, ML48.S532); and five including Bach's name but lacking the cavatina (CDN-Ttfl, lib 00425; I-NOVC, CIV 194.F.32; I-Tac, Simeon 761; I-Tci, L. O. 193; and I-Tn, F XIII. 490/1). I noted minor but significant variants: two pages exist in two different states, as the following illustrations demonstrate. In one state of page v (*Interlocutori*), the composer's name is absent, while in another, evidently later state, it is present. In one state, the cavatina from Metastasio's original text of act 3, scene 1, Arbace's "Perché tarda è mai la morte" (no. 20) is present, while in another the cavatina is cut by means of quotation marks (*virgolette*) surrounding the text, the conventional way of indicating deletion in performance (about a third of the opera's recitative is cut in this manner as well).<sup>24</sup>

22. The top-range fee for composers was paid in Piedmontese *lire* (1662.10) and not *zecchini gigliati*. 180 *zecchini* were equal to 1755 Piedmontese *lire* (Bouquet, *Il teatro di corte*, 294).

23. Corago (corago.unibo.it) currently lists five exemplars, three of which I consulted, as well as the others listed above. I did not have access to those at I-Rsc, Carv.Vol.147.04, and I-Vgc, BAC-BAK. Warburton lists seven exemplars in CWJCB, vol. 48, pt. 2, 459.

24. The decision to cut passages of recitative and to change aria texts



These pages exist in different combinations within the exemplars: two with Bach's name absent and the cavatina intact; two with Bach's name present and the cavatina intact; and five with Bach's name present and the cavatina cut. These sorts of variants, representing stop-press corrections, are common in eighteenth-century libretti; those printed in Turin throughout the century exhibit many similar situations. Printers would stop the press, adjust the type, and keep printing, and then use all the sheets, with and without the corrections: paper was too expensive to discard. Turin's directors routinely sent composers copies of libretti they were to set. Bach must have received one with the cavatina intact: the copies of the score penned by the Turin copyists include his setting of the cavatina text.<sup>25</sup> And he must have received a copy of the 1760 libretto and not one for Turin's earlier production from 1741, since he did not set any of the recitative text that was cut with quotation marks in 1760. The nature of the variants suggests that the third combination, with Bach's name present and the cavatina cut, represents the latest one to have been produced. However, given the variety and combination of its variants, the libretto is unreliable as a source documenting the content performed in Turin. Neither are the copies of the score in the hands of the Turin copyists entirely to be trusted. Despite the cavatina's presence in both of them, it is likely that this piece was not performed, as other evidence suggests.

A copy of the libretto with Bach's name present and the cavatina cut exhibits manuscript marks in ink indicating elimination of the B sections of almost every one of the arias.<sup>26</sup> In another page from this exemplar, the final scene of act 1 is completely cut by means of a penciled-in bracket. The cuts in the arias resemble ones I observed in a copy of the libretto for Galuppi's setting of *La clemenza di Tito*, given in Turin the previous season, which exhibits similar cuts in B sections of many arias, and in one case, the deletion of an entire aria (with marks next to both A

and B sections). The same exemplar for *La clemenza di Tito* contains a rare type of document: three manuscript charts, one per act, penned by a member of the Teatro Regio's administrative staff. These charts show the duration of every portion of the opera in total minutes—recitatives, arias, and other pieces—and cuts in them indicate that a performance of the opera was shortened by a half hour. I have shown elsewhere that these cuts likely occurred at a performance attended by the sovereign, and that the cuts to the arias' B sections likely indicated deletions of their A-prime sections as well (the da capo repeats of the first stanzas).<sup>27</sup> The copy of *Artaserse*'s libretto with cuts to the arias seems to represent the same convention. The fact that this particular copy contains the excised cavatina suggests that this short piece was not performed either, despite its presence in the scores copied by the Turin scribes. It appears that, during at least one of the opera's few performances and perhaps others, the Turinese public heard only a fraction of Bach's music.

Although carnival 1761 got off to a rough start in Turin, it ended well for Bach: it launched his international career as an Italian opera composer. The evidence linked with Bach's *Artaserse* demonstrates anew the need to consider a rich and varied array of sources in order to gain a full view of a work in its broadest context.

Beyond the archival materials, the production is documented by plentiful visual sources. The aforementioned Galliari brothers, scenographers renowned throughout Europe, created numerous scene designs for *Artaserse*, which are preserved at Turin's Biblioteca Reale.<sup>28</sup> One of these (see figure 2), "Atrio delli Apartamenti Reali," for act 2, scene 3, is particularly striking, representing the "scena per angolo," which had revolutionized scenic design when it was introduced at the end of the previous century.

The work's musical sources include five manuscript scores: the autograph (Gb-Lbl, R.M.22.a.18–20) and four

was institutional, coming from Turin's directors. I-Tac, Ordinati, V, 14 (28 June 1760): "Il Sign[or] Conte de Malines domanda la facoltà di diminuire gli Recitativi della prima Opera, e far varie mutazioni nelle Arie d'accordo col S[igno]r. Cigna . . . il che è stato approvato." (Count Malines requests authorization to cut down the recitatives of the first opera and make changes in the arias with the approval of Mr. Cigna [Vittorio Amedeo Cigna-Santi, the Teatro Regio's house poet], which has been approved.)

25. Scores in the Turin copyists' hands that include the cavatina are those at P-La, I-Tf, and I-SAVc. The cavatina is absent from the autograph.

26. *Artaserse* (Turin: Avondo, 1761), I-Tci, L.O. 193, 50–51; see Butler, "Misadventures," 104.

27. Butler, "Time Management," 285–86.

28. I-Tr, "Tom. VII," (1), Ms. Varia 327. Mercedes Viale Ferrero, *La scenografia del '700 e i fratelli Galliari* (Turin: Edizioni d'arte fratelli Pozzo, 1963), 269–70, 273. Viale Ferrero details the volume's contents, giving the title of the designs on each page and describing them; pp. 138–62 of the manuscript contain the designs for this production of *Artaserse*. Some pages include multiple designs and some pages are missing from the volume; approximately twenty-five designs are present. A second manuscript volume, containing nine designs for this production of *Artaserse* (at least one of them is apparently a refinement of one given in the aforementioned volume, according to note 25 on p. 273) is held at Varese's Fondazione Pogliaghi; Viale Ferrero, *I fratelli Galliari*, 248, 252. See also Viale Ferrero, *La scenografia dalle origini al 1936*, vol. 3 of *Storia del Teatro Regio di Torino*, ed. Alberto Basso (Turin: Cassa di Risparmio di Torino, 1980), 221–22.



FIGURE 2. Fabrizio Galliari, "Atrio delli Apartamenti Reali," (*Artaserse*, act 2, scene 3).  
Turin, Biblioteca Reale, "Tom. VII" (1), Ms. Varia 327, p. 148.  
With permission MiC—Musei Reali, Biblioteca Reale di Torino.

others (I-SAVc, Santa Rosa Mss. 2/1–3; I-Tf, I.VIII.1–3; P-La, 44-II-34 a 36, which is given in facsimile in CWJCB; and P-La, 54-II-73 a 75). Apart from the autograph, the scores were institutional products, copied or partially copied by Turin copyists active during the mid-century. These men were instrumentalists who performed with court and theatrical ensembles; one composed music for Turin's ballets given between the operas' acts. The Turin copyists' hands are visible in manuscript musical materials connected with the Teatro Regio's operas and administrative documents of various kinds that date from the years of their employment.<sup>29</sup>

Largely neglected for some 250 years, apart from recent recordings of arias sung by the celebrated countertenor Philippe Jaroussky,<sup>30</sup> *Artaserse* was given new life in 2013, when the first modern production of the work took place

in Kortrijk, Belgium. Featuring rediscovered and restored sets originally painted by Albert Dubosq for a 1913 *comédie-française* performance, and an ensemble from the Antwerp Conservatoire directed by Ewald Demeyere, the production served as the highlight of an international conference and helped create new audiences for Bach's first foray into Italian opera seria.<sup>31</sup>

Margaret R. Butler

## APPENDIX

1. J.C. Bach's contract for *Artaserse*, Turin, 30 May 1760. I-Tac, cartella 436, Carte sciolte 6242; cf. Roe, DL 25; facsimile in Butler, "Artaserse," *Operas of JCB*, 24, fig. 1.

### TEXT:

Per virtù della presente Scrittura, la quale averà forza di pubblico Istrumento rogato, ed insinuato Bisognando ecc.

Il Sig.<sup>r</sup> \_\_\_\_ Bacchi Maestro di Cappella si obbliga verso gli Signori Cavalieri Direttori delle Opere nel

29. Butler, *Operatic Reform*, chap. 2, details the activities of the Turin copyists and gives samples of their hands in payment documents and scores.

30. J.C. Bach, *La Dolce Fiamma: Forgotten Castrato Arias*, Philippe Jaroussky and Le Cercle de l'Harmonie, dir. Jérémie Rhorer, Erato BoiJT7HEC6, 2009. Reviewed by David Yearsley, with insightful commentary on Bach's musical style, in "Bringing Landscapes to Life: The Music of Johann Christian Bach," *CounterPunch* (14 August 2020), CounterPunch.org.

31. See Bruno Forment, "Preface: A Twenty-first-century Plea for Vintage, Heritage-friendly Theater," in *Theatrical Heritage*, 11–20; plate 2 (p. 261) shows an image of the stage sets and leading singers in the production.

Reg.<sup>io</sup> Teatro di Torino, di comporre, e dare composta in Musica affatto nuova, e non già sentita, la prima Opera da rappresentarsi in d.<sup>o</sup> Reg.<sup>io</sup> Teatro, e da principiare alla scadenza dell'anno Corr.<sup>e</sup>, secondo l'Istruzione, che le verrà trasmessa col Libro; e dovrà esso S.<sup>r</sup> Maestro dare compiti, e mandare gli due primi Atti al finire del mese d'Ottobre, ed il 3.<sup>o</sup> portarlo – seco al suo arrivo in questa Capitale non più tardi del fine del mese di Novembre, o principio di Xmbre, per mettere in Scena l'Opera, e suonare tre, o quatro Sere alla medesima.

E mediante l'adempimento delle sovra espresse Condizioni, gli prefati Sig.<sup>ri</sup> Cavalieri si obbligano, sotto le riserve de' Casi contrarj, fortuiti, pensati, od impensati, di pagare allo stesso Sg.<sup>r</sup> Bacchi la somma di Zecchini cento trenta Gigliati, o loro giusto valore di Tariffa in questa Capitale p. la composizione pred.<sup>a</sup> dell'Opera in Musica. Tor.<sup>o</sup> addì 30 Maggio 1760.

Giovanni Christiano Bach

Il C.<sup>te</sup> Malines

Il M.<sup>se</sup> Granery

#### TRANSLATION:

By virtue of the present agreement, which shall have all the force of a legally binding and publicly registered notarized document, etc.

Signor \_\_\_\_ Bacchi Maestro di Cappella pledges to the Signori Cavalieri, directors of the operas at the Royal Theater of Turin, to compose and to submit composed, with completely new music that has not already been heard elsewhere, the first opera to be performed in the aforementioned Royal Theater, which will have its premiere at the end of the current year, according to the instructions that will be sent with the libretto. The Signor Maestro will also make arrangements to send the first two acts [of the opera] in advance, by the end of the month of October, and bring the third [act] with him when he arrives in this capital city, [which must occur] no later than the end of the month of November or the beginning of December, in order to mount a production of the opera, and will play [i.e., play the harpsichord and lead the orchestra] three or four evenings of the same [the aforementioned opera].

And upon fulfillment of the conditions detailed above, the aforementioned Signori Cavalieri are bound, except in adverse cases due to unfavorable, accidental, foreseeable or unforeseeable circumstances, to pay the same Signor Bacchi the sum of 130 *zecchini gigliati*, or their equivalent

in this capital city, for the composition of the aforementioned opera. Turin, 30 May 1760.

Giovanni Christiano Bach

Il Conte Malines

Il Marchese Granery

#### 2. Receipt for *Artaserse* rehearsals, 1760.

I-Tac, cartella 436, Carte sciolte 6242; facsimile in Butler, "*Artaserse*," *Operas of JCB*, 27, fig. 2.

#### TEXT:

1760

Notta delle prove fatte del opera Artaserse

17 Xbre prova di arie di Musica

18 d.<sup>o</sup> prova di Musica nella Camera

19 d.<sup>o</sup> prova sul palco [de] Recitativo, e Comparese

20 d.<sup>o</sup> prova di Musica nella Camera

21 d.<sup>o</sup> prova di Musica sul palco

23 d.<sup>o</sup> prova di Recitativo e, Comparese e, Scene

24 d.<sup>o</sup> prova Generale

26 d.<sup>o</sup> prova Generale de Balli

Francesco Bayn

Ho ricevuto lire sedici per le sud.<sup>e</sup> Prove sud.<sup>e</sup> Torino li 2.

Gennaio 1761

#### TRANSLATION:

1760

Note regarding the rehearsals of the opera *Artaserse*

17 December rehearsal of arias

18 [December], music rehearsal in the chamber [which music, and which chamber, is not specified; this likely took place in a small room in the building housing the theater]

19 [December], rehearsal of the recitatives and with supernumeraries, on stage

20 [December], music rehearsal in the chamber

21 [December], music rehearsal on stage

23 [December], rehearsal of recitatives and with supernumeraries, and scene changes [likely rehearsal of staging and scene/set changes]

24 [December], general rehearsal [likely a full run-through, or rehearsal of anything that was needed]

26 [December], general rehearsal of the dances [likely a run-through of the entr'acte dances]

Francesco Bayn

I have received 16 lire for the aforementioned rehearsals, Turin, 2 January 1761

*Translations by Margaret R. Butler*