

Francesco Cavalli * Opere

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Francesco Cavalli

La Calisto

Dramma per musica by Giovanni Faustini

Edited by
Álvaro Torrente (Score)
Nicola Badolato (Libretto)



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Francesco Cavalli * Opere

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Preface

The Edition

Over the past several decades, the operas of Francesco Cavalli (1602–1676) have become increasingly in demand in theaters around the world, an interest stimulated in part by the overwhelming popular success of the operas of Monteverdi, Cavalli's great predecessor and teacher. Whereas Monteverdi's extant operas are only three, however, Cavalli's number nearly thirty. Indeed, Cavalli was the most prolific and important opera composer of the seventeenth century, and it is his works that set the stage for the subsequent development of opera as a genre. Cavalli's operas, which share some of the most outstanding features of Monteverdi's, thus provide a treasure trove of material waiting to be performed.

The few editions that were available in the last decades of the 20th century, though path-breaking for their time, and actually responsible for the increasing interest in Cavalli, were not in keeping with present day performance standards for early music. Two more recent critical editions, published during the past decade, however, have encouraged a number of productions, especially of *La Calisto*, but productions of other Cavalli operas have depended on ad hoc editions made for the occasion, without much thought for future use.

Our new critical edition of the Operas of Francesco Cavalli will attempt to fill the need for reliable source-based editions as well as dependable performance materials. It is also designed to encourage productions of operas that have not yet been resurrected in modern times. The project, long overdue, became reality thanks to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, which granted me a Distinguished Achievement Award in 2007. We are also indebted to the Università di Bologna and the Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca for financing the research on the librettos of Cavalli's operas under the direction of Lorenzo Bianconi. In addition to the Associate Editor Álvaro Torrente, and Executive Editors Robert Holzer and Hendrik Schulze, our Editorial Board consists of seasoned Cavalli scholars from six countries – the United States of America, Great Britain, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, and Spain.

The first phase of this edition will comprise fourteen operas, half of those for which scores have survived:

<i>La Calisto</i>	<i>L'Ipermestra</i>
<i>Artemisia</i>	<i>Veremonda l'Amazzone di Aragona</i>
<i>Scipione Affricano</i>	<i>L'Erismena</i>
<i>L'Eliogabalo</i>	<i>L'Egisto</i>
<i>L'Orione</i>	<i>L'Eritrea</i>
<i>La Didone</i>	<i>Ercole amante</i>
<i>Il Xerse</i>	<i>Giasone</i>

These were chosen on the basis of a variety of criteria: the historical importance of the works, the variety and interest of particular source materials, the interests of the individual editors, some of whom had already been working on their editions before the Cavalli Edition was established, or as representative examples of important trends or moments in the development of the composer's career.

Editorial challenges posed by these works differ profoundly from those of later operas. For one thing, the original musical material for these operas is notoriously laconic – the scores consist essentially of only two lines, a voice part and a sparsely figured bass line, interspersed with a few passages for three or five-part strings. The scores may also contain certain verbal notations and shorthand symbols for orchestration, transposition, or other editorial intervention, material that the original performers could understand, but whose meaning is not immediately obvious to contemporary ones. Translation into usable performing material thus requires the intervention of specialist editors who understand the implications of the scores and can flesh them out – or provide performers with the means of doing so themselves – with appropriate additional material.

The Sources

Although nearly all were produced more than once in the seventeenth century, as attested by numerous published librettos (exceptions are *Eliogabalo*, never performed at all, *Calisto*, *Ipermestra*, and *Ercole amante*), some are represented by only a single musical score (*Eliogabalo*, *Calisto*, *Ipermestra*, *Ercole amante*, *Eritrea*, *Artemisia*, *Didone*, and *Veremonda*), while others have multiple scores – *Giasone* (11), *Erismena*, *Xerse*, and *Scipione Affricano* (three), *Orione* and *Egisto* (two).

This source situation is both ameliorated and further complicated, however, by the existence of multiple librettos for most of the works. The importance of these librettos – as testifying to multiple productions and as means of understanding various editorial annotations in the extant scores – makes them an essential part of this edition. Indeed, because of the paucity of musical sources, the textual edition can often reflect more about the reception of the opera than the score does. It is for this reason that each individual opera will have a text editor as well as a music editor. Most of the primary musical sources for our individual volumes come from the famous Contarini Collection at the Biblioteca Marciana, Venice. The 28 Cavalli scores in this collection, representing all of his extant operas, seem to have been collected by the composer himself, with an eye toward preserving them for posterity.

More than half of them (including *Calisto*, *Orione*, *Veremonda*, *Xerse*, *Artemisia*, *Ipermestra*, and *Ercole amante*) are full or partial autographs, some (including *Calisto*) are partly in the hand of the composer's wife, Maria Sosomeno, who was active as a copyist between 1650 and 1652, when she died, and others (including *Dido-ne*, *Eritrea*, *Giasone*, *Erismena*, *Scipione Affricano*, and *Eliogabalo*) are fair copies that were probably made between 1652 and 1676, when the composer died. Other mostly subsidiary manuscripts come from libraries in Florence, Lisbon, Modena, Naples, Oxford, Paris, Rome, and Vienna. The primary librettos are all found in Venetian collections (Cini, Correr, Goldoni, Marciana), but some of those for subsequent productions come from elsewhere (Bologna, Florence, London, Milan, Modena, Naples, Rome).

General Editorial Policy

For the scores, we have applied only basic performance aids, such as writing out ritornellos where they were implied or adding the occasional missing instrumental part. We have added figures only in cases where the harmony is ambiguous, and filled out or regularized whatever expressive indications may be implied or applied inconsistently. In all cases, editorial additions will be clearly differentiated from original material.

Most of our musical sources are singular, but there are at least two distinct versions of the libretto: the literary text given in the Critical Edition, and the sung text, given under the notes. Although distinctions between them will be preserved, occasional mistakes or ambiguities in one will be corrected with reference to the other. English translations will be provided. Each volume will contain a substantial prefatory essay covering the historical and literary background and the production history, as well as a synopsis, a list of characters (with vocal ranges), and a list of stage settings. The preface will include a Guide to Performance, which will contain a section on suggested transpositions and cuts. It will also provide facsimiles of frontispieces from the libretto and representative pages from the score.

Our goal is to provide a dependable score for music libraries, where these milestones of operatic composition belong, and a basic framework that can be used as it is or else modified by those responsible for individual productions, who will need to make their own decisions regarding the distribution of continuo instruments, dynamics, and so forth. By making available critical editions that are designed for performance in multiple venues, we hope to satisfy and stimulate the interest in these works, which demonstrate for the first time in history the ways in which the vicissitudes of theatrical life were managed in the production of operas on a regular basis.

Ellen Rosand

Introduction

La Calisto received its première at the Teatro Sant' Apollinare, Venice, on 28 November 1651. It was Francesco Cavalli's fifteenth opera, and his ninth to a libretto by Giovanni Faustini. As the mature fruit of its authors' collaboration, it was the culmination of one of the most productive and enduring partnerships in the history of the genre. Over the previous decade, that partnership had helped to establish many of the basic conventions of Venetian opera, some of which were to endure for centuries.¹ The smallest theater in Venice, Sant' Apollinare was where in 1650 Faustini had started a new venture – after two years (of a three-year contract) as impresario at S. Moisè – to be joined by his brother Marco and other Venetian entrepreneurs. *Calisto* is one of the few seventeenth-century operas for which we have substantial information about the production, thanks to the surviving account book of Marco Faustini:² we know the names of the singers and the make-up of the instrumental ensemble (just two violins and continuo), and we have a record of the expenses for spectacular machines and scenography as well as itemized information about the preparation of the season, the run of the opera, the attendance figures – even the payments for the *prima donna's* gondola. Together with the printed libretto and the single surviving musical manuscript, which was used in the production by one of the continuo players, this wealth of evidence makes it possible to undertake a critical edition with a level of comprehension of the work and its text unusual for the period.

Diverging from most of Cavalli and Faustini's previous operas, *Calisto* is based on mythology. It combines two contrasting love stories involving the same Olympian goddess, Diana, which do not seem to have been associated in any previous source, whether ancient or modern. They concern the love between Jupiter (dis-

guised as Diana) and the nymph Callisto; and that between Diana and the shepherd Endymion. The second story refers to still another mythological relationship, the love between Diana and Pan. Faustini articulates a brilliant plot which, while carefully respecting the essential elements of the Classical tradition, allows for the introduction of other elements typical of a Venetian operatic scheme; these include a number of comic and supporting roles, some of which have their own short, witty subplots. The opera was composed for the same season and cast as *Eritrea* and premiered one month earlier than the usual opening date of the theaters (26 December), probably in order to preempt competition from the two other theaters operating in that season. The production was marked by tragedy: the leading male singer, the alto castrato Bonifazio Ceretti, who was to have sung Endimione, fell ill shortly before the first night and died a few weeks later, with the result that Cavalli was forced to adapt the role for a soprano and recast the production; two weeks later, on 19 December, Giovanni Faustini himself died. It is hard to imagine worse luck for a public entertainment, but nonetheless even after Faustini's death the opera ran for four more performances. Although it is unclear how directly the double tragedy affected the production, the account book shows that it was a miserable failure: the opera was cancelled after eleven performances and never revived.³

Calisto's modern fortunes have been quite different. As part of Raymond Leppard's rediscovery of Cavalli, it was produced at Glyndebourne in 1970, and there followed both a recording and an edition.⁴ Leppard's score neither was nor pretended to be a critical edition, but was rather a thorough-going adaptation that had in mind a public whose expectations were substantially different from those of the original seventeenth-century audience. The produc-

- 1 The best insights into this critical period of Italian opera are found in Lorenzo Bianconi, *Music in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 161–219; and particularly Ellen Rosand, *Opera in Seventeenth-Century Venice: The Creation of a Genre* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991). On Francesco Cavalli see Jane Glover, *Cavalli* (London: Batsford, 1978); Lorenzo Bianconi, "Caletti, Pietro Francesco, detto Cavalli," in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, ed. A. M. Ghisalberti (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1973), 16: 686–96; Hendrik Schulze, "Cavalli," in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, second ed. (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2000), Personenteil 4: 471–84; Thomas Walker and Irene Alm, "Cavalli, Francesco," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, second edition (London: Macmillan, 2001) 5: 302–13; the articles in Dinko Fabris, ed., *Francesco Cavalli: La circolazione dell'opera veneziana nel Seicento* (Naples: Turchini Edizione, 2005). On Faustini see Thomas Walker, Beth Glixon and Jonathan Glixon, "Faustini, Giovanni," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, second edition (London: Macmillan, 2001) 7: 607–08; Nicola Badolato, *I drammi musicali di Giovanni Faustini per Francesco Cavalli* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2012) and idem, "Sulle fonti dei drammi per musica di Giovanni Faustini per Francesco Cavalli: Alcuni esempi di ars combinatoria," *Musica e storia* 14 (2008), 341–84.
- 2 Archivio di Stato di Venezia, Scuola Grande di San Marco, busta 112. This extraordinary source was discovered by Beth Glixon and Jonathan Glixon, who provided a preliminary report in "Marco Faustini and Venetian Opera Production in the 1650s: Recent Archival Discoveries," *Journal of Musicology* 10 (1992), 48–73. A broader pathbreaking study was more recently published by the same authors as *Inventing the Business of Opera: The Impresario and His World in Seventeenth-Century Venice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006). References in this essay are to the Glixons publications or, when necessary, to the source as ASV, SGSM, b. 112, followed by folio number(s).
- 3 Precise figures of paid attendance for operas produced by Marco Faustini in the 1650s are provided in Glixon and Glixon, "Marco Faustini and Venetian Opera Production," 56. Tables of paid attendance for the 1650s and 1660s are found in Glixon and Glixon, *Inventing the Business of Opera*, 353–57.
- 4 Francesco Cavalli, *La Calisto*, sound recording conducted by Raymond Leppard (London: Decca, 1972); Francesco Cavalli, *La Calisto*, ed. Raymond Leppard (London: Faber Music, 1975).