

Heaven and Hell

Performances of Liszt's Works and their Reception in Rome, 1861–1886¹

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Abstract: Although the period of Liszt's residency in Rome is marked by pivotal events, many aspects concerning his networks, activities, and relevance in the city's musical life still await musicological scrutiny. The present paper examines which of Liszt's compositions could have been heard in Rome by a broader audience during the time the composer had his permanent residence there, and which pieces received attention from the Italian press. Although the performances of the *Dante Symphony* in 1866 and *Christus* in 1867 are to be understood as key events in the Roman perception of Liszt as a composer of symphonic music, performances in this genre remained a rarity throughout the 1860s. By then, it was primarily Liszt's piano music which was heard both in private and more public settings, mainly popularized by Liszt's student Giovanni Sgambati. Together with the violinist Ettore Pinelli, Sgambati was also key to staging Liszt's symphonic music with full orchestra during the 1870s and 1880s. Focusing on these decades, this paper eventually elaborates the consolidation and canonization of Liszt's music and the lasting implications of the Liszt–Sgambati–Pinelli circle on Rome's concert repertoire after the Italian unification.

Keywords: Franz Liszt, Giovanni Sgambati, Ettore Pinelli, Rome, *Dante*, *Christus*

Franz Liszt's residency in Rome (1861–1869) was a period not only of important premières of his works, but also of a new compositional emphasis on sacred music. Further, one can observe drastic changes in both the private and public persona of Liszt, as during this period he received the minor orders, and henceforth pre-

1. Research for this article was supported by a grant from the Austrian Academy of Sciences and the Austrian Historical Institute in Rome. I dedicate further thanks to Elisa Pederzoli for her help with translations of Italian quotes.

sented himself as a cleric. Although this was received by his contemporaries with a certain level of surprise, Liszt soon “became a familiar figure in Rome, walking through the cobbled streets of the old city with his long grey hair streaming in the wind and his abbé’s soutane fluttering behind him,” as Ferdinand Gregorovius articulated.² Such an outward appearance indeed fit with Liszt’s compositional output and networks in elite clerical circles in Rome, but according to Dezső Legány, this was not only to Liszt’s benefit, but rather seen controversially: a cleric with close relations to the Vatican would hardly gain great popularity among the increasing liberal circles in Risorgimento-Italy.³

Numerous studies, older⁴ as well as more recent,⁵ have considered a detailed and sophisticated investigation of Liszt’s relations with Rome as a desideratum in research. Although by now some basis is established⁶ and details continue to accumulate, there is much that has yet to be examined, especially regarding Liszt’s networks and activities in Rome (and Italy generally), as well as his reception as a performer and composer. The present paper examines questions such as which of Liszt’s compositions could have been heard in Rome by a broader audience during the time the composer had his permanent residence there, which of the compositions received attention in the press, and, eventually, which lasting implications for the concert repertoire in Rome during the following two decades can be witnessed. Local press reports on musical events at this time were, in fact, presented only by two journals: *L’Osservatore Romano: giornale politico-mondiale* (published since 1861) and *Eptacordo: giornale di musica, drammatica, coreografia, varietà di belle arti, scienze, letteratura e annunci* (published between 1855 and c. 1872). The latter – as already described by Daniela Macchione⁷ – hardly contains any accounts of Liszt or music in general, although during those years it was the only periodical published in Rome specifically dedicated to artistic and cultural

2. Ferdinand GREGOROVIVS, *Römische Tagebücher* (München: Beck, 1991), 195. Translation from Alan WALKER, *Franz Liszt, vol. 3: The Final Years, 1861–1886* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 90.

3. Dezső LEGÁNY, “Liszt in Rom, nach der Presse (Erster Teil),” *Studia Musicologica* 19/1–4 (1977), 106; Alberto de Angelis noted that Liszt hardly won the sympathies either of the liberals by presenting himself as abbé or of the Catholics by having had love affairs with Marie d’Agoult and the Princess Wittgenstein. Alberto de ANGELIS, “Liszt a Roma,” *Rivista Musicale Italiana* 18/2 (1911), 330.

4. This becomes obvious in: Michael SAFFLE, *Franz Liszt: A Guide to Research* (New York etc.: Routledge, 3/2004) (= *Routledge Music Bibliographies*); cf. also LEGÁNY, “Liszt in Rom.”

5. Cf. Nicolas DUFETEL, “Liszt e Roma: bilancio e prospettive di ricerca,” in *Musikstadt Rom. Geschichte – Forschung – Perspektiven. Beiträge der Tagung “Rom – Die Ewige Stadt im Brennpunkt der aktuellen musikwissenschaftlichen Forschung” am Deutschen Historischen Institut in Rom, 28.–30. September 2004*, ed. by Markus ENGELHARDT (Kassel etc.: Bärenreiter, 2011) (= *Analecta musicologica*, vol. 45), 452–477.

6. Cf. especially WALKER, *The Final Years*. For the biographical background of Liszt’s Rome residency, see also Alan WALKER and Michael SAFFLE, *Liszt, Carlolyne and the Vatican: The Story of a Thwarted Marriage* (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1991). There are further some more specialized articles concerning the musician’s Rome years, published in this journal, such as Klára HAMBURGER, “Documents – Liszt à Rome,” and “Franz Liszt et Michelangelo Caetani, duc de Sermoneta,” *Studia Musicologica* 21/2–4 (1979), 239–265 and 319–344.

7. Daniela MACCHIONE, “‘Ne’ latifondi delle lettere, e delle arti belle’ sotto l’occhio vigile della censura. Storia dell’ *Eptacordo*, periodico romano di metà Ottocento,” *Fonti Musicali Italiane* 13 (2008), 181 and 187.

events.⁸ The *Osservatore*, the Vatican's daily newspaper, has already served as a fundamental source for Liszt research, since it was profoundly analyzed by Dezső Legány in his 1977 publication.⁹ Legány provides a comprehensive review of articles concerning Liszt in Rome published not only in Roman but also Hungarian newspapers, covering the period between 1861 and 1869.¹⁰ Thus, reports on concerts during the 1870s and 1880s, such as those of Ettore Pinelli's Società Orchestrale and Giovanni Sgambati's Società del Quintetto as well as those presented on the occasion of Liszt's birthday 1881, are not included. As I will elaborate below, an examination of those years, however, reveals new aspects of the further consolidation of Liszt's orchestral music in Roman concerts.

During the initial years following his arrival, Liszt was only occasionally mentioned in newspapers, which mostly reported his presence at festive events and sometimes mentioned when he played the piano. The first longer report was published in the *Osservatore* on 28 March 1863 and also includes some aesthetical statements on Liszt's music. It deals with a concert at the Palazzo Altieri¹¹ presenting two premières: the new *Cantico del Sol di Francesco d'Assisi*, and the first performance of *Die Seligkeiten*.¹² In the article, both compositions, featuring soli for baritone executed by a certain "Capelloni," a member of the Capella Giulia, are marked as special highlights of the concert.¹³ Additionally, the author addresses Liszt's transition from piano virtuoso to composer¹⁴ and elevates him to the level of Palestrina (one of whose pieces was also performed at the concert), Paisiello, Pergolesi, and Allegri – in short, the "old masters" whose music was practised by the grand institutions such as the Capella Sistina.¹⁵ Ultimately, Liszt is described as being an artist not only in music but also in painting and poetry. Somehow, this foreshadowed one central aspect of his later reception, especially in relation to the performance of the *Dante Symphony*, which centred around the unification of the three arts of poetry, painting, and music.

8. In 1849, almost all newspapers in Rome had been suspended and it was difficult to gain permission for founding a new one, which would have to pass political and ecclesiastical censorship, as well as the "Ministero dell'Interno" and the "Polizia sulla morale." See MACCHIONE, "Ne' latifondi delle lettere," 178.

9. LEGÁNY, "Liszt in Rom."

10. His addition to the article's title "Erster Teil" [first part] suggests that a sequel (probably covering the years until 1886) originally might have been planned; however, this hypothetical "Zweiter Teil" [second part] has never been published.

11. This was the fifth of six concerts organized by Giuseppe and Leopoldo Mililotti, and was entitled "Rinascimento della Musica vocale sacra e profana." See Bianca Maria ANTOLINI, "Liszt e Dante: l'unione delle arti nella sinfonia," in *Musica come pensiero e come azione. Studi in onore di Guido Salvetti*, ed. by Marina VACCARINI, Maria Grazia SITÀ and Andrea ESTERO (Lucca: Libreria Musicale Italiana, 2014), 590.

12. Article printed in full length in LEGÁNY, "Liszt in Rom," 89.

13. "Noterò solo due sommi pregi nella musica di Liszt, il primo direi quasi puramente artistico ed è la perfetta fusione e gradazione dei suoni in mezzo alla vivacità e grande varietà delle [tinte], il secondo intellettuale, ed è il perfetto accordo del suono al pensiero ed all'affetto." *L'Osservatore* 3/70 (28 March 1863), 279.

14. This transition in Liszt's image could generally be observed almost two decades earlier related to his employment in Weimar and his symphonic poems.

15. "Liszt, che tutti sanno essere il primo pianista d'Europa, ma è pure uno dei più grandi compositori, e precisamente in quella musica che è la più antica e belle fra tutte, la musica di Palestrina, di Paisiello, di Pergolesi, di Marcello, di Allegri, di Baini." *L'Osservatore* 3/70 (28 March 1863), 279.

1. *Dante and Christus:* Two Concerts as Keys to Liszt's Perception in Rome

On the occasion of the 25-year-jubilee of the Pest Conservatory, Liszt conducted the first movement of his *Symphonie zu Dantes Divina Commedia*¹⁶ (which had already been premièred in 1857) in August 1865 in Hungary. Another performance in Pest (in Liszt's absence) took place under the direction of Ferenc Erkel on 29 October 1865. This time, the whole symphony could be heard, and the performance had immense success.¹⁷ Shortly after, Romualdo Gentilucci, a Roman editor, came up with the idea of a performance in Rome. He initiated correspondence with Liszt in November of 1865. At that time, Gentilucci, being vividly engaged in the flourishing "Dante fan circles" and the Roman Società Dantesca, initiated the "Galleria Dantesca," a permanent exhibition of 27 large-scale paintings showing scenes from Dante Alighieri's *Divina Commedia*.¹⁸ The paintings were placed at the Palazzo Poli just behind the Fontana di Trevi in the now so-called "Sala Dante," which became an important venue for musical events. It must have seemed perfectly fitting to inaugurate this place with Liszt's celebrated *Sinfonia Dantesca* – an opinion shared by the composer himself.

On 2 December 1865, an extensive announcement for the concert was published in the *Osservatore*, introducing Liszt as "Orfeo Alemanno," who had poetised Germany with his famous and immortal masterpiece, recently performed in Pest with great success.¹⁹ The article further announces the unification of the three related arts of poetry, painting, and music by this performance. Alongside this, several attachments were printed: Gentilucci's letter to Liszt, Liszt's answer, and a partial reprint of a report of the Pest concert by Ede Reményi from *L'Indépendance Belge* (7 September 1865).²⁰ Eventually, Liszt himself was involved in the project. He assisted in the rehearsals and attended the performance. The week before the concert, he wrote the following to Carl Gille:

Next week my *Dante Symphony* will be played at the opening of the Dante Gallery. 70 to 80 instrumentalists have been participating in the rehearsals since the day before yesterday with eagerness and pleasure, which is an exceptional thing in Rome. Sgambati conducts the orchestra and is determined to schedule another dozen rehearsals if necessary. My friends here claim that the work *must* cause fanaticism.²¹

16. On the genesis of the symphony, see ANTOLINI, "Liszt e Dante."

17. LEGÁNY, "Liszt in Rom," 99.

18. For more information on the paintings and the exhibition, see ANTOLINI, "Liszt e Dante," 592.

19. *L'Osservatore Romano* 5/275 (2 December 1865), 1091.

20. Printed in LEGÁNY, "Liszt in Rom," 99–102.

21. Liszt to Carl Gille, 18 February 1866. Original in German, quoted in *Franz Liszt's Briefe an Carl Gille*, ed. by Adolf STERN (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1903), 22–23. Translation mine.

The concert took place on 26 February 1866, followed by a repeat performance on 3 March, both of which were conducted by Liszt's student Giovanni Sgambati. Jessie Taylor Laussot (see further details on her below) directed the choir.²² On 2 March, the *Osservatore* published an initial short report, describing the enthusiastic applause by the audience and presenting two sonnets, one dedicated to Dante and the other to Liszt, again named "d'Alemagna Orfeo." The next day's issue contained a fairly extensive and laudatory review of the concert signed by a certain "P. A. S."²³ The author of the review expresses the highest compliments regarding the piece, which evoked true sentiments, and compares it in terms of relevance to Michelangelo's *Last Judgement* in the Sistine Chapel. The greater part of the text consists of similar superlatives and argues that this music indeed realized Dante's journey to paradise through hell. However, the text also briefly addresses the question of instrumental or rather symphonic music in Rome: P. A. S. states that while dramatic music ("la musica drammatica") in Italy was of noteworthy beauty, instrumental, respectively, symphonic music ("musica puramente istrumentale" and "sinfonia") was almost completely lacking contributions by Italian composers and the repertoire was reduced to transalpine musicians such as Mozart, Beethoven, and "finally in our times Liszt."²⁴ In fact, the performance in 1866 was the first symphonic concert in Rome and, aside from sporadic initiatives by Sgambati (see below), it kept its unique status in Roman musical life at least until the reinstallation of the Accademia Filarmonica Romana in 1870 and the foundation of Pinelli's Società Orchestrale Romana in 1877. The *Dante Symphony* became the one work Liszt would be identified with in Rome until the 1880s. Thus, the performance indeed aroused a certain "fanaticism," at least with regard to this piece.

On 11 November 1866, Tito Ricordi announced in the *Gazzetta Musicale di Milano* that "Abbé Liszt has completed his oratorio entitled Christ."²⁵ In fact, this meant 12 of the 14 final numbers.²⁶ Single parts had already premiered in Rome before Ricordi's announcement: *Die Seligkeiten* (composed with German text as a standalone work during the 1850s and then set in Latin as the first movement for the second part of *Christus*) was performed at the above-mentioned concert at the Palazzo Altieri in 1863.²⁷ This received a universally positive response from the

22. Mariateresa STORINO, "Il carteggio Liszt-Laussot," in *Franz Liszt e Jessie Taylor Laussot Hillebrand. Un capitolo inedito della storia musicale dell'ottocento*, ed. by ead. (Lucca: Libreria Musicale Italiana, 2016), 99; ANTOLINI, "Liszt e Dante," 596.

23. *L'Osservatore Romano* 6/31 (3 March 1866), 202–203; partly transcribed in LEGÁNY, "Liszt in Rom," 101–102, and also analyzed in ANTOLINI, "Liszt e Dante," 596–596.

24. *L'Osservatore Romano* 6/31 (3 March 1866), 203. For a further discussion of that aspect, see ANTO-LINI, "Liszt e Dante," 596.

25. *Gazzetta Musicale di Milano* 21/28 (11 November 1866), 224. Original in Italian, translation mine. It was also Ricordi who announced the completion of the whole oratorio in the *Gazzetta* on 18 July 1869.

26. Still missing at that time were the "Foundation of the Church" (finished 1867) and the Easter Hymn "O filii et filiae;" on the creation and completion of *Christus*, see WALKER, *The Final Years*, 255–259.

27. *L'Osservatore Romano* 3/70 (28 March 1863), 279; see further de ANGELIS, "Liszt e Dante," 340.

press, which was not the case for the première of the *Stabat Mater Speciosa* from the oratorio's first part on 4 January 1866 at Santa Maria in Aracoeli. Gregorovius, who was in general no great aficionado of Liszt, noted the following after the concert:

Last Wednesday Liszt performed a cantata at Araceli [sic], a composition on the *Stabat mater speciosa* by Fra Jacopone, this was pretty lame.²⁸

The press also did not express great enthusiasm and reacted rather guardedly. An article in the *Osservatore* repeatedly emphasized how important excellent singers were for the music's true effect – which was obviously not achieved by the members of the Capella Sistina during the performance, although the power of evoking a profound religious feeling was generally not denied completely:

A great flow of people came to that huge temple to enjoy the strong concept of this music, which develops a deeply religious feeling. Nevertheless, we must confess that the pleasing harmonies meditated by this eminent composer whose name spread across Italy and also Europe, lack the vocal and instrumental means. The science and the genius disclosed by everything Liszt meditated and wrote need great and accurate interpreters, and a lively and intelligent execution. ... We must be convinced; Liszt's [gentle] and inspired musical productions required powerful performers, who must be educated to the beauty or the greatness of Art.²⁹

A performance of all the then-existing movements was scheduled for the summer of 1867. Around mid-June, Liszt returned from Budapest to Rome to attend the rehearsals. Again, it was Sgambati who conducted the concert in the Sala Dante on 6 July 1867.³⁰ In contrast to the *Dante Symphony* the year before, this time the *Osservatore* reacted quite reservedly, with only one brief mention of the event.³¹ It is noteworthy, though, that the otherwise indifferent *Eptacordo* wrote about the performance – not very extensively, but at least describing a numerous audience cheering:

28. GREGOROVIVS, *Römische Tagebücher*, 204 (entry from 7 January 1866). Original in German, translation mine.

29. "Fu grande l'affluenza delle persone accorse in quel vasto tempio a gustare il forte concetto di quella musica, che sviluppa un sentimento profondamente religioso. Dobbiamo però confessare che alle soavi armonie meditate da questo illustre Compositore, che empie del suo nome non che l'Italia, l'Europa mancarono i mezzi vocali ed Istrumentali. La scienza ed il genio, che balena in tutto quello, che medita e scrive *Liszt*, ha bisogno di grandi ed accurati interpreti, e di una esecuzione animosa ed intelligente. ... Bisogna persuadersi, le [dolce] ed ispirate produzioni musicali di *Liszt* domandano esecutori potenti, ed educati al bello o al grande dell'arte." *L'Osservatore Romano* 10/6 (13 January 1866), 39. Translated by Elisa Pederzoli.

30. The first performance of the complete oratorio took place in 1873 in Weimar and was not referenced by any Roman or Italian newspaper.

31. *L'Osservatore Romano* 7/162 (18 July 1867), 646.

On the very evening of the 6 [July], the Sala Dantesca was the place of a performance of the Oratory by signor Commendatore F. Liszt, *Christus*, for full orchestra and voices, with Latin text after the Holy Scripture and the [hymnology], conducted by signor Giovanni Sgambati. The large audience applauded the work of the illustrious composer as well as the performers of this.³²

Still more remarkable is how *La Fama: rassegna di scienze, lettere, arti, industria e teatri* (published weekly in Milan, 1836–1877) not only literally quoted the *Eptacordo* in its issue from 23 July, but also commented as follows:

Thus the *Eptacordo* does not accord to the reports of other journals, which describe the non-existing effect of the empty, scanty, and bizarre composition.³³

The following two issues of *La Fama* from 13 and 20 August contain extensive, withering criticism not only of the performance but also of the composition in general. Firstly, the anonymous author raises fundamental questions on the genre (“Ma di grazia è poi codesto veramente un Oratorio?” – “Please, is this really an oratorio?”).³⁴ He then starts his argument by presenting Rome, specifically the Oratory of San Filippo Neri, as the birthplace of the musical genre and invoking the Rome-born Emilio de’ Cavalieri as the creator of the oldest oratorio, which he considers to be *La Rappresentazione di anima, et di corpo*.³⁵ According to the author, despite all subsequent developments of the genre, the oratorio always remained a “Melodramma Sacro,” divided into acts and scenes and providing real parts or roles for soloists and choirs – exemplary works are listed from eighteenth- and nineteenth-century composers such as Georg Friedrich Händel, Niccolò Jommelli, Johann Sebastian Bach, Joseph Haydn, Domenico Cimarosa, and Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy.³⁶ In contrast to the named examples, Liszt’s “pseudo-Oratorio” provided no acts, scenes, real persons, or even a plot; even worse, many movements were purely instrumental.³⁷ Several other stylistic aspects are also heavily criticized: the number of dissonances was deplorable, and the treatment of the orchestra experienced as musical anarchy.³⁸ Practically the

32. “Nella Sala Dantesca le medesima sera del 6 [Juli] ebbe luogo l’esecuzione dell’Oratorio del sig Commendatore F. Liszt, *Il Cristo*, a piena orchestra e voci, con testo latino tratto dalla Sacra Scrittura e dalla Inno-logia, e diretto dal signor Giovanni Sgambati. Il numeroso uditorio applaudì l’opera dell’illustre Compositore e gli esecutori della medesima.” *Eptacordo* 25/10 (9 July 1867), 100. Translation mine.

33. “Così l’*Eptacordo*, col quale non si accordano le relazioni daltri giornali, che descrivono il nessun effetto della composizione vuota, stentata e bizzarra.” *La Fama* 30/25 (23 July 1867), 119. Translation mine.

34. *La Fama* 25/33 (13 August 1867), 130.

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid. On Liszt’s *Christus* from the perspective of genre history, see Daniel ORTUÑO-STÜHRING, *Musik als Bekenntnis. Christus-Oratorien im 19. Jahrhundert* (Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 2011) (= *Weimarer Liszt-Studien*, vol. 6).

38. *La Fama* 25/34 (20 August 1867), 135.

only positive critique concerns the last movement of the first part, *The Three Kings*, which is described as the best piece of the whole oratorio.³⁹ Further, the article attends to the vocal setting: “Liszt does not know how to treat the vocals,” the soloist parts suffered from a “grand fatigue,” the “intonation was almost impossible,” and the “music was written in a mathematical manner” “without inspiration of the heart.”⁴⁰ Additionally, concerning the choral performers of 6 July 1867, the article’s author was not at all convinced by their performance. To underline his point, he describes a short rehearsal scene:

One day, Liszt assisted in a rehearsal of the choir of his *Christ*, and because there was not much progress after many repetitions from the beginning, he stepped forth to say: – Signori, my music is difficult music! ... It’s not music from the street! ... – and while saying so he sat down to tinkle the great finale of *Poliuto*!!!⁴¹

Further problems in this context are revealed by several sources preserved in the archive of the Accademia Nazionale di S. Cecilia⁴² that document a lawsuit of Gentilucci and the Società della Galleria Dantesca, which supported the event financially, with Francesco Borghi, who was responsible for the choir: Gentilucci refused to pay the singers, who were Borghi’s students, the full fee. The reason for this is revealed by a protocol of the preparations of the choir up to the concert and several testimonies by involved persons such as Sgambati and the orchestra musicians. These writings reveal that only a third of the singers regularly attended the rehearsals and that it appeared as if a large part of the choir was seeing the work for the very first time only at the final rehearsal. Since we learned from the *Osservatore* above that the *Christus* required the most sensitive, talented, and well-prepared singers, these background controversies might have also impeded a positive perception of the oratorio.

39. Ibid.

40. “Oso dire apertamente che Liszt non sa trattare le voci. ... Di a soli non ne fu eseguito che uno, le *Beatitudini*, e il Capelloni [on the concert in 1863, when Capelloni premèred *Die Seligkeiten*, see above], sebbene uno del più distinti professori romani, durò gran fatica ad eseguirlo, nè gli fu dato cavarne il più piccolo effetto. Di pezzi concertati nessuno. In quanto ai cori nulla di più contorto e di meno adatto alle voci. E per convincervi di quel ch’io dico, vi basti sapere, che dopo un numero infinito di prove l’esecuzione corale fu infelicissima. Perchè ciò? ... Perchè le intonazioni sono quasi impossibili; perchè è musica scritta da matematico, più che da artista; perchè tutto in essa è effetto di calcolo, nulla invece d’ispirazione di cuore.” Ibid.

41. “Il Liszt assisteva un giorno alle prove dei cori del suo *Cristo*, e siccome non si veniva ancora dopo molte repliche a capo di nulla, egli uscì fuori a dire: – Signori, la mia musica è musica difficile! ... Non è musica da piazza! ... – e si dicendo si pose a strimpellare sul piano il gran finale del *Poliuto*!!!” *La Fama* 25/33 (13 August 1867), 130. Translation mine.

42. Accademia Nazionale di S. Cecilia, Archivio Preunitario, box 129, fasc. 42; the documents are printed attached to the Italian translation of Legány’s article: LEGÁNY, “Liszt a Roma,” *Nuova Rivista Musicale Italiana* 4 (1987), 571–594.

2. Performance and Promotion: The Role of Liszt's Students

Liszt did not conduct the two aforementioned concerts himself; his student, Giovanni Sgambati (1841–1914), was instead entrusted with this task. This was a logical choice, since Sgambati had already studied the piano transcription of the *Dante Symphony* shortly after he had begun studying with Liszt in 1861.⁴³ He was also the first in Rome (except for Liszt himself) to perform Liszt's compositions in more public settings. The first documented performance of this kind was a concert on 5 July 1864 at the Palazzo Braschi, where Sgambati performed Liszt's transcription of the *Valse de l'opéra Faust*.⁴⁴ Throughout the following years, this piece remained in Sgambati's solo repertoire.

Liszt's students played an important role in promoting their maestro's music, which is also demonstrated by other examples, such as that of pianist Jessie Laussot (1826–1905). Born in London, Laussot moved to Florence in 1853, becoming an important figure in the city's musical life. In 1863, she visited Liszt in Rome and became his student. Subsequently, Laussot and her circle were significant to promoting Liszt's music in Florence.⁴⁵ In 1863, the London pianist Walter Bache commenced his studies with Liszt in Rome. After Bache returned to his home country in 1865, he started to organize a successful series of concerts focused on Liszt's music, which previously was only occasionally heard in London.⁴⁶ An important section of those concerts were Liszt's own piano arrangements of his symphonic poems. Bache had studied the version of *Les Preludes* for two pianos in Rome (as many of Liszt's pieces for piano that Bache later played in the London concerts), where he also performed this piece together with Sgambati in 1864.⁴⁷ This arrangement could be heard regularly in Italy, performed by Sgambati with alternating partners; in addition to Bache, also performances with Laussot (Florence, March 1865)⁴⁸ and Nadine Helbig (Rome, April 1869)⁴⁹ are documented.

43. In a letter from 1862, Liszt mentions to Franz Brendel that Sgambati did well with the piano arrangement of the *Dante Symphony* and that Liszt planned to study all his symphonic poems with Sgambati (10 August 1862); published in *Franz Liszt's Briefe*, coll. and ed. by La MARA [Marie Lipsius], vol. 2: *Von Rom bis an's Ende* (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1893), 17; see also ANTOLINI, "Liszt e Dante," 590.

44. Mentioned in *Eptacordo* 9/1 (14 July 1864), 3.

45. On this topic, see STORINO, "Il carteggio."

46. Michael ALLIS, "Promoting the Cause: Liszt Reception and Walter Bache's London Concerts 1865–87," *The Liszt Society Journal* 30 (2005), 12; Bache advertised Liszt eagerly and set in motion various actions for increasing the interest of both the public and the critics. See *ibid.*, 15 and 28.

47. *Ibid.*, 9. The program of the concert, which also contained Liszt's arrangement of Schubert's op. 15 for 2 pianos and the concert paraphrase of Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, is preserved in the Archivio Alberto De Angelis (Dizionario della Musica in Italia) and transcribed in *Giovanni Sgambati: musicista dell'avvenire o epigono romantico?*, ed. by Bianca Maria ANTOLINI and Annalisa BINI (Roma: Accademia nazionale di Santa Cecilia, 2018) (= *L'Arte Armonica*, Series 3: *Studi e testi*, vol. 16), 546.

48. Program for a concert on 27 March 1865 preserved in the Biblioteca Casanatense, Archivio Sgambati, box 7.

49. Program for a concert at the Palazzo Caffarelli on 2 April 1869 preserved in the Biblioteca Casanatense, Archivio Sgambati, box 7.

The orchestral version of *Les Preludes* was performed in Rome for the first time in 1877 by Pinelli's Società Orchestrale.⁵⁰

Another "hit" that can be found in multiple 1860s programs is Liszt's arrangement of Schubert's *Wandererfantasie* op. 15, which was actually set for piano with orchestra but in Rome was performed accompanied by a second piano and string quintet instead and was probably the most frequently played Liszt piece in Rome during his lifetime. Behind that on the "hit list" probably came Liszt's second piano concerto, arranged for two pianos. It was performed for the first time in January 1865 by Sgambati, accompanied by Bache playing the second piano.⁵¹ It was Liszt himself who had ordered the publisher Kahnt to send him two copies of the concert's transcription for two pianos in 1863 for Sgambati, with whom he studied this piece.⁵² Generally, Liszt frequently obtained study and performance scores for Sgambati and his other students from Breitkopf und Härtel or Kahnt.⁵³

However, the newspapers do not report much about these concerts, except announcements placed by the organizers and occasional short notes. Additionally, many more performances probably took place in private settings such as in Sgambati's own or other music-loving houses.⁵⁴ Thus, we can glean hardly any details about their "success" or broader reception.

50. Liszt himself was present. A report of the concert by Francesco d'Arcais in the *Gazzetta Musicale di Milano* dedicates a few lines to Liszt's piece, which is described as "bello, melodico, ispirato, con effetti nuovi e peregrine d'istrumentazione." *Gazzetta Musicale di Milano* 32/46 (18 November 1877), 378. Another performance was staged by the Società Orchestrale and the Accademia Filarmonica in 1882. See *L'Accademia Filarmonica Romana dal 1868 al 1920. Memorie Storiche*, coll. by Romolo GIRALDI (Roma: Accademia Filarmonica Romana, 1930), 115.

51. Program for a concert on 25 January 1865 preserved in the Biblioteca Casanatense, Archivio Sgambati, box 7.

52. Liszt's letter to Brendel, 7 September 1863, published in La MARA (ed.), *Franz Liszt's Briefe*, vol. 2, 50–53.

53. For instance, Piano Concerto no. 2 for two pianos from Kahnt (ibid.); *Études d'exécution transcendante* and *Études d'exécution transcendante d'après Paganini*. Liszt's letter to Breitkopf und Härtel, 28 August 1863, ibid., 46–50.

54. See Andreina MANZO, "Sgambati e i salotti musicali romani," in *La romanza italiana da salotto*, ed. by Francesco SANVITALE (Turin: EDT/Istituzione Nazionale Tostiano, 2002), 398. In October 1877, Sgambati and Liszt played Sgambati's arrangement of Liszt's *Les Idéales* for two pianos at Caetani's house. In 1884, Sgambati played the same piece with Baron Robert Keudell, the German ambassador and husband of Nadine Helbig, at their house. See Bianca Maria ANTOLINI, "Giovanni Sgambati nei salotti romani," in ANTOLINI and BINI (eds.), *Giovanni Sgambati*, 86–87. Liszt to Sgambati (28 May 1875): Liszt ordered *Les Ideales* from Breitkopf und Härtel for Sgambati; letter published in László EÖSZÉ, *119 római Liszt-dokumentum* (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1980), 148 (letter 68). Also, Liszt reported a musical gathering at Keudell's house in November 1877, where he and Sgambati together had played *Mazeppa* and *Hamlet*. See Liszt's letter from Rome to Olga von Meyendorff, 9 November 1877, published in *The Letters of Franz Liszt to Olga von Meyendorff, 1871–1886 in the Mildred Bliss Collection at Dumbarton Oaks*, ed. and transl. by William R. TYLER (Washington, D.C.: Harvard University Press, 1979), 297. On 29 December 1884 Liszt again reported to Meyendorff about *Die Ideale* being performed at Palazzo Caffarelli by Nadine Helbig and Sgambati; ibid., 473.

3. Canon and Premières: Liszt's Music in Rome After 1869

Liszt's presence indeed left a lasting effect in Rome, mostly due to his students. It was this widespread network of engaged, internationally-oriented young musicians that would shape Roman concert life throughout the second half of the nineteenth century. Sgambati and his friend, the violinist Ettore Pinelli, who was also close to Liszt, ensured that Liszt's music would stay in the repertoire, forming the core of Sgambati's piano and chamber music concerts. Following the foundation of Pinelli's Società Orchestrale Romana, the two musicians regularly staged symphonic music by Liszt.

Sgambati's relevance in the establishment of Liszt's piano music in Rome has been argued above. The young pianist introduced some pieces on stage as soon as he became Liszt's student, such as Liszt's transcriptions of Gounod's *Valse de l'opéra Faust* and Schubert's *Wandererfantasie* op. 15, as well as Liszt's own symphonic poem *Les Preludes* and Second Piano Concerto. These works remained in his repertoire during the following decades. However, this only concerned the public concerts; assuredly, even more of his teacher's works could be heard in private settings that included arrangements of other symphonic works (see above).

Although there is no concrete record, it is not unlikely that Liszt introduced his student, whom he held in high esteem, to his piano arrangements of Beethoven's symphonies, which he had recently completed during his time at Monte Mario in 1863–1864. Later, Sgambati would take the lead in staging these symphonies in full orchestral versions in Rome. The first such Beethoven première by Sgambati, the *Eroica*, together with the overture to Carl Maria von Weber's *Oberon*, announced as “Prima Accademia Sinfonica,” might have been further inspired by the *Dante* concert in February 1866, since it followed only a couple of months later on 6 December of the same year. The fact that the Sala Dante eventually provided an appropriate setting for such concerts should also be considered as a contributing factor. Liszt supported the preparations and assisted Sgambati during the rehearsals, which he announced in October in a letter to Franz Brendel:

Bigger performances of Beethoven's symphonies and of my *Dante Symphony* will happen during the upcoming Advent in the Dante Gallery. Sgambati is going to conduct them and I promised to attend the rehearsals.⁵⁵

In another letter, written to Agnes Street-Kindsworth on 24 November 1866 (mentioning not only the innovative character of the event but also the popularity of his *Dante Symphony* in Rome), Liszt articulates:

55. Liszt's letter to Brendel, 2 October 1866, published in La MARRA (ed.), *Franz Liszt's Briefe*, vol. 2, 94; cf. also ANTOLINI, “Liszt e Dante,” 598. Original in German, translation mine.

In the Dante Gallery the heroic Symphony of Beethoven will be repeated. This evening being a novelty in Rome, Sgambati is going to conduct the performance. He is a true and rare artist this Sgambati. He keeps up with Bronsart and Tausig. ... After the *Eroica* my *Dante Symphony* will be reprised (a third or fourth time, this enjoys a certain popularity here)!⁵⁶

Premières of other Beethoven symphonies were then mainly staged during the 1870s by Pinelli's Società Orchestrale Romano. With the foundation of this orchestra in 1874, Pinelli finally established regular symphonic concerts in Rome, primarily featuring works by Beethoven, Wagner, and Mendelssohn in its early years, and later increasingly works by Schumann, Berlioz, Brahms, and Liszt. In the fall of 1877, the Società Orchestrale performed Beethoven's Fifth Symphony and Liszt's *Les Préludes* for the first time in Rome (eventually in the full orchestral version).

Liszt further arranged some pieces for Pinelli's orchestra. In October 1875, the Florentine *Boccherini* announced that Liszt had orchestrated one of his *Rapsodies hongroises* for Pinelli, and that it would be performed by the Società Orchestrale (probably the *Hungarian Rhapsody* no. 1 for orchestra, which Pinelli also performed in 1881, see below).⁵⁷ However, Romolo Giraldi reports in his history of the Accademia Filarmonica Romana that Pinelli conducted a public concert as early as 10 July 1873, at which the *Hungarian Rhapsody* was performed.⁵⁸ Another arrangement Liszt made especially for Pinelli was *Angelus!* from the *Troisième année* of his *Années de pèlerinage*, which Liszt transcribed for orchestra in 1882 and which was performed in Rome in early 1885.⁵⁹ Liszt and Sgambati attended the concert, which was a great success.⁶⁰

Sgambati also continued conducting symphonic concerts, although not in such an institutional setting as Pinelli's Società. In December 1880, while staying in Tivoli, Liszt ordered scores and parts for his *Tasso* from Breitkopf & Härtel, which would be performed in concert in January 1881:

56. Franz Liszt and Agnes Street-Klindworth: *A Correspondence, 1854–1886*, transl. and ed. by Pauline Pocknell (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon, 2000), 371. Original in French, translation mine. Cf. ANTOLINI, "Liszt e Dante," 599.

57. *Boccherini* 13/10 (31 October 1875), 40.

58. GIRALDI (ed.), *L'Accademia Filarmonica*, 49. Pinelli often cooperated with the Accademia Filarmonica; usually the performing orchestra was his Società Orchestrale, while the Accademia Filarmonica provided the choir.

59. Antonio ROSTAGNO, *Musica riscoperta. Violinisti-compositori a Roma nel secondo Ottocento. Musiche per violino e pianoforte di Tullio Ramacciotti, Ettore Pinelli, Luigi Mancinelli* (Roma: Accademia Nazionale di S. Cecilia, 2010), 46. A manuscript copy of the *Angelus* score with a personal dedication to Pinelli by Liszt is preserved in the archive of the Accademia Nazionale di S. Cecilia in Rome (A-Ms-2153). It was printed in ROSTAGNO, *Musica riscoperta*, 26. The concert (21 January 1885) was announced in *L'Osservatore Romano* 25/12 (16 January 1885). The further program included Mozart's Overture to *Le nozze di Figaro*, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, and Liszt's version of Schubert's *Soirées de Vienne* arranged for orchestra by Pinelli.

60. As described by another member of the audience, Gabriele d'Annunzio. *La Tribuna* 22/111 (23 January 1885), [n.p.]. This is quoted in ROSTAGNO, *Musica riscoperta*, 47.

Before my departure, my dear friend Sgambati plans to perform the two symphonic poems *Tasso Lamento*, *Trionfo*, and *Epilog*, with orchestra, for the first time in Rome. Last winter he staged the *Hunnenschlacht*, not without success, and years ago, on the inauguration of the Sala Dante, he conducted the *Dante Symphony* masterfully, which since then has been performed in Rome a few times. I allow myself to stress your kindness to that effect, that you soon send the two scores of *Tasso*, and two copies of each, along with the complete orchestral parts (quintuple quartet) of the *Epilog* to "Signor Professore e Cavaliere, Giovanni Sgambati, Via della Croce, No 2, Roma." I will gladly bear the costs for these sheets.⁶¹

While no further reprises of the orchestral version⁶² of the *Dante Symphony* could be traced (which does not mean that they did not happen), the *Hunnenschlacht* was indeed presented in three concerts in January and February of 1880 that were organized by Sgambati, conducted by Pinelli, and performed by the Società Orchestrale.⁶³ The score and parts for those concerts had also been sent by Liszt, who had written the following to Sgambati one year before:

The large package of orchestral parts with the score of the *Hunnenschlacht* which you have been expecting. ... I suppose that the *Hunnenschlacht* shall be performed, I beg you to ask Madame Helbig for her American organ [orgue américain], so that the chorale *Crux fidelis* will come out properly.⁶⁴

On the performance of *Tasso*, Liszt reports in a letter to Olga von Meyendorff on 7 January 1881:

Sgambati is preparing an orchestral concert which I have promised to attend. His symphony [op. 11] will be performed and, *for the first time* in Rome,

61. Liszt's letter from Tivoli to Breitkopf und Härtel, 20 December 1880: "Mein verehrter Freund Sgambati beabsichtigt noch vor meiner Abreise (also in der ersten Woche Januars) die beiden Symphonischen Dichtungen: 'Tasso's Lamento, Trionfo' und Epilog, orchestral, zum 1ten mal in Rom aufzuführen. Vorigen Winter brachte Er die 'Hunnenschlacht', nicht ohne Erfolg, und vor Jahren, zur Eröffnung der Sala Dante, dirigierte Er meisterhaft die Dante Sinfonie, welche seither noch ein paarmal in Rom aufgeführt wurde. Ich erlaube mir Ihre Freundlichkeit dahin zu beanspruchen, die zwei Tasso Partituren, und von jeder 2 Exemplare, nebst den sämtlichen Orchester stimmen (5 faches Quartett) des Epilogs, an 'Signor Professore e Cavaliere, Giovanni Sgambati, Via della Croce, No 2, Roma' bald zu senden. Die Kosten dieser Musikalien übernehme ich gerne." *Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Darmstadt*, 40.II.12; translation mine.

62. In 1879, Nadine Helbig and Anna Treuenfels-Rilke performed a version for two pianos and string quartet in a concert at the Palazzo Caffarelli, while Sgambati participated in other pieces (Program, Biblioteca Casanatense, Archivio Sgambati, box 7).

63. Programs for concerts at the Sala Dante on 26 and 30 January and 2 February 1880, Biblioteca Casanatense, Archivio Sgambati, box 79.

64. Liszt from Budapest to Sgambati, 11 February 1879; Library of the Budapest Institute for Musicology, Research Center for the Humanities, Fond 6/19; published in EÖSZE, *119 római Liszt-dokumentum*, 159 (letter 92). Original in French, translation mine.

my *Tasso, Lamento e Trionfo*. This concert was to be held on January 10; it has been postponed a few days, thereby also postponing my departure from Rome.⁶⁵

Further (but also the final) memorable events in this context took place on the occasion of Liszt's 70th birthday in the fall of 1881, which he spent in Rome and which was solemnized by both Sgambati and Pinelli. Nadine Helbig, who was a German native, an important salonière in Rome, and Liszt's student, remembers the events in her memoirs in 1907:

On the celebration of Liszt's birthday (1881) the first concert of the Roman Quintet, consisting of Sgambati, Monachesi, Enrico Masi, Jacobacci and Furino, was given in the splendid hall of the [German] embassy. On that occasion, all paintings, busts, medallions of the maestro, which could be found in Rome, were tastefully arranged under beautiful clusters of palms and flowers.⁶⁶

Incidentally or otherwise, by the time of Liszt's arrival in Rome in mid-October 1881, Sgambati had laid the official foundation of his *Società Romana del Quintetto*.⁶⁷ The event mentioned above, dedicated to the 70-year jubilarian, was the society's very first concert. It took place on the exact date of Liszt's birthday, 22 October, at the Palazzo Caffarelli, the seat of the German embassy in Rome. The program featured quintets by Schumann, Schubert, and Sgambati himself; the latter in F minor and "dedicated to Liszt."⁶⁸ Of Liszt's own *œuvre*, one could hear a "fragment from a symphonic poem" – *Le berceau*, the first movement from Liszt's last symphonic poem *Von der Wiege bis zum Grabe*, arranged for two violins and viola.⁶⁹

Pinelli's *Società Orchestrale*, once more in cooperation with Sgambati, also celebrated Liszt's birthday, although a little later. On 6 December, a Liszt-only concert was staged at the Sala Dante, featuring the *Festmarsch zur Goethe-Jubiläumsfeier*, *Dante Symphony*, and *Hungarian Rhapsody* no. 1 for orchestra.⁷⁰ Only two days later, the *Osservatore* published a report that includes a particular praise of the *Dante Symphony*, the execution by Pinelli and his orchestra, and, of

65. TYLER (ed.), *The Letters of Franz Liszt*, 393.

66. Nadine HELBIG, "Franz Liszt in Rom. Aufzeichnungen von Nadine Helbig," *Deutsche Revue* (1907), 173. Original in German, translation mine.

67. This was the first official quintet society in Rome (following the model e.g. of Florence and Milan); from 1893 it was known as "Quintetto della Regina Margherita."

68. ROSTAGNO, *Musica riscoperta*, 40. The mentioned quintet from Sgambati probably refers to his op. 4, which was published by Schott on Richard Wagner's recommendation in 1879 and about which Liszt reported to Meyendorff on 15 September 1879: "Sgambati has sent me his very lovely first quintet published by Schott (Mainz). The title is adorned with my coat of arms, surmounted by the unicorn." TYLER (ed.), *The Letters of Franz Liszt*, 352.

69. *L'Osservatore Romano* 21/240 (21 October 1881), [n.p.].

70. Announcement in *L'Osservatore Romano* 21/273 (30 November 1881), [n.p.].

course, the guest of honour, as well as an emphasis on Liszt's activities in Rome having had a lasting effect on the city and enhancing its progressive development.⁷¹ The evening after the performance, Liszt reported the success of the concert to Meyendorff, also mentioning that he had noticed that the Roman audience had grown familiar with such music:

This afternoon's concert in my honor, of which I enclose the program, was a complete success both as a performance and in terms of the favourable attitude of the large audience. When you used to hear my *Dantesque Symphony* at the same Sala Dante some fifteen years ago, it seemed to the great majority of the audience a tissue of extravagance. People assure me that this is no longer the case.⁷²

The Florentine *Boccherini* published a letter of thanks to Pinelli that Liszt had written (or at least dated) the same evening:

Dear monsieur Pinelli,

Again I would like to express to you my very serious compliments, congratulations and thanks.

The execution of the concert of the Société orchestrale romaine for celebrating my 70th birthday indeed was achieved in the best manner.

It must also be mentioned that my compositions, among other flaws, challenge the performers – maybe it is the same also for the listeners. –

The warm applause of the audience testifies for the Conductor and the artists of the orchestra that their distinguished talents and their perfect ensemble playing were appreciated.

A good part of the praise is with pleasure addressed to the choir of sopranos and contraltos, and to the soloist; their short task well perfected the true melody and religious feeling of the final Magnificat of the *Dante Symphony*.

Would you have the kindness to be the translator of my appreciatory thanks also to the MM.rs artists of the orchestra and the ladies of the choir; and my dear monsieur Pinelli accept the expression of feelings of high esteem of your
Very dear

F. Liszt⁷³

71. "Non è qui il posto di parlare di Liszt, di quest'artista prodigioso, che in mezzo alle sue continue peregrinazioni nei grandi centri artistici di Europa ha saputo trovare il tempo di scrivere tante e sì importanti opere musicali, nè di accennare alle bellezze racchiuse nelle composizioni che sono state ieri eseguito alla Sala Dante, diremo soltanto che Roma si è mostrata gratissima a questo uomo sommo, che nella sua dimora in questa città ha esercitato tanta influenza nel suo movimento musicale ed ha efficacemente contribuito al suo progressivo sciluppo." *L'Osservatore Romano* 21/280 (8 December 1881), [n.p.].

72. TYLER (ed.), *The Letters of Franz Liszt*, 412.

73. "Cher monsieur Pinelli, De nouveau je viens vous dire mes très sincères compliments, félicitations et remerciements. L'exécution du concert par le quel la *Société orchestrale romaine* a bien voulu fêter mon

Liszt stayed in Rome until February 1882. Obviously, this inspired several concerts of Pinelli's Società in early 1882 that are documented in the *Osservatore*: in January 1882, Pinelli presented "interessanti novità," which included not only Liszt's symphonic poem *Orpheus* but also the overture to Schumann's *Genoveva*.⁷⁴ Again, as with *Die Ideale*, the *Orpheus* had already been introduced to Rome several years earlier in a two piano-arrangement, that time by Liszt himself, who performed it together with Hans von Bülow at a spontaneous musical gathering in his apartment at Santa Francesca Romana, where he also played *Mazeppa* together with Sgambati.⁷⁵ Further, Pinelli and his Società staged Schumann's *Fantasia* in C major, op. 17, arranged by Liszt for orchestra.⁷⁶ On 7 February 1882, the *Osservatore* promised a concert featuring purely Liszt's *Dante Symphony*,⁷⁷ yet this was not realized before the end of December.⁷⁸

From October 1885 to January 1886, Liszt was in Rome for the last time;⁷⁹ he died a couple months later on 31 July. The *Osservatore* dealt with his death in three subsequent issues in early August with a short death notice, the announcement that Tito Monachesi⁸⁰ was going to attend the funeral in Bayreuth, and, eventually, a description of the funeral.⁸¹

* * *

Although from 1869 onwards Rome had no longer been Liszt's main residence, he stayed in close contact with Pinelli and Sgambati and kept abreast of whatever happened in Roman concert life. His letters document a lively interest and steady involvement – be it by sending scores and performance material, or assisting with rehearsals while visiting the city. Further, Sgambati and Pinelli partly formed their own careers based on the international network that was drawn to Rome

70me anniversaire était vraiment des mieux réusais. Il convient d'autant plus en remarquer le mérite que mes compositions, entre autres torts, ont aussi celui de n'être guère commodes aux exécutans – peut-être même pas aux auditeurs. – Les chaleureux applaudissements du public ont témoigné au Directeur et aux artistes de l'orchestre que leurs talents distingués et leur parfait ensemble étaient appréciés. Une bonne part d'éloge revient également au chœur de soprani et contralto, et à la soliste; leur courte tâche a été bien remplie par la juste intonation et le sentiment religieux du *Magnificat* final de la Symphonie Dantesque. Veuillez avoir la bonté d'être l'interprète de mes reconnaissants remerciements auprès de MM.rs les artistes de l'orchestre et des dames du chœur; et agréez cher monsieur Pinelli l'expression des sentiments de haute estime de votre *Très affectueusement* F. Liszt. Mardi soir, 6 décembre 1881. Rome." *Boccherini* 28/12 (31 December 1881), 50–51. Translation mine.

74. *L'Osservatore Romano* 22/7 (10 January 1882), [n.p.].

75. Liszt reported to Olga von Meyendorff on 23 October 1871 that "Yesterday, Princess Wittgenstein and her daughter did me the honor of inviting themselves to dinner at Santa Francesca Romana. ... – and since Sgambati had taken the trouble to have a second piano brought to the house, we played *Mazeppa* together. ... Our little improvised concert ended with *Orpheus*, with Bülow." TYLER (ed.), *The Letters of Franz Liszt*, 26.

76. *L'Osservatore Romano* 22/19 (24 January 1882), [n.p.].

77. *L'Osservatore Romano* 22/30 (7 February 1882), [n.p.].

78. *La Palestra Musicale di Roma. Periodico scientifico-aristico ufficiale per gli atti della Reale Accademia di S. Cecilia* 12/23 (30 December 1882), 92.

79. WALKER, *The Final Years*, 473.

by Liszt's presence (e.g. students such as Bache, virtuosos such as Reményi) and the contacts he established for his protégés (such as connecting Sgambati with Richard Wagner). However, I have to emphasize that in regard to Sgambati and Pinelli we also deal with two strong and distinct artistic personalities, and Liszt's music probably would not have been perceived by such a broad audience in Rome if not for them.

I have traced here the transition from Sgambati popularizing Liszt's piano music in his concerts as early as the 1860s to Pinelli staging symphonic works in the 1870s and 1880s. It was the piano repertoire of Liszt's compositional output which initially reached the Roman public, while large-scale orchestral and choral performances, such as the *Dante Symphony* and the *Christus*, were exceptions at first (and in fact, as long as Liszt was a resident in Rome). This is especially relevant with regard to the introduction of Liszt's symphonic poems. Initially, only a small circle became familiar with those. Liszt, Sgambati, Bache, Laussot, Helbig, and others performed them in piano arrangements during the 1870s, though mainly in private houses and only seldomly in public settings. Orchestral premières were finally possible due to Pinelli and his Società during the late 1870s and 1880s. Despite this, a broad perception of Liszt as a composer of symphonic music seems never to have fully prevailed in Rome (and as a composer of large-scale sacred music never at all, despite this genre being the focus of his compositional work in Rome). He remained associated mainly with piano music and forming a piano school. Eventually, as it has become clear with respect to the events in 1881, in the symphonic field, the public mainly appreciated Liszt as the creator of the *Dante Symphony* and as the teacher of the two (Italian) protagonists of concert life in post-Risorgimento Rome.

80. A violinist and member of Pinelli and Sgambati's chamber music ensemble.

81. *L'Osservatore Romano* 26/127 (5 August 1886), [n.p.]; 26/128 (6 August 1886), [n.p.]; and 26/129 (7 August 1886), [n.p.].