

FRYDERYK CHOPIN UNIVERSITY OF MUSIC

Field of Art, Artistic Discipline: Musical Arts

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**The Specificity of Coloratura Passages in the Tenor Voice in
the Performance of Dramatic and Comic Roles in Selected
Opera Excerpts by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Gioachino
Rossini**

Description of the Artistic Work

Doctoral dissertation written under the supervision of

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I hereby declare that the present doctoral dissertation was prepared under my supervision, and I confirm that it meets the requirements for submission within the doctoral proceedings.

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Gioachino Rossini (1792–1868)

Tancredi, Act I

1. Duettino: „*Se amistà verace, e pura*” (Argirio and Orbazzano)

Gioachino Rossini (1792–1868)

Otello, Act I

2. „*Ah! sì, per voi già sento*” (Otello)

Gioachino Rossini (1792–1868)

Il barbiere di Siviglia, Act I

3. „*Ecco ridente in cielo*” (Count Almaviva)

Gioachino Rossini (1792–1868)

La gazza ladra, Act I

4. „*Vieni fra queste braccia*” (Gianetto)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

Idomeneo, re di Creta, K. 366, Act II

5. „*Qual mi conturba i sensi... / Fuor del mar*” (Idomeneo)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

La clemenza di Tito, K. 621, Act II

6. „*Se all'impero, amici Dei*” (Titus)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

Die Entführung aus dem Serail, K. 384, Act I

7. „*Konstanze... O wie ängstlich*” (Belmonte)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

Die Entführung aus dem Serail, K. 384, Act III

8. „*Ich baue ganz auf deine Stärke*” (Belmonte)

Recording date and place:

February 28, 2024

May 25, 2024

National Philharmonic, Chamber Hall

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Abstract

Vocal coloratura has long been regarded as one of the most dazzling elements of operatic art, enabling singers to display both technical virtuosity and artistic expressiveness. During the transition from Classicism to Romanticism, the *bel canto* era, a distinctive style of tenor singing took shape, grounded in the performance of intricate coloratura passages and present in the operas of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Gioachino Rossini. The author maintains that coloratura tenor parts constitute an important and integral component of the operatic literature of that period. Although vocal coloratura is most often associated with showpiece soprano arias or with the comic idiom of *opera buffa*, over time coloratura writing for the tenor voice has also been increasingly appreciated, in both comic and dramatic works. As a significant manifestation of tenor vocal virtuosity, operatic coloratura passages are, in every respect, worthy of in-depth study and meticulous analysis.

This dissertation presents an analysis of selected excerpts from operas by two eminent composers, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Gioachino Rossini, highlighting the distinctive features of coloratura passages in the tenor voice in both dramatic and comic roles. In addition, the author offers a set of practical performance guidelines. Employing scholarly analytical methods, the author seeks to elucidate in depth the performance characteristics of tenor coloratura parts and to describe their musical style.

Chapter 1. General Overview of the Operas of Rossini and Mozart

1.1 General Overview of Rossini's Operas

1.1.1 Rossini and His Operatic Works

Gioachino Rossini (born in Pesaro on 29 February 1792; died in Paris on 13 November 1868), the son of Giuseppe Rossini and Anna Guidarini, developed an innovative operatic style. He composed thirty-nine operas encompassing a wide range of genres, from farce and comedy to tragedy, opera seria, and opera semiseria.

His father, Giuseppe Rossini (1764¹-1839), was a trumpeter from Lugo (Ravenna), while his mother, Anna Guidarini (1771–1827), was a singer born in Urbino. Owing to his father's political convictions, the Rossini family moved frequently. At the age of ten, Gioachino left Pesaro and, together with his family, settled first in Lugo, where he studied the fundamentals of music theory at the school run by the Malerbi brothers. The family later moved to Bologna, where Rossini began vocal training. He was a baritone and sang at the Bologna Academy of Music. He also studied piano and harpsichord under the guidance of Giuseppe Prinetti. At the age of fourteen, in 1806, he commenced composition studies at the Bologna Academy of Music, cultivating an interest in the works of composers such as Haydn, Mozart, Palestrina, and Cimarosa. During this period, he composed his first opera, *Demetrio e Polibio*, which, however, was not staged until 1812. In 1810, *La cambiale di matrimonio* premiered at the Teatro San Moisè in Venice.

Over the following twenty years, Rossini composed more than thirty operas, and in some years as many as four or five different works of his were staged. Public reactions to the premieres of his operas were mixed. Some, such as *La pietra del paragone*, *Tancredi*, and *L'italiana in Algeri*, achieved immediate success at their first performances. Others, however, were initially received coolly or even regarded as failures. A notable example is *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, which suffered a historic failure at its premiere in 1816 at the Teatro Argentina in Rome, possibly due to disturbances caused by opponents of the composer². A similar fate befell the opera *Otello*, which likewise gained recognition and success some time after its premiere in 1816.

¹ Richard Osborne, „Rossini's Life”, w: Emanuele Senici (red.), *The Cambridge Companion to Rossini*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, s. 11.

² These critics were, in fact, supporters of the composer Giovanni Paisiello, whose opera *Il barbiere di Siviglia* had its premiere in 1782.

Between 1815 and 1822, Gioachino Rossini served as music director of the Teatro San Carlo in Naples. In 1822, Rossini married Isabella Colbran, the leading prima donna of the Teatro San Carlo.

Semiramide (1823) was the last opera Rossini composed for Italian theatres. After the premiere of this work, the composer moved to Paris, where his music met with widespread acclaim. On 30 July 1824, Rossini was appointed music and theatre director of the Théâtre de la Comédie-Italienne in Paris, at the same time committing himself to the composition of new works for the opera.³

His first work in Paris was *Il viaggio a Reims*, which premiered on 19 June 1825 at the Teatro Italiano in honour of Charles X. Although it was not conceived as an occasional work, at Rossini's own request it was withdrawn from the repertoire after only three performances.

However, a substantial portion of the music from this opera was later reused in the light comic opera *Le Comte Ory*, which premiered on 20 August 1828. Shortly thereafter, Rossini brought his operatic career to a close at the same theatre with *Guglielmo Tell*, first performed on 3 August 1829, a masterpiece that unites elements of Classicism and Romanticism.

The following is a list of operas by Rossini (dates and locations of first performances):

1. *Demetrio e Polibio* (composed 1806–1808, premiere: Teatro Valle, Rome, 18 May 1812) – Demetrio, King of Syria, under the pseudonym Eumene (tenor)
2. *La cambiale di matrimonio* (premiere: Teatro San Moisè, Venice, 3 November 1810) – Edoardo Milfort (tenor)
3. *L'equivoco stravagante* (Teatro del Corso, Bologna, 26 October 1811) – Ermanno, a poor young man (tenor)
4. *L'inganno felice* (Teatro San Moisè, Venice, 8 January 1812) – Bertrando, a prince (tenor)
5. *Ciro in Babilonia, ossia La caduta di Baldassare* (Teatro Comunale, Ferrara, 14 March 1812) – Baldassare (Belshazzar), King of Babylon (tenor)
6. *La scala di seta* (Teatro San Moisè, Venice, 9 May 1812) – Dorvil (tenor)
7. *La pietra del paragone* (Teatro alla Scala, Milan, 26 September 1812) – Knight Giocondo, a poet (tenor)
8. *L'occasione fa il ladro, ossia Il cambio della valigia* (Teatro San Moisè, Venice, 24 November 1812) – Count Alberto (tenor)
9. *Il signor Bruschino, ossia Il figlio per azzardo* (Teatro San Moisè, Venice, 27 January 1813) – Florville (tenor)

³ Richard Osborne, Rossini, revised edition, Master Musicians series (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 93.

10. *Tancredi* (Gran Teatro La Fenice, Venice, 6 February 1813) – Argirio (tenor)
11. *L'italiana in Algeri* (Teatro San Benedetto, Venice, 22 May 1813) – Lindoro (tenor)
12. *Aureliano in Palmira* (Teatro alla Scala, Milan, 26 December 1813) – Aureliano, Roman Emperor (tenor)
13. *Il turco in Italia* (Teatro alla Scala, Milan, 14 August 1814) – Don Narciso, suitor of Fiorilla (tenor)
14. *Sigismondo* (Teatro La Fenice, Venice, 26 December 1814) – Ladislao (tenor)
15. *Elisabetta, regina d'Inghilterra* (Teatro di San Carlo, Naples, 10 April 1815) – Leicester (tenor)
16. *Torvaldo e Dorliska* (Teatro Valle, Rome, 26 December 1815) – Torvaldo (tenor)
17. *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Teatro Argentina, Rome, 20 February 1816; originally titled *Almaviva, ossia l'inutile precauzione*) – Count Almaviva (tenor)
18. *La gazzetta* (Teatro dei Fiorentini, Naples, 26 September 1816) – Alberto, a well-born young man (tenor)
19. *Otello, ossia Il moro di Venezia* (Teatro del Fondo, Naples, 4 December 1816) – Otello (tenor) and Rodrigo, son of the governor (tenor)
20. *La Cenerentola, ossia La bontà in trionfo* (Teatro Valle, Rome, 25 January 1817) – Don Ramiro, Prince of Salerno (tenor)
21. *La gazza ladra* (Teatro alla Scala, Milan, 31 May 1817) – Giannetto, a soldier (tenor)
22. *Armida* (Teatro San Carlo, Naples, 9 November 1817) – Goffredo and Gernando (tenors)
23. *Adelaide di Borgogna* (Teatro Argentina, Rome, 27 December 1817) – Adelberto (tenor)
24. *Mosè in Egitto* (Teatro San Carlo, Naples, 5 March 1818) – Osiride, heir to the throne (tenor)
25. *Adina* (Teatro Real de São Carlos, Lisbon, 22 June 1826; composed in 1818) – Selimo, a young Arab (tenor)
26. *Ricciardo e Zoraide* (Teatro San Carlo, Naples, 3 December 1818) – Agorante, King of Nubia (tenor)
27. *Ermione* (Teatro San Carlo, Naples, 27 March 1819) – Oreste (tenor)
28. *Eduardo e Cristina* (Teatro San Benedetto, Venice, 24 April 1819) – Carlo, King of Sweden (tenor)
29. *La donna del lago* (Teatro San Carlo, Naples, 24 October 1819) – James V, King of Scotland, disguised as the knight Uberto di Snowdon (tenor)
30. *Bianca e Falliero, o sia Il consiglio dei Tre* (Teatro alla Scala, Milan, 26 December 1819) – Contareno, a senator (tenor)

31. *Maometto secondo* (Teatro San Carlo, Naples, 3 December 1820) – Paolo Erisso (tenor)
32. *Matilde di Shabran, o sia Bellezza e cuor di ferro* (Teatro Apollo, Rome, 24 February 1821) – Corradino Cuor di Ferro (tenor)
33. *Zelmira* (Teatro San Carlo, Naples, 16 February 1822) – Ilo, a Trojan prince (tenor)
34. *Semiramide* (Teatro La Fenice, Venice, 3 February 1823) – Idreno, King of India (tenor)
35. *Il viaggio a Reims, ossia L'albergo del giglio d'oro* (Théâtre des Italiens, Paris, 19 June 1825) – Belfiore, a knight and young French officer (tenor), and Count Libenskoof, a Russian general (tenor)
36. *Le siège de Corinthe*, (revision of *Maometto secondo*. Académie Royale de Musique (Opéra), Paris, 9 October 1826) – Cléomène, Governor of Corinth (tenor)
37. *Moïse et Pharaon*, (revision of *Mosè in Egitto*. Académie Royale de Musique (Opéra), Paris, 26 March 1827) – Aménophis (tenor)
38. *Le Comte Ory* (Académie Royale de Musique (Opéra), Paris, 20 August 1828) – Count Ory, an aristocrat (tenor)
39. *Guillaume Tell* (Académie Royale de Musique (Opéra), Paris, 3 August 1829) – Arnold Melchtal, a Swiss conspirator (tenor)

On the basis of the types of librettos, the intended function of the works, and their artistic character, the author refers to the general classification of these thirty-nine operas proposed by the supervisor of this doctoral dissertation, Eugenia Rezler. They have been divided into eight categories.

1. **Tragic:**

- a. Tragica: *Ermione*,
- b. Tragico-sacra : *Mosè in Egitto*

2. **Burletta:** *L'occasione fa il ladro, ossia Il cambio della valigia*

3. **Comedy:** *Il barbiere di Siviglia*

4. **Drama:**

- a. dramma: *Sigismondo*; *Elisabetta, regina d'Inghilterra*; *Otello, ossia Il moro di Venezia*;
Eduardo e Cristina; *Zelmira*,

- b. buffo: *Il turco in Italia*,

- c. Z chórami muzycznymi: *Ciro in Babilonia, o sia La caduta di Baldassare*,

- d. giocoso: *L'italiana in Algeri*; *La Cenerentola, ossia La bontà in trionfo*; *Il viaggio a Reims, ossia L'albergo del giglio d'oro*,

- e. giocoso per musica: *L'equivoco stravagante*,
- f. per musica: *Maometto secondo*,
- g. semiserio: *Torvaldo e Dorliska*,
- h. serio: *Demetrio e Polibio*; *Aureliano in Palmira*

5. Farce:

- a. farsa: *Adina*,
- b. comica: *La scala di seta*,
- c. comica per musica: *La cambiale di matrimonio*,
- d. giocosa: *Il signor Bruschino, ossia Il figlio per azzardo*,
- e. per musica: *L'inganno felice*

6. Melodrama:

- a. melodramma: *La gazza ladra*; *La donna del lago*; *Bianca e Falliero, o sia Il consiglio dei Tre*,
- b. eroico: *Tancredi*,
- c. giocoso: *La pietra del paragone*; *Matilde di Shabran, o sia Bellezza e cuor di ferro*,
- d. tragico: *Semiramide*

7. Opera:

- a. opera: *Guillaume Tell*,
- b. grand opera: *Moïse et Pharaon, ou Le passage de la Mer Rouge*,
- c. opera buffa: *La gazza*,
- d. opera comique: *Le Comte Ory*,
- e. opera seria: *Armida*; *Adelaide di Borgogna*; *Ricciardo e Zoraide*

8. Tragédie lyrique: *Le siège de Corinthe*, remake *Maometto secondo*

This classification assisted the author in achieving a more detailed differentiation and understanding of Rossini's operas, in assessing their subject matter, and in providing substantial inspiration for exploring the meanings of dramatic and comic passages across various works.

Moreover, the author observes that tenor roles are of great importance in Rossini's operas, and that almost every opera by Rossini includes a coloratura part written for the tenor voice.

Both dramatic and comic tenor arias in Rossini's operas highlight the composer's distinctive stylistic language and reveal a broad spectrum of character traits embodied by individual protagonists. On the basis of the frequency with which Rossini's operas are performed, as well as the sig-

nificance of tenor roles within them, the author presents below a list of tenor roles in Rossini's operas, divided into the following categories:

Date of Composition	Title of the Work	Genre of the Work	Characteristics of the Tenor Role	Performance Requirements
1806	<i>Demetrio e Polibio</i>	Dramma serio	King Demetrio, mature and steadfast	Beautiful high notes, flexible, full tone.
1812	<i>La pietra del paragone</i>	Melodramma giocoso	Young Giocondo, honest and loyal	Beautiful high notes, flexible, with a smooth timbre.
1813	<i>Tancredi</i>	Melodramma eroico	Argirio, brave and full of wisdom	Beautiful high notes, flexible, and full-bodied in sound.
1813	<i>L'italiana in Algeri</i>	Dramma giocoso	Young Lindoro, clever and devoted	Beautiful high notes, flexible, with agile expressiveness.
1814	<i>Il turco in Italia</i>	Dramma buffo	Knight Don Narciso, jealous and sensitive	Beautiful high notes, flexible, with agile expressiveness.
1816	<i>Il barbiere di Siviglia</i>	Commedia	Count Almaviva, handsome and quick-witted	Beautiful high notes, flexible, with a smooth timbre.
1816	<i>Otello</i>	Dramma drama	Moor Othello, strong and jealous	Clear, powerful voice.
1817	<i>La Cenerentola</i>	Dramma giocoso	Prince Ramiro, handsome and quick-witted	Beautiful high notes, flexible, with agile expressiveness.
1817	<i>La gazza ladra</i>	Melodramma	Young Gianetto, honest and shy	Bright, light voice with flowing expressiveness.

1823	<i>Semiramide</i>	Melodramma tragico	King Idreno of India, sincerely in love	Beautiful high notes, full resonance.
1828	<i>Le Conte Ory</i>	Opera comique	Count Ory, cunning and deceitful	Bright voice with flowing expressiveness.
1829	<i>Guillaume Tell</i>	Opera	Arnold Melchtal, inwardly conflicted by love, yet a resolute patriot	Broad, deep voice, full of power, yet delicate.

Through an in-depth study of Rossini's biography and a close examination of the tenor roles in the operas mentioned above, the author observed that Rossini's family musical tradition, together with the rich experiences gained from his numerous travels, gave rise to a distinctive operatic style and exerted a profound influence on his conception of tenor roles. The musical careers of his parents and his first wife, a soprano, enabled him to develop a deep understanding of the singer's voice, which in turn made his operas exceptionally "singable." The wide range of tenor roles in his operas renders his dramatic and comic coloratura arias truly distinctive. The specific nature of these tenor coloraturas allows these parts to be regarded as a classical canon, offering many singers valuable vocal lessons. Drawing on his own vocal abilities and on his understanding of male operatic roles, which he considers representative and exceptional, the author selected the following operatic excerpts for dramatic and comic tenor for recording and detailed analysis.

Dramatic coloratura roles:

1. *Tancredi* (*Tancred*). Melodramma eroico
2. *Otello*. Drame

Roles with comic coloratura elements:

3. *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (*The Barber of Seville*). Commedia
4. *La gazza ladra* (*The Thieving Magpie*). Melodramma

In order to deepen the investigation into the specific performance aspects of these excerpts, the author will briefly introduce each selected opera and provide an outline of the plot, together with a description of the particular scene chosen for analysis.

1.1.2 Tancredi and a general description of the duettino "Se amistà verace, e pura"

Tancredi (premiered on 6 February 1813 at the Gran Teatro La Fenice in Venice) is one of Rossini's most celebrated early works. The libretto was adapted from a two-act play by Gaetano Rossi, itself based on Voltaire's tragedy of the same title (1760). Rossini's biographer Stendhal re-

garded *Tancredi* as one of the composer's greatest masterpieces and described it as "a true thunderbolt in the clear, azure sky of Italian lyric theatre," while its librettist, Gaetano Rossi, observed that it was precisely at this moment that "Rossini passed into glory."⁴ Richard Osborne described the opera as "his first mature tragic work, which to a large extent immediately established him as a leading composer of contemporary Italian opera."

Characters and plot:

Argirio⁵ (tenor)

Tancredi (alto)

Amenaide (soprano)

Isaura (mezzo-soprano)

Orbazzano (bass)

Roggiero (mezzo-soprano)

The story takes place in the eleventh century in the city of Syracuse, which faces an invasion by the Saracens under the leadership of Solamir. In the face of this threat, the two most powerful families in the city, those of Orbazzano and Argirio, put an end to their long-standing feud, and Argirio promises to give his daughter Amenaide in marriage to Orbazzano. However, Amenaide is already in love with the exiled knight Tancredi. Amenaide writes a letter to Tancredi, urging him to return as soon as possible. The letter falls into Orbazzano's hands, who mistakenly believes that Amenaide is a traitor and in secret contact with the enemy, Solamir. As a result, she is sentenced to death. Disguised, Tancredi comes to Amenaide's defense and defeats Orbazzano. Although he succeeds in clearing Amenaide of all charges, he leaves her, convinced of her infidelity. After departing, Tancredi learns that Solamir is planning an attack on the city of Syracuse, and he returns to take part in the battle. Following the victorious combat, he discovers that the dying Solamir has confirmed Amenaide's innocence. In this moment of joy, the lovers are reunited. Tancredi, Argirio, and Amenaide express their happiness, joined in their shared joy by Isaura.

Although the original version had a happy ending, in accordance with the traditional conventions governing operatic finales, shortly after the Venetian premiere Sivardoni observed that Rossini more closely resembled a modern neoclassicist than a Romantic. The poet Luigi Lechi subsequently reworked the libretto, modeling it on Voltaire's original tragic ending. In this revised conclusion, first performed on 21 March 1813 at the municipal theatre in Ferrara, Tancredi wins the

⁴ Richard Osborne, *Rossini*, wyd. zrewid. (Oxford–New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), s. 199

⁵ Marco Beghelli, Nicola Gallino (red.), *Tutti i libretti di Rossini* (Milano: Garzanti, 1991), s. 177.

battle but sustains mortal wounds. In the final moments of his life, Amenaide clarifies the misunderstanding caused by the letter, leading to reconciliation between her and Tancredi. Argirio, arriving just in time, enables the couple to be married, and Tancredi dies in the arms of his beloved.

In the revised December version staged in Milan in 1813, Rossini restored the happy ending.

The piece selected by the author is the richly ornamented *Se amistà verace, e pura*. This excerpt comes from the first act, set in a palace corridor, where the nobleman Argirio (tenor) proclaims a truce and expresses to his former enemy, Orbazzano (bass), a sincere desire for friendship, so that they may unite in opposition to the Moors.

1.1.3 Otello, ossia Il moro di Venezia (Otello, or The Moor of Venice)

It is the second in the series of nine operas composed by Rossini for Naples, and it premiered on 4 December 1816 at the Teatro del Fondo in Naples.

The libretto was written by Francesco Maria Berio di Salsa and is not directly based on Shakespeare's tragedy, but rather on contemporary adaptations, such as **Othello, ou le More de Venise** by Jean-François Ducis from 1792⁶.

Characters and plot:

Otello - an African general in the service of Venice (tenor)

Desdemona - daughter of Elmiro and Otello's secretly wedded wife (soprano)

Elmiro - a Venetian nobleman, father of Desdemona (baritone)

Rodrigo - a suitor spurned by Desdemona, son of the governor (tenor)

Jago - Otello's silent enemy, who forms an alliance with Rodrigo for tactical purposes (tenor)

Emilia - Desdemona's confidante (soprano)

Gondolier - a gondolier (tenor)

Chorus of senators, supporters of Otello, and the ladies of Desdemona's retinue. Senators, citizens, friends, and members of Desdemona's entourage (chorus).

The plot of this work, as presented in the operatic libretto staged in Milan in 1818, unfolds as follows. Otello, a Black soldier in the service of Venetian power on the Adriatic, returns victorious from a battle against the Turks. In the meantime, he has secretly married Desdemona, the daughter of Elmiro, a Venetian patrician, who was intended to marry the governor's son, Rodrigo. Another suitor of Desdemona, Otello's silent enemy Jago, previously rejected by her, decides to take revenge. Feigning support for Rodrigo's love for Desdemona, he seeks to avenge the wrong he believes he has suffered. Jago intercepts a letter, through which he convinces Otello of his wife's

⁶ Richard Osborne, „Otello (i)”, Grove Music Online, Oxford University Press, [online], DOI: 10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.O003768, dostę: 16 XI 2025.

infidelity. This incident sets in motion a chain of events that culminates in Otello's stabbing of Desdemona, followed by his own suicide after the deception is revealed and his wife's innocence is made clear.

The cavatina *Ah sì, per voi già sento* is Otello's first cavatina and one of the opera's opening scenes. The action takes place in the senate chamber, where Otello has just returned as a victor. He has already secretly married Desdemona. In this cavatina, Otello, the Moorish general, expresses his joy at the victory over the Turks and takes pride in his success, hoping that his love will be accepted.

Otello also expresses his love for his wife and his happiness at returning to her after the battle. For him, this is a moment of exaltation and joy. He believes that his return bears witness both to his love for Desdemona and to his loyalty to Venice. The scene conveys a triumphant atmosphere and the strength of his emotions. Rossini's music in this passage captures Otello's enthusiasm and passion.

1.1.4. *Il barbiere di Siviglia (The Barber of Seville)* and the cavatina *Ecco ridente in cielo (Laughing brightly in the heavens)*.

Il barbiere di Siviglia, also known as *The Barber of Seville* (originally *Almaviva, ossia L'inutile precauzione*), is a two-act comic opera composed by Gioachino Rossini with a libretto by Cesare Sterbini.

The opera is an adaptation of the French comedy *Le barbier de Séville* (1775) by Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais. Its premiere took place on 20 February 1816 at the Teatro Argentina in Rome under the title *Almaviva, ossia L'inutile precauzione*. The stage design was created by Angelo Toselli.

The commission was given to Rossini by Francesco Sforza Cesarini, the theatre's manager. The theatre, now known as Teatro Argentina, was sponsored by his family and had been built by his grandfather, Giuseppe Sforza, in 1732. In December 1815, Francesco Sforza Cesarini and the then twenty-three-year-old Rossini reached an agreement to compose a joyful and humorous musical work, intended for performance during the 1816 Carnival season. However, on 16 February 1816, Sforza Cesarini died of a heart attack. Despite this, the opera's premiere proceeded as planned on 20 February at the Teatro Argentina in Rome, under the title *Almaviva, ossia L'inutile precauzione*, as a tribute to *Il barbiere di Siviglia* by Giovanni Paisiello from 1782.

At its premiere, the opera was met with vehement protests from the audience, largely because many supporters of Paisiello were present and openly wished for the new work to fail. Nevertheless, the second performance on the following evening was met with overwhelming success.

Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* is regarded as one of the masterpieces of comic opera. More than two centuries later, the work continues to enjoy immense popularity worldwide.

Characters and plot:

Count d'Almaviva, in love with the young Rosina (tenor)

Don Bartolo, a physician, Rosina's guardian and suitor (bass)

Rosina, Bartolo's "jewel in the crown" (mezzo-soprano)

Figaro, the "jack-of-all-trades" barber (baritone)

Don Basilio, Rosina's music teacher (bass)

Berta, Bartolo's elderly housekeeper (soprano)

Fiorello, servant to Count d'Almaviva (bass)

Ambrogio, Bartolo's servant (bass)

Guards, townspeople, notaries, policemen, musicians, and others.

The action takes place in eighteenth-century Seville, Spain, where the young Count Almaviva falls in love with a girl named Rosina and follows her to Seville, trying by every possible means to express his love for her. However, the physician Don Bartolo, Rosina's guardian, attempts to prevent her from meeting the Count. In Seville, the Count encounters the barber Figaro, who helps him thwart Bartolo's devious plans, and in the end Almaviva succeeds in marrying Rosina.

The excerpt chosen by the author, performed by the tenor character Count Almaviva, is the cavatina *Ecco ridente in cielo* (Laughing brightly in the heavens). It appears at the beginning of the first act, as night falls over a square in Seville. Beneath the balcony of Bartolo's house, whose windows are secured with locked shutters, Count Almaviva sings a serenade. He is in love with Rosina, a beautiful, kind, and innocent young woman, and therefore follows her to Spanish Seville despite all obstacles, hoping to win her heart. As dawn approaches and the square lies deserted, he stands beneath her window after a sleepless night, lost in thoughts of his beloved. Musicians tune their instruments to accompany him as he sings this splendid song.

1.1.5 *La gazza ladra* (The Thieving Magpie) and the cavatina *Vieni fra queste braccia* (Come into these arms).

The libretto of *La gazza ladra* (The Thieving Magpie) was written by Giovanni Gherardini. The work belongs to the opera semiseria genre and is based on the drama *La Pie voleuse ou La Servante de Palaiseau* (1815) by Théodore Badouin d'Aubigny and Louis-Charles Caigniez. Its premiere took place on 31 May 1817 at Teatro alla Scala in Milan.

La gazza ladra displays exceptionally high musical quality and contains one of the most dramatic episodes in the entire output of Gioachino Rossini. It is characterized by a semi-serious operatic profile, inspired by events from the lives of ordinary people, in contrast to the predominantly serious historical and mythological contexts typical of operas of that period. The opera requires a large cast of singers. In the author's view, it places exceptionally high demands on both the acting skills and the vocal abilities of opera performers.

Plot and characterization of the roles:

Fabrizio Vingradito, a wealthy peasant (baritone)

Lucia, Fabrizio's wife (mezzo-soprano)

Gianetto, Fabrizio's son, a soldier (tenor)

Ninetta, a servant in Fabrizio's household (soprano)

Fernando Villabella, Ninetta's father, a soldier (baritone)

Gottardo, the mayor (baritone)

Pippo, a young boy employed by Fabrizio (alto)

Isacco, a street vendor (tenor)

Antonio, the prison guard (tenor)

Giorgio, the mayor's servant (baritone)

Ernesto, Fernando's companion and friend, a soldier (baritone)

Gentlemen soldiers, peasants, members of Fabrizio's family (chorus)

The magpie

Servants

The action takes place in a village near Paris, France, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, during the period of the Napoleonic counter-revolution⁷.

Fabrizio Vingradito and his wife Lucia are preparing to welcome home their son Gianetto, who is returning from service. At the same time, the servant Ninetta is eagerly awaiting the return of both her beloved Gianetto and her father Fernando, who is being sought as a deserter. Before a court presided over by Judge Gottardo, Ninetta reads aloud a public notice announcing the search for a man. As the judge is not wearing his spectacles, Ninetta, while presenting the notice, omits the fact that the wanted man is in fact her own father. Fernando gives his daughter a silver spoon to sell. Ninetta sells the spoon to the merchant Isacco. When Lucia discovers that a silver spoon is missing, Ninetta is falsely accused of theft. The judge imprisons her, and she faces the threat of execution.

⁷ Harenberg Opera Guide, wyd. 4 (Meyers Lexikonverlag, 2003), hasło „La gazza ladra”, s. 778 i n.

Fernando, in desperation, attempts to save Ninetta, who is urged by Gianetto to reveal the truth. Ninetta, however, refuses. She asks Pippo to help secure Fernando's property. The court sentences Ninetta to death, and she is led to the place of execution. At that moment, a magpie steals a gold coin from Pippo. In the magpie's nest, not only the coin but also the missing silver spoon from the Vingradito household is discovered. At the last moment, thanks to the proof of her innocence, Ninetta's execution is halted and she is cleared of all charges. Fernando likewise receives a royal pardon.

The vocal excerpt selected by the author, Gianetto's cavatina **Vieni fra queste braccia**, appears in the fifth scene of the first act. Gianetto returns to the village amid the applause of the inhabitants, and this arietta conveys his excitement at the prospect of meeting Ninetta. At last he is able to be with his beloved, expressing joy and happiness. These intense emotions are vividly conveyed both in the text and in Rossini's music.

1.2 A General Overview of Mozart's Operas

1.2.1 The Biography of Mozart and an Overview of His Operas

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) was born on 27 January 1756 in Salzburg, Austria. His father, Leopold Mozart, was an accomplished violinist and composer who served as court Kapellmeister in Salzburg⁸. From an early age, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart displayed extraordinary musical talent. At the age of four he began to compose, and by the age of five he had mastered several instruments, including the piano and the violin. In 1762, at just six years old, Mozart set out on a concert tour together with his father Leopold Mozart and his sister Maria Anna Mozart, known as Nannerl.

In March 1767, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart composed his first opera, *Die Schuldigkeit des ersten Gebots* (K. 35), which was performed in his native Salzburg. In May of the same year, he also wrote the Latin comic opera *Apollo et Hyacinthus* (K. 38).

In 1768, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart composed two further operas, *Bastien und Bastienne* (K. 50) and *La finta semplice* (*The Pretended Simpleton*, K. 51). In 1769, Mozart traveled to Italy with his father, where he studied counterpoint under the priest Giovanni Battista Martini, who was regarded at the time as one of the most eminent music theorists in Europe and a leading authority on Renaissance and Baroque music⁹. During his stay in Italy, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart became fa-

⁸ Cliff Eisen, Stanley Sadie, „Mozart, (Johann Chrysostom) Wolfgang Amadeus”, Grove Music Online, Oxford University Press, [online], DOI: 10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.6002278233, dostę: 16 XI 2025.

⁹ Stanley Sadie, Mozart: The Early Years, 1756–1781 (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2006), s. 190–191.

miliar with operatic compositional techniques and studied the expressive devices of vocal music. This experience enriched his compositional skills and enabled him to refine his mastery of writing Italian opera.

In 1770, in Milan, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart composed the opera *Mitridate, re di Ponto* (K. 87), which achieved notable success.

In 1771, he wrote another highly regarded opera, *Ascanio in Alba* (K. 111).

In 1772, Mozart returned to Salzburg, where his next opera, *Lucio Silla* (K. 135), was staged with great acclaim.

In 1775, following conflicts with the new Archbishop of Salzburg, Mozart left the city and traveled to Munich, where he composed two successful operas, *La finta giardiniera* (K. 196) and *Il re pastore* (K. 208).

The year 1777 marked a definitive break with the Archbishop. Mozart became the first independent composer in European history. He embarked on another musical journey, visiting Mannheim, Paris, and Munich once again. This period was marked by severe hardship, including poverty, the death of his mother, and a painful romantic disappointment. Nevertheless, he continued to compose without interruption.

In 1781, Mozart composed *Idomeneo* (K. 366), an opera that caused a sensation at its premiere and vividly demonstrated his mastery of operatic composition.

In July 1782, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (*The Abduction from the Seraglio*, K. 384) was premiered to great success. It is also regarded as the first national opera in German history.

In 1786 and 1787, Mozart composed two operas, *Le nozze di Figaro* (*The Marriage of Figaro*, K. 492) and *Don Giovanni* (K. 527), which represent the highest level of his achievement in terms of dramaturgy, conceptual depth, and musical language. Although both works received only a moderate reception in Vienna, they achieved overwhelming success in Prague, where the entire city embraced them enthusiastically and Mozart was welcomed as a hero.

In 1790, Mozart completed *Così fan tutte* (K. 588). The librettist, Lorenzo Da Ponte, was also the author of the librettos for *Le nozze di Figaro* and *Don Giovanni*. All three operas are regarded as classics of Mozart's operatic legacy.

The year 1791 saw the creation of two major operas, *La clemenza di Tito* (K. 621) and *Die Zauberflöte* (*The Magic Flute*, K. 620). Mozart died on 5 December 1791 at the age of thirty-five in Vienna.

After becoming acquainted with Mozart's life and his operatic output, the author observes that Mozart's ability to create a wide variety of tenor roles, as well as his skill in applying different

dramatic and comic styles in his operas, is closely connected to his life experiences and to the historical events he witnessed. An understanding of the nature of tenor roles in Mozart's operas from different periods enabled the author to select dramatic and comic scenes that he considers characteristic of Mozart's style and, at the same time, exceptionally demanding for the performer.

Mozart operas selected by the author:

1. *Idomeneo* k.366
2. *La clemenza di Tito* K.621

Operas containing comic elements:

3. *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* K.384

1.2.2 *Idomeneo*

Idomeneo (*Idomeneus*, K. 366) is an opera whose libretto was written by Giambattista Varesco. In the summer of 1780, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart received a commission from the Bavarian Elector Karl Theodor to adapt the French tragedy *Idoménée* (1712) by Antoine Danchet into an Italian opera. The story of Idomeneus reaches back to ancient Greek sources, including Iliad and Odyssey by Homer, as well as Aeneid by Virgil, which recount the return of heroes after the fall of Troy. These heroic legends have inspired countless works of art, and Idomeneus stands among their most enduring figures. The opera premiered on 29 January 1781 at the Cuvilliés Theatre in Munich. *Idomeneo* is regarded as Mozart's first fully mature opera and is distinguished by his individual and unmistakable style. In *Idomeneo*, Mozart demonstrates masterful command of orchestral color and of accompaniment that powerfully reinforces the narrative and shapes the melodic lines¹⁰.

Characters and plot:

Idomeneo, King of Crete (tenor)

Idamantes, son of Idomeneo (mezzo-soprano, originally castrato)

Ilia, Trojan princess, daughter of Priam (soprano)

Elettra, daughter of Agamemnon, King of Argos (soprano)

Arbace, confidant and friend of Idomeneo (tenor)

High Priest of Neptune (tenor)

La Voce (The Voice) (bass)

Trojans, Cretans, warriors from Argos and Crete, sailors, priests, people (chorus)

Procession of Idamantes, procession of Idomeneo, procession of Ilia, Cretans (ballet)

¹⁰ James Webster, „Mozart's Operas and the Myth of Musical Unity”, Cambridge Opera Journal 2, nr 2 (1990): 197–218, DOI: 10.1017/S0954586700003220, s. 216.

After the end of the Trojan War, Idomeneo, King of Crete, returns to his homeland as a victor. Ilia, the daughter of King Priam of Troy, also arrives in Crete, but as a captive. During the journey, Ilia is thrown into the sea by a storm and is rescued by Idomeneo's son, Idamante. This rescue gives rise to mutual feelings between them. However, another woman awaits Idamante in Crete: Elettra, the daughter of Agamemnon, who is deeply in love with him.

During the storm at sea, Idomeneo makes a vow to Poseidon, promising that if he and his men survive, he will sacrifice the life of the first person he encounters upon reaching land. Tragically, the first person he meets is his own son, Idamante. Unwilling to fulfill this vow, Idomeneo attempts to protect his son without revealing the true reason. Ultimately, the sea, enraged by the broken oath, threatens the citizens of Crete with destruction unless the vow is honored. Idomeneo is thus forced to confront his promise.

At this moment, Ilia, driven by her love for Idamante, offers her own life as a sacrifice to save the city. Her extraordinary act of self-sacrifice appeases Poseidon's anger, and the god decrees that Idomeneo must abdicate in favor of Idamante, who will become the new king, with Ilia as his queen. Idomeneo joyfully accepts these terms, while Elettra, unable to endure this outcome, descends into uncontrollable rage. Power is thus transferred in Crete, and the opera concludes with a happy ending.

The coloratura tenor aria selected by the author is Idomeneo's aria *Fuor del mar*.

This aria appears in the second act of the opera, when Idomeneo speaks with his friend about the vow to sacrifice his son. Ilia overhears the conversation and warns the king that if he avoids fulfilling his promise to Poseidon, disaster will befall the people. She also hints at her feelings for Idamante, which provokes doubt and anger in the king. Enraged, Idomeneo sings the aria *Fuor del mar*. In this moment, he releases long-suppressed emotions and rails against the gods. The inner torment that builds within Idomeneo constitutes a crucial element of the drama. It deepens his characterization, lends him a more human dimension, and propels the opera toward its tragic climax.

1.2.3 *La clemenza di Tito*

La clemenza di Tito (*The Clemency of Titus*) is an opera seria composed by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart for the coronation of Leopold II as King of Bohemia. The opera consists of two acts and received its premiere on 6 September 1791 at the Gräfllich Nostitzsches Nationaltheater in Prague.

The original libretto was written in 1734 by Pietro Metastasio, the court poet in Vienna. Mozart, together with Caterino Mazzolà, court poet to the Elector of Saxony, revised the original text in order to adapt it to contemporary tastes and practical theatrical requirements.

Characters and plot:

Tito Vespasiano, Roman emperor (tenor)

Vitellia, daughter of Emperor Vitellius (soprano)

Servilia, sister of Sesto, beloved of Annio (soprano)

Sesto, friend of Tito, lover of Vitellia (soprano)

Annio, friend of Sesto, beloved of Servilia (soprano)

Publio, prefect of the Praetorian Guard (baritone)

Vitellia, the daughter of the former Roman emperor, wishes to become empress when Tito ascends the throne. However, Tito initially intends to marry Berenice. Vitellia therefore urges her beloved, the young aristocrat Sesto, to set fire to the imperial palace and murder Tito. Although Sesto believes that betraying his friend would be a terrible crime, he cannot resist his love for Vitellia and agrees to carry out the deed. Later, Tito changes his mind and decides to choose Sesto's sister, Servilia, as his new empress, a decision that deeply distresses Annio, who loves Servilia. When Servilia confesses to Tito that she loves Annio, the emperor, moved by her honesty, blesses their union. Eventually, Tito resolves to marry Vitellia. In desperation, Vitellia attempts to stop Sesto from setting the palace on fire and assassinating Tito, but it is already too late. In the second act, Sesto is arrested for the attempted assassination of Tito. He confesses his guilt and is ultimately sentenced to death by the Senate. Tito, believing in Sesto's loyalty, grants him the opportunity to defend himself, but Sesto remains silent, accepting all consequences. When Vitellia, in an effort to save Sesto, publicly confesses to the conspiracy, Tito, as a merciful ruler, chooses to forgive everyone.

The excerpt selected by the author, rich in ornamentation, is Tito's aria *Se all'impero, amici Dei*. This aria appears in Act II of *La clemenza di Tito*, at the moment when Tito concludes his interrogation of Sesto. He is furious with his friend for the betrayal and demands that Sesto tell the truth. Sesto, however, remains unyielding. He refuses to betray his beloved and will not reveal the truth, which only further inflames Tito's anger. Enraged, Tito orders Sesto to be taken to the Colosseum to await judgment. Left alone, Tito takes out the written sentence against Sesto and sinks into deep reflection. As he contemplates their friendship, he is torn between sorrow and rage that his closest companion has attempted to kill him. Yet his merciful nature compels him to seek another way of resolving the situation. After a violent inner struggle, Tito arrives at the conclusion that "if one can-

not win the loyalty of a kingdom through gracious love, one should not seek to win the loyalty of a man through fear.” While Sesto awaits the final verdict in the arena, Tito, after signing the sentence and enduring a series of inner conflicts, ultimately decides to forgive mercifully. He tears up the decree, singing this aria, thereby affirming clemency as the guiding principle of his rule.

1.2.4 Die Entführung aus dem Serail K. 384 and the two arias of Konstanze, *Ach, ich liebte* and *Ich baue ganz auf deine Stärke*

Die Entführung aus dem Serail (*The Abduction from the Seraglio*, K. 384) is a three-act *Singspiel* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. The libretto was written by Johann Gottlieb Stephanie. The premiere took place on 16 July 1782 in Vienna, where the composer himself conducted the performance at the Burgtheater.

Work on *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* coincided with the period when Mozart left Salzburg and settled in Vienna. This move followed a definitive break between the composer and the Archbishop of Salzburg, caused by the restrictions imposed by ecclesiastical hierarchy on Mozart’s creative activity. Mozart arrived in Vienna in 1781 and, in the company of his beloved Constanze, drew inspiration from an atmosphere of freedom and love. These personal circumstances are also reflected in his work on *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*.

The opera is based on a libretto by Christoph Friedrich Bretzner, a German writer and merchant from Leipzig. Composer Johann André had previously set this libretto to music in the opera *Belmont und Konstanze*, also known as *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, which premiered in Berlin. Later, on the occasion of a visit to Vienna by Grand Duke Paul, son of Catherine II, and his wife Maria Feodorovna, Johann Gottlieb Stephanie adapted the libretto to suit a new production planned for Vienna. This task was entrusted to Mozart.

In Mozart’s Vienna, Joseph II ordered the court opera house to be renamed the German National Opera and initiated the creation of an ensemble dedicated to performing works in the German language. Although this project ultimately proved unsuccessful, many of the notable works produced during this period were German translations or adaptations of earlier pieces. Mozart’s operas, however, stood out for their exceptional originality and artistic independence¹¹.

Characters and plot:

Belmonte (Belmondo), a Spanish aristocrat (tenor)

Konstanze (Constanze), Belmonte’s fiancée (soprano)

Pasha Selim, the Turkish ruler (spoken role)

¹¹ Elizabeth Manning, „Mozart’s ‘Entführung’: Anniversary”, *The Musical Times* 123, nr 1673 (July 1982): 473–474, DOI: 10.2307/963241.

Pedrillo, Belmonte's servant and Blonde's husband (tenor)

Blonde, Konstanze's maid and Pedrillo's wife (soprano)

Osmin, the Pasha's guardian (bass)

The action of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* takes place in the Turkish dominion, where a young Spanish aristocrat, Belmonte, learns that his fiancée Konstanze and two servants, Pedrillo and Blonde, have been abducted by pirates and sold to a Turkish governor, Pasha Selim. Belmonte courageously decides to travel alone to the Pasha's harem in order to rescue his beloved and the two servants. At the palace gate, Belmonte encounters Osmin, the Pasha's guard, and becomes embroiled in an argument with him. He then meets his servant Pedrillo, from whom he learns that Konstanze is safe but that the Pasha wishes to claim her for himself. Pedrillo and Belmonte devise a plan to escape with Konstanze and Blonde. Pedrillo smuggles his master into the palace disguised as an architect, where Belmonte meets the Pasha. In order to facilitate the escape, Pedrillo gives Osmin wine laced with a sleeping potion. When the four prepare to flee, Osmin awakens and stops them, bringing them before the Pasha, who intends to sentence them to death. At this moment, the Pasha discovers that Belmonte is the son of his enemy. When all hope seems lost, the Pasha decides to release them. All are deeply moved by his magnanimity and celebrate his act of mercy. The excerpt selected by the author is an aria of the chevalier Belmonte.:

Konstanze, Konstanze - oh wie ängstlich

And Ich baue ganz auf deine Stärke

Konstanze, Konstanze – oh wie ängstlich is an arioso that appears in the first act, at the moment when Pedrillo introduces the protagonist into the palace and presents him to the Pasha under a false identity. Belmonte learns that he will soon meet Konstanze. It is at this point that he sings his second arioso, *Konstanze, Konstanze – oh wie ängstlich*, which reveals his inner longing and anxiety. As a young Spanish nobleman in the prime of his life, Belmonte once again expresses his infatuation and deeply concealed emotions through this arioso.

Ich baue ganz auf deine Stärke appears at the beginning of the third act, when Belmonte and Pedrillo are preparing to escape with Konstanze and Blonde. While waiting alone, Belmonte sings his fourth aria in the opera, using it as an expression of his most intimate feelings. This aria is of considerable length and technical difficulty, requiring a degree of virtuosity in performance in order to convey the protagonist's emotional agitation and excitement. At the same time, through its text, the aria reveals Belmonte's inner strength and the steadfastness of his love. The praise of love expressed in the text conveys the hero's infatuation and complete devotion.

Chapter 2. Analysis of Vocal Technique in Selected Coloratura Excerpts from Rossini's Operas Included on the Author's CD

In this chapter, I analyze dramatic and comic coloratura excerpts from Rossini's operas. I draw on the books of my professor, Eugenia Rezler, as well as on the knowledge she conveyed to me during my studies, in order to classify coloratura passages and the corresponding exercises (gorgheggi). In addition, I supplement these findings with an analysis of my own vocal experience. This approach has made it possible to identify the specific characteristics of dramatic and comic coloratura passages in Rossini's tenor roles.

2.1 Dramatic roles:

2.1.1 The duettino of Argirio and Orbazzano, "*Se amistà verace, e pura*," from the opera *Tancredi*

Rossini's first opera seria¹². As noted in the *Harenberg Opera Guide*, a defining musical characteristic of this opera is its "refined balance and classical simplicity."¹³

This can be observed in the duettino, both in Argirio's principal melodic line and in Orbazzano's part, in which one senses refined simplicity and classical balance of melody. Throughout the dramatic development, the motif of "struggle" recurs persistently. The author believes that Rossini attaches great importance to expression and the portrayal of emotions in duettini, and that the character of Argirio conveys complex emotional states in this passage, perceptible in both the text and the music. The opening *adagio* reflects his hope for reconciliation and friendship with Orbazzano, as well as his devotion to their shared homeland. Orbazzano then enters, responding and gradually intensifying these emotions, until the music finally moves into the concluding coloratura section. This final passage strengthens the sense of faith in victory and culminates in a triumphant, morale-raising conclusion.

The duettino of Argirio and Orbazzano: "*Se amistà verace, e pura*" from the opera *Tancredi*

Position	Description
Title	Duettino of Argirio (tenor) and Orbazzano (bass) – " <i>Se amistà verace, e pura</i> " (<i>Tancredi</i>)
Number of measures	140 measures (mm. 100–239)

¹²Norbert Miller, *Tancredi* (1813). In: *Piper Encyclopedia of Musical Theatre*, Vol. 5: *Works. Piccinni–Spontini*. Piper, Munich and Zurich, 1994, p. 372.

¹³ *Tancredi*. In: *Harenberg Opera Guide*. 4th edition. Meyers Lexikonverlag, 2003, p. 764.

Key	B-flat major as the tonal framework. With local inflections toward G minor (overall tonal stability with local shifts).
Meter	4/4
Tempo	Andante sostenuto → Allegro → Più allegro (stretta)
Dynamics (general)	Clearly variable (pp–ff), with passages marked <i>sottovoce</i> and numerous crescendos. The same dynamic level is typically maintained for approximately 4–8 measures.
Articulation	In <i>cantabile</i> sections, legato predominates. In the stretta, articulation becomes more syllabic and <i>marcato</i> . At times, there is a contrast between legato and staccato.
Coloratura figures (principal)	LONG SUSTAINED NOTES: t.155, t.193–195, t.164–166, t.168–169, t.171, t.197–199, t.201–202, t.204, t.215–217, t.219–221, t.181, t.214, t.233, t.219–229; EIGHTH-NOTE TRIPLETS: t.110, t.113; SIXTEENTH-NOTE TRIPLETS: t.120–121, t.123, t.132–133, t.135; SCALE PASSAGES ASCENDING AND DESCENDING: t.124–125, t.136–137; DESCENDING SCALE PRECEDED BY A SECOND-TRILL GROUP: t.179–180, t.212–213; SIX-NOTE QUINTAL GRUPETTI: t.134, t.139–140.
Formal Type	Close to an A – Tempo di mezzo – A ¹ structure, with development toward a concertato / stretta. In practice, an AA ¹ layout (return and expansion).
With or without recitative	Without recitative within the duettino. Earlier context: scena/chorus – scena e duetto con coro.

Text of the duet:

Italian Text	English Text
ARGIRIO Se amistà verace e pura Serberete ognor nel petto, Se di patria il vivo affetto L'alme vostre accenderà , Sì: felice, vincitrice Siracusa ognor sarà . ORBAZZANO Rea discordia invan fra noi Scuoterà la nera face: Alla patria in guerra, in pace Giuriam tutti fedeltà . CORO Sì, giuriam. ARGIRIO Respiro omai. CORO Fede, o morte. ARGIRIO Or vissi assai: E contento in tal momento Altri voti il cor non ha. ORBAZZANO e CORO Sempre illesa in guerra, in pace Sia la nostra libertà . ARGIRIO e poi CORO Di noi/voi tremi il Moro audace, Vinto alfin da noi(voi) cadrà.	ARGIRIO If sincere and pure friendship shall always dwell within your hearts, if living love for our homeland ignites your souls, then Syracuse shall ever be happy and victorious. ORBAZZANO Wicked discord shall not in vain brandish its dark torch between us. To our homeland, in war and in peace, we all swear fidelity. CHORUS Yes, we swear it. ARGIRIO Now I can breathe again. CHÓR Loyalty or death. ARGIRIO Now I have lived enough. In this moment of happiness my heart desires nothing more.. ORBAZZANO and CHORUS May our freedom, in war and in peace, remain forever inviolate. ARGIRIO, then CHORUS Let the bold Moor tremble before us. Defeated at last, he shall fall by our hands.

LONG SUSTAINED NOTES



In Rossini's coloratura passages, rapid runs abound. Although this study analyzes only part of the coloratura material, I consider long sustained notes to be of fundamental importance. They not only prepare the breath for coloratura passages, but also introduce a different kind of expressiveness into them. Practicing long sustained notes constitutes the foundation of coloratura singing. Every warm-up preceding coloratura technique begins precisely with them.

¹⁴ Eugenia Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno. Gioachino Rossini in Relation to Selected Italian Vocal Schools of the Nineteenth Century: An Analysis of Operatic Excerpts with Respect to the Use of Recommended Gorgheggi*. Warsaw, 2013, p. 160.

Why begin with a long sustained note?

A long sustained note allows the singer to experience real control over the airflow. It facilitates a clear perception of both the onset and the release of the sound. By juxtaposing “the ending of one sound” with “the beginning of the next,” the singer can, within the simplest possible structure, clearly distinguish and understand these two moments.

The Essence of the Beginning and Ending of a Sound

The beginning (attack) consists in the release of air.

The ending consists in its suspension.

The diversity of articulation and diction grows out of a conscious grasp of these two poles.

The Importance of the Long Sustained Note for Coloratura Technique

When a sound is repeatedly initiated and released within a single breath (through different distributions of airflow), the crucial skill lies in the ability to quickly eliminate unnecessary tension and to activate only those muscle groups that are truly required.

Calm as a Point of Reference

The calm associated with a long sustained note serves as a measure. After irregular, tense runs, it allows the muscles to return to the minimal level of tension necessary for free resonance.

The Function of Long Sustained Notes within a Work

A long sustained note fulfills not only an expressive function, but also a regenerative and preparatory one. It relaxes muscles that have been working intensively for dramatic effect. At the same time, it sends a signal to the listener. If the performer maintains stable control and avoids the vibrato characteristic of virtuosic runs, this indicates that interpretative intention shapes the sound, rather than the vocal apparatus itself.

Working Definition

According to observation, a half note may be regarded as the basic and minimal unit of time corresponding to a “long sustained note.”¹⁵

In the duettino of Argirio and Orbazzano, long sustained notes appear in fourteen places. The first occurs in measure 155, where a half note emphasizes the word “*Or*” (“now”), which may be interpreted as an act of proclamation. A similar function is fulfilled in measures 193–195, where the lengthening underscores the word “*cadrà*” (“will fall”). This set of solutions reveals the emo-

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

tional resonance between the tenor role of Argirio and Orbazzano, as well as with the other characters, leading to a local climax and highlighting the hero's leadership qualities.

When employed sparingly and with full control, long sustained notes can impart momentum to the breath. The performer should aim for a sound that is solemn and radiant, marked by noble brilliance (*serio e brillante*).

Bar 155



Bar 193-195



In the subsequent examples, passages of a repetitive character appear. The tenor lines from measures 164–166, 168–169, and 171 recur in measures 197–199, 201–202, and 204. The long sustained notes in these measures function as a kind of “warm-up” preceding the runs. They allow the voice to “open” first, to fully activate resonance, while the breath, shaped by the long note values, becomes more flexible, thereby preparing the breathing apparatus for the ensuing coloratura passages.

These measures correspond to the phrase “*E contento in tal momento altri voti il cor non ha*” (“*and in this very moment, contented, the heart has no other desires*”), and the long note values fall precisely on the textual accents. This may be interpreted as an expression of firm and lucid satisfaction and relief. It is precisely this emotional shading that the duettino reveals, shaping the tenor character of Argirio.

Bar 164-166

¹⁶ Gioachino Rossini, *Tancredi*. Melodramma eroico in due atti. Riduzione per canto e pianoforte condotta sull’edizione critica della partitura edita dalla Fondazione Rossini di Pesaro, a cura di Philip Gossett, Milano: Ricordi, 1991, s. 30.

¹⁷ Tamže, s. 33.

163 Più allegro

ARG.  18

Bar 168-169

167

ARG.  19

Bar 171

171

ARG.  20

It is worth noting that although measures 197–199, 201–202, and 204 repeat earlier material, the entrance of Orbazzano and the appearance of the *sottovoce* marking significantly alter the approach to sustaining the long notes. In comparison with the preceding passages, these measures require more stable breath support and a more restrained, carefully controlled airflow. The performer should aim for the impression of a tone that “floats” above the texture, rather than one that increases volume or presses the sound forward.

Bar 197-199

196

ARG.  21

ORB. *sottovoce* 

Bar 201-202

¹⁸ Tamže, s. 31.

¹⁹ Tamže.

²⁰ Tamže.

²¹ Tamže, s. 34.



22

Bar 204



23

Measures 215–217 and 219–221, although formally reminiscent of measures 197–199 and related passages, become the final climax before the conclusion as the pitch level rises and the text changes. Of particular importance is the verbal stress falling on the long note values: Di noi | TRE-mil | MÓ-ro | au-DÀ-ce | VÍN-to | ca-DRÀ (“Let the audacious Moor tremble before us; at last, defeated by us, he shall fall”). This may be interpreted as a proclamation addressed directly to the enemy. In performance, this passage should assume a more declarative, slogan-like character, with an element of chant or emphatic declamation.

Bar 215-217



24

Bar 219-221

²² Tamže.

²³ Tamže, s. 35.

²⁴ Tamže, s. 36.



One of the functions of long sustained notes is to close a passage or to bring an entire section to an end. In the material under analysis, measures 181 and 214 conclude coloratura passages, serving as a bridge between the preceding section and the one that follows.

Bar 181



Bar 214



The long sustained note in measure 233 falls precisely at the energetic peak reached through gradual repetitive intensification and simultaneously serves as the final sound of the entire work.

Bar 233

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 37.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 32.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 36.



29

In measures 223–229, Argirio, through a series of simultaneous long note values, firmly anchors the proclamatory message on the accented syllables *da noi cadrà* (“by us he shall fall”). At this point, the long sustained notes no longer fulfill the same lyrical function as in measures 164–166 and related passages. Instead, they act as a structural pillar. They unify the perception of pulse, stabilize the harmonic vertical, and transform the tone of utterance from an individual declaration into a collective call. The entire passage, treated as a “long-note unit,” forms a weight-bearing span between the phase of accumulation and the climactic conclusion that immediately precedes the final apex. From a performance perspective, this section should be conceived as one continuous “extended sound.” A low-intensity airflow combined with stable breath support is required, so as to brighten the timbre and maintain coherence across the span.

Bar 223-229



30

GORGHEGGI – LONG SUSTAINED NOTES

Referring to my professor’s study on Rossini’s approach to vocal training, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno* (1827), we may employ the category of Gorgheggi – Long Sustained Notes, that is, begin from the sustained tone itself. The process consists of a gentle onset, followed by a gradual

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

strengthening of the sound up to a point of culmination, and finally a “thinning” of the overtone (harmonic) components in order to close the sound. The exercise is recommended within the ambitus from c^1 to g^2 (occasionally extending to a^2), without key signatures. Most of these exercises do not require a unified harmonic accompaniment. It is sufficient to sense the vocal line itself, which demonstrates that the same pitch should be produced differently depending on its harmonic environment. In varying shades of expression or in a different linguistic context, the same note may function as a fundamental tone, a leading tone, or become a dissonant insertion. The interpretation of notational signs likewise depends on context.³¹



In light of the category Gorgheggi – Long Sustained Notes (according to **Metodo pratico di canto moderno**, 1827), the long note values in the duettino of Argirio and Orbazzano may be treated according to the exercise model “*gentle onset* → *gradual intensification* → *thinning*.” In measures 164–166 (and their repetition in measures 197–204, marked *sottovoce*), the half notes placed on textual accents “open” the resonance in preparation for the ensuing runs. This is achieved with a low airflow and increased laryngeal focus. The passage in measures 223–229 may be understood as a single “long-note unit.” Here the tenor does not expand volume but instead brightens the timbre. The long sustained note in measure 233 crowns the climax. It functions as a brief *messa di voce*, closing through the “thinning” of overtones.

In the author’s view, the example of long sustained notes in the duettino of Argirio and Orbazzano demonstrates that, in Rossini’s dramatic coloratura passages, the range of types and styles of long notes is presented with considerable breadth. This places before the performer the task of shaping timbre and managing breath in a more complex manner. These heightened demands constitute one of the distinctive characteristics of long sustained notes in the tenor performance of Rossinian dramatic coloratura excerpts.

EIGHTH-NOTE TRIPLETS



³¹ Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno...*, p. 56.

³² *Ibid.*

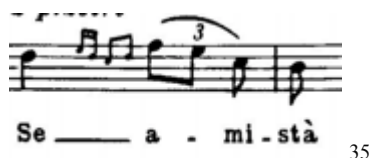
³³ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

Eighth-note triplets constitute the next stage after long sustained notes in the study of coloratura technique. Practicing this type of figure teaches an even distribution of breath and precise rhythmic control. The singer must maintain equality among all three notes and ensure that each one carries a full, rounded tone. In this way, the eighth-note triplet develops vocal fluency and prepares the voice for more demanding coloratura passages.

In accordance with what Prof. Rezler taught me in class, I understand that the same figure may assume different characters. Rossini defined the basic outline of this figure through specific meter and tempo indications. It is the singer's task, however, within the semantic framework of the text and the dramatic premises of the character, to determine precisely its expressive function and to shape appropriately the hierarchy of dynamics, articulation, and breath management, so that a coherent and reproducible interpretative concept emerges. The goal is not to repeat a neutral technical demonstration, but to transform the figure into an artistic utterance with an individual profile, logically clear and internally consistent. Such an approach simultaneously respects the conventions of musical notation, ensures continuity of the narrative, and enhances the theatrical effect.³⁴

Eighth-note triplets in the duettino of Argirio and Orbazzano appear twice, both at the very beginning, in measures 110 and 113. In this duet, the initial triplets are not merely ornamental. Rather, they function as a contrapuntal softening of the strong, declarative tone of the opening. Through the even subdivision of the triplets, without anticipating the pulse, they emphasize the words “*amistà*” (“friendship”) and “*serberete*” (“you will preserve”). To a certain extent, they temper the initial tension and excitement, giving the phrase more rounded contours and a calmer emotional trajectory.

Bar 110



Bar 113

³⁴ ³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

³⁵ G. Rossini, *Tancredi*, reduction for voice and piano based on the critical edition, edited by Ph. Gossett, Ricordi, 1991, p. 23.



GORGHEGGI – EIGHTH-NOTE TRIPLETS

This type of exercise is based on triplets and does not presuppose a fixed meter. The aim is to focus attention on the figure itself rather than on an external metric framework. This approach reduces respiratory load and prevents the progression of metric time from disrupting still-unstable muscular coordination, thereby promoting relaxation and continuity of the phrase.

Practice usually takes a chain-like form. The same modules are linked together, but without mechanical repetition. As the pitch shifts, muscular tension changes accordingly. Upward motion trains lift and control, while downward motion develops the maintenance of support and stability during descending pitch movement.

The material often unfolds in a diatonic progression, which facilitates control of evenness and coherence. Owing to its open structure, the ambitus and length can be adapted to the performer's level.

Once the basic pattern has stabilized and the timbre and quality of the individual notes have become unified, meter is introduced (for example 3/8, 6/8, or 9/8), and articulation and dynamics are refined, allowing for moderate improvisation. In this way, the technical exercise is transformed into a musical utterance with an individual character, coherent with the musical notation and the theatrical context.³⁷



In the duet of Argirio and Orbazzano, in measures 110 and 113, when focusing specifically on the eighth-note triplets, it is advisable to aim for a more relaxed and fluid shaping of the phrase. Diction and dynamics can be refined in this context, especially by practicing the transition from the

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno...*, p. 57.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

vowel *‘‘a’’* to *‘‘i’’* and by working carefully on the vowel *‘‘e’’*, which proves particularly effective in the triplet figures of this composition. Moreover, when performing coloratura passages with eighth-note triplets in this type of dramatic repertoire, the tenor should bear in mind that both a clear, projecting articulation, with a certain degree of ‘‘grain,’’³⁹ and the preservation of legato are required. This balance constitutes one of the distinctive features of tenor performance in Rossini’s dramatic coloratura passages employing eighth-note triplet figurations.

SIXTEENTH-NOTE TRIPLETS



The sixteenth-note triplet in a return-to-the-initial-pitch pattern (x–y–x) has clear pedagogical value. It trains quick and accurate rearticulation of the same pitch after a brief departure. At fast tempi, this ability is crucial. The performer must immediately distinguish and execute a minor second and a major second. Even slight intonational inaccuracies, when accumulated over longer passages, lead to a blurring of the tonal center. Regular work with this pattern organizes intonation, stabilizes breath support, and strengthens articulatory precision. For these reasons, this exercise should be regarded as a fundamental element of vocal technique training, especially in coloratura repertoire.⁴¹

Sixteenth-note triplets in the duet of Argirio and Orbazzano impart a different, more sparkling character to the phrase. They function like brief impulses that ignite emotion and sharpen the rhetorical profile of the utterance. The composer employs them selectively and sparingly. They do not dominate the musical material but instead highlight pivotal moments and propel the narrative forward.

In measures 120–121 and 123, the triplet serves to momentarily heighten tension following clearly articulated metric accents, creating an impression of ‘‘illumination’’ of the phrase without overloading the volume. Its return in measures 132–133 and 135 has the character of an echo-like recapitulation. Short, resilient rhythmic eddies reinforce the energy leading into the next gesture while simultaneously providing contrast to the surrounding prosody. As can be observed, emotional

³⁹ Iberto Zedda, ‘‘Aspetti della vocalità rossiniana nell’opera buffa e nella seria’’ (‘‘Aspects of Rossinian Vocality in Opera Buffa and Opera Seria’’), *Archivio Alberto Zedda* [online], no pagination; accessed 4 November 2025 <https://www.albertozedda.com/aspetti-della-vocalita-rossiniana-nellopera-buffa-e-nella-seria>

⁴⁰ E. Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno Gioachino Rossiniego...*, s. 162.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

agitation here does not translate into overuse of the device. The sixteenth-note triplet remains a precise, infrequent accent of high expressive value.

Bar 120–121



Bar 123



Bar 132–133



Bar 135



GORGHEGGI – SIXTEENTH-NOTE TRIPLETS

The exercise is based on two groups of sixteenth-note triplets and employs the pattern “step up by a second – return to the fundamental pitch,” which stabilizes pitch placement and corrects intonation. The individual triplet units are then shifted successively by a third, preventing mechanical repetition while at the same time developing a sense of vocal placement and continuity of emission.

⁴² G. Rossini, *Tancredi*, reduction for voice and piano based on the critical edition, edited by Ph. Gossett, Ricordi, 1991, p. 24.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

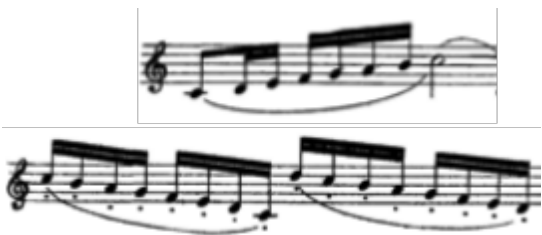
⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

The entire figure proceeds diatonically upward and downward, which facilitates control and supports the shaping of an even vocal line and stable breath support.⁴⁶



In the duet of Argirio and Orbazzano, the triplets do not form traditional, extended runs, and certain intervallic spans appear between the notes. For this reason, the exercise places particular emphasis on stabilizing pitch placement and correcting intonation. Uniformity of vocal setup is crucial for achieving an even line and stable breath support. The performance characteristics of sixteenth-note triplets are similar to those discussed in relation to eighth-note triplets. However, in this case, maintaining a clearly defined and stable tempo is of primary importance.

ASCENDING AND DESCENDING SCALE PASSAGES



48

In this exercise, the composer in fact makes it quite clear “how to sing.” In the ascending motion, legato is required, with the phrase closed by a long sustained note. In the descending motion, staccato is prescribed. In my own practice, I have an intuitive sense that at the beginning I have more breath available, and that the requirement of legato naturally leads me toward a gentler onset. I feel as though I am using less breath. It is also worth noting another phenomenon. During ascent, not a single muscle works in isolation. Rather, it feels as though a small group of cooperat-

⁴⁶ E. Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno* Gioachino Rossini..., p. 58.

⁴⁷ Gioachino Rossini, *Gorgheggi e solfeggi*, Brussels: Phil. Lippens, 1827; reprint: Ricordi, 1966, examples 1–5, p. 1.

⁴⁸ E. Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno* Gioachino Rossini..., p. 163.

ing muscles “guides” the sound upward. This kinesthetic sense of “teamwork” helps me understand why upward motion tolerates the legato task more effectively.

Conversely, when descending, if I persistently adhere to legato, I often fail to maintain stable intonation, especially in fast passages. Changing the descent to staccato seems to compel me to “gather” the breath and increases the precision of the attack. Moreover, the very idea of a staccato onset appears to activate certain breath reserves, ones that are difficult to access at all without appropriate habits. My current hypothesis is therefore as follows. Legato in ascending motion serves primarily a sustaining and guiding function, whereas staccato in descending motion serves calibration and focus. This configuration, legato upward and staccato downward, may well have been conceived in order to train breath control and intonational control simultaneously.⁴⁹

Ascending and descending scale passages in the duettino of Argirio and Orbazzano appear twice: in measures 124–125 and 136–137. After the descending scale, the following wide leap highlights the word “*vincitrice*” (“victorious”). This may be interpreted as an impression of triumph, a journey “from below toward the summit.”

Bar 124-125

ARG. 124

- li - ce, vin - ci tri - ce Si - ra -

50

Bar 136-137

ARG. 136

- li - ce, vin - ci tri - ce Si - ra -

51

GORGHEGGI – ASCENDING AND DESCENDING SCALE PASSAGES

I treat this passage as an important exercise in the key of C major:

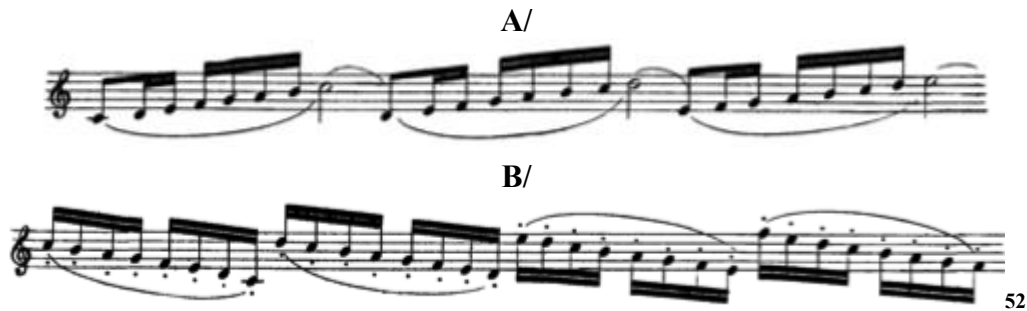
Element 1: deliberately lengthened extreme notes (c^1 as an eighth note, c^2 as a half note) with a moment of suspension, in order to emphasize the octave. This is supported by the ascending sixteenth-note scale.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

⁵⁰ G. Rossini, *Tancredi*, reduction for voice and piano based on the critical edition, edited by Ph. Gossett, Ricordi, 1991, p. 25.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

Element 2: an entry starting from the next diatonic degree, without further stepwise filling. This functions as a direct training of the seventh, as if the “support” of stepwise motion had been removed. The material then returns to regular sixteenth notes. Each segment consisting of two groups of sixteenths connected by a slur from top to bottom is marked **staccato**, creating a legato–staccato contrast. This serves to refocus airflow management and attack precision.



In the duet of Argirio and Orbazzano, measures 124–125 and 136–137 are based on the same material, namely an “ascending scale followed by a return downward.” In the second occurrence, however, with a denser texture, the added bass voice, and a higher tessitura, this material serves to test the stability of the high vocal position and the “flexibility” of the vocal apparatus.

In combination with the bass, one should avoid “spreading” the tone. It is essential to maintain vertical alignment and a unified, integrated sound. In summary, when dealing with pronounced intervallic spans, the key lies in balancing stable suspension of the tone with secure breath support.

In the case of a large leap to a high note, the tenor may, and indeed should, employ a more direct and slightly brighter (*brillante*) timbre. This is also one of the characteristic features of tenor performance in dramatic coloratura passages.

DESCENDING SCALE PASSAGE PRECEDED BY A SECOND–TRILL GROUP



This figure is often used to close extended passages. Its execution should have a clear rhetorical effect. It must not simply “pass by” without significance. The passage needs its own mo-

⁵² G. Rossini, *Gorgheggi e solfeggi*, examples 6–7, p. 2.

⁵³ E. Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno Gioachino Rossini...*, p. 165.

mentum and dynamic profile so that, once incorporated into the configuration of **gruppetti**, it becomes a firm and stable pillar of breath support.

Although the rhythmic pattern used in this duet for the “descending scale passage preceded by a second–trill group” is not built from sixteenth or thirty-second notes, I have selected measures 179–180 and 212–213 because of the *più allegro* tempo and the figure’s characteristic function as a coloratura closure.

179

ÆG.

Musical notation for the vocal part. It starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody consists of a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some notes beamed together. There are slurs over the first two groups of notes and the last two groups. The lyrics 'cor, [no,] non ha.' are written below the staff. The word 'cor,' is under the first group, '[no,]' is under the second group, 'non' is under the third group, and 'ha.' is under the fourth group. The number 179 is written above the staff at the beginning. The word 'ÆG.' is written to the left of the staff.

cor, [no,] non ha.

212

ARG.

cor, no, non ha.

56



In the duet of Argirio and Orbazzano, measures 179–180 and 212–213 correspond exactly to this scheme. In accordance with the accent markings in the score, these accents may be simulated during practice and worked through following the exercise described above.

In Rossini’s coloratura writing, the material is often organized into four-note groups, with the accent falling on the first note of each group⁵⁹. In dramatic coloratura passages, however, the performative accent should be articulated more emphatically. This is also one of the distinctive features of tenor performance in Rossini’s dramatic coloratura excerpts of the type descending scale preceded by a second–trill group.

SIX-NOTE QUINTAL GRUPETTI



A figure consisting of six notes appears quite frequently in Rossini’s coloratura passages. Its execution is demanding. It is not a matter of two triplets, but rather of dividing the breath into six equal parts. Owing to the interval of the fifth, this figure can most naturally be filled with six notes, producing a full, “pearly” articulation.

In the duettino of Argirio and Orbazzano, six-note quintal gruppetti appear twice: in bar 134 and in bars 139–140. The entrance of these figures lends the music greater energy and compactness, and causes the tenor and bass lines to sound more harmoniously integrated. The aura of unity and decisiveness is likewise strengthened.

Bar 134

⁵⁸ R. Osborne, *Rossini: His Life and Works*, s. 4.

⁵⁹ Manuel García, *Hints on Singing*, London: Ascherberg, Hopwood & Crew, 1894, s. 36–37

⁶⁰ Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno...*, s. 167.



Bar 139-140



SIX-NOTE QUINTAL GRUPETTI COLORATURA PASSAGES

In sextuplet passages, the structural framework can be based on a descending fifth. What is crucial is the clear articulation of the dominant seventh chord at the appropriate moments. This makes the harmonic direction more distinct and intensifies the sense of tension.⁶³



When rehearsing this passage together with the bass line, I pay particular attention to rhythmic precision. At the same time, by accentuating the dominant seventh chord, I sharpen the harmonic direction. With a flexibly sustained breath, it becomes easier to achieve an even vocal line and a more “pearly” sonority, as well as better coordination with the bass part.

The specificity of this exercise for the tenor is similar to that discussed earlier in connection with eighth-note triplets and sixteenth-note triplets, yet it demands greater overall cohesion and a more attentive shaping of the melodic line.

⁶¹ G. Rossini, Tancredi. Riduzione per canto e pianoforte, Ricordi, 1991, s. 27.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁶³ Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno...*, s. 62.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

Conclusion

The specificity of dramatic coloratura passages in Rossini's tenor roles has been illustrated, to a certain extent, through the example of the duettino of Argirio and Orbazzano. The classification of coloratura patterns and the selection of corresponding *gorgheggi* exercises helped to organize my way of thinking while singing. For example: how to shape a *messa di voce* on a sustained note and anchor intonation; how triplets lighten the phrase and promote fluid legato; how ascending and descending scales calibrate breath and intonation; and how a six-note figure built on the framework of a fifth can preserve a delicate, "pearly" articulation in the upper register.

It is precisely these details that together form the distinctive idiom of Rossini's dramatic tenor coloratura. The classification of coloraturas and the practice of *gorgheggi* proved inspiring for me. They made it possible to identify the appropriate technical characteristics of singing in specific passages and then, moving beyond these frameworks, to apply them creatively in the discussed duet. In this way, I was able to present more fully the character of Argirio, his emotions, and other interpretative nuances.

2.1.2 "Ah! sì, per voi già sento" aria from the opera Otello

The author considers the tenor role in this cavatina of the African general Otello to be exceptionally complex. In this aria, the character displays the hero's courage and determination in the opening section, as well as hope for happiness in the central Andante, and fidelity in love in the return of the main melody through to the end. The vocal part contains numerous ornaments and coloratura passages and is characterized by a wide vocal range.

From the text, one can broadly understand what the hero wishes to convey, yet there are also hidden narrative threads and aspects of the character's psychology. Otello expresses his profound love for Desdemona, feels courage and passion, and experiences the awakening of a new emotion in his heart. He declares that he expects no greater reward, suggesting that love for his beloved is his greatest happiness. Otello longs for love to dispel his worries and to rekindle hope anew.⁶⁵

Cavatina Otella

"Ah sì, per voi già sento" from the opera *Otello, ossia il moro di Venezia* by Gioachino Rossini.

⁶⁵ "Otello ossia Il Moro di Venezia – Synopsis," Opera-guide.ch [online], accessed: 2 XI 2025, <https://opera-guide.ch/operas/otello%2Bossia%2Bil%2Bmoro%2Bdi%2Bvenezia/synopsis/it/>

Elements of Analysis	Description
Cavatina	Otello: “Ah! sì, per voi già sento”
Number of bars	132
Key (outline)	Part I: D major → Part II: A major → Part III: D major
Meter	2/4
Overall dynamics	Part I: mp–mf, local small crescendi and diminuendi Part II: p–mp, overall more delicate and inward in character Part III: as in Part I (mp–mf, slight fluctuations)
Articulation	Part I: more short note values and pointillistic contrasts, a touch of staccato Part II: predominance of legato, smooth connections, soft diction Part III: legato as the basis, with a moderate return to the pointillistic contrasts of Part I
Main coloratura figures	Sustained notes: 19, 31, 69, 75, 94, 100, 108, 117, 123, 124, 126, 131, 132; Eighth-note triplets: 72, 97; Sixteenth-note stepwise gruppetti ending with a quarter note: 13, 17, 68, 77, 93, 97, 102, 104, 125; Sixteenth-note triplets: 21, 23; Ascending and descending scalar passages: 30, 86, 111, 116, 122, 131; Trill: 47; Passagework runs: 74, 77, 79, 99, 102, 104 Conclusion of a running passage with a rest: 74, 79, 99,
Form	I + A – B – A'
With or without recitative	without recitative

Cavatina text:

Italian Text	English Text
OTELLO Ah! sì, per voi già sento nuovo valor nel petto: Per voi d'un nuovo affetto sento infiammarsi il cor. Premio maggior di questo a me sperar no lice. (Ma allor sarò felice quando il coroni Amor.) (Amor, dirada il nembo cagion di tanti affani; comincia coi tuoi vanni la speme a ravvivar.)	OTELLO Ah, yes, thanks to you I already feel new courage rising in my breast; for you, a new affection sets my heart aflame. No greater reward than this may I any longer dare to desire. (But only then shall I be happy, when love crowns my destiny.) (O Love, dispel this cloud, the source of so many torments; begin, with your wings, to rekindle hope anew.)

SUSTAINED NOTES

In Otello's cavatina, there are thirteen sustained notes. Their points of occurrence and pitch levels differ in character, yet together they allow for the control of changes in breath management during these tones, which is one of the characteristic elements of Rossini's coloratura passages. The first sustained note appears in bar 19. Its function is the same as in bar 31. Both close a coloratura passage and emphasize the word "*cor*" ("heart").

Bar 19



Bar 31



In bar 69, Otello sustains a long note on the word "*nembo*" for two beats (a half note). This serves as a point of support in the middle of the phrase and helps to regulate the breath, while at the same time shifting the semantic weight onto "the cause of misfortune / the storm cloud" (*nembo*

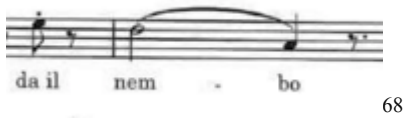
⁶⁶ Gioachino Rossini, *Otello, ossia Il Moro di Venezia*.

Dramma per musica in three acts. Vocal and piano reduction based on the critical edition of the score published by the Fondazione Rossini of Pesaro, edited by Michael Collins. Milan: Ricordi, 2007, p. 38.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

cagion). It also creates a textural contrast with the preceding dense, agile eighth-note figures. The same device appears again in bar 94.

Bar 69



Bar 94



In bars 75 and 100, the sustained notes appear after the “singing out” of a coloratura passage. The end of the phrase settles on a half note as a point of closure, followed by a brief rest that introduces the subsequent “Ah,” the opening of the next phrase. This serves to conclude the preceding musical thought, signals a breath, and allows for renewed focus. Sustained notes frequently function to present a cadence or to prepare the following dense coloratura passage. The notes in bar 132 fulfill the same function.

Bar 75



Bar 100



Bar 132

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 47.



The sustained note in bar 108 serves simultaneously as a warm-up before the ensuing coloratura passage and as an emotional “gathering of energy” prior to the next intensification of expression. The sustained notes in bars 124, 126, and 131 fulfill the same function.

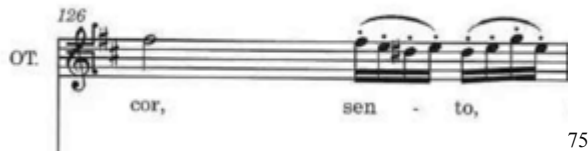
Bar 108



Bar 124



Bar 126



Bar 131



In bars 117 and 123, the sustained notes once again close a coloratura passage. Here, a very low A appears, which once more emphasizes the word “*cor*” (“heart”). The descent into the lower register creates a sense of “landing,” while the ignited intensity of the text is immediately con-

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 53.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

densed into composure and strength. The author considers this to reveal Otello's commanding steadiness and self-control, and at the same time to constitute one of the distinctive features of tenor roles in Rossini's operas within dramatic coloratura passages.

Bar 17



Bar 123



GORGHEGGI: SUSTAINED NOTES

In Otello's cavatina, sustained notes appear in different registers, which requires careful attention to the connection between the registers while simultaneously differentiating vocal color.

From my performance experience, certain sustained notes in this piece require the use of chest resonance. There are two reasons for this. First, the occurrence of low pitches naturally causes the voice to shift toward chest resonance. Second, the heroic construction of Otello's character means that an appropriate admixture of chest color more effectively conveys his meaning and character. This is also one of the distinctive features of sustained notes in tenor performance within Rossini's dramatic passages.

TRIOLE ÓSEMKOWE

I mentioned this figure earlier in the duettino of Argirio and Orbazzano from the opera *Tancredi*. Bars 72 and 97 are analogous. The eighth-note triplet functions as a connective element. It softens the point of arrival of the preceding phrase and introduces the next one. It places particular emphasis on the words "*coi tuoi*" ("*with yours*"). In performance, a light, bright, and legato approach is recommended. Consonants should be prepared before the group, that is, before the triplet. Maintain a single, uninterrupted stream of breath, and release the energy on the target note.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 51.



GORGHEGGI: EIGHTH-NOTE TRIPLETS

I discussed this exercise in detail in connection with the duettino of Argirio and Orbazzano. In Otello's cavatina, taking bar 72 as an example, the crucial aspect of eighth-note triplets is the even execution of the three notes. Here, however, because they function as a connective element, legato is equally important. For this reason, in practice I begin the triplet lightly, smoothly link the three notes, and release the energy on the target note, the point of arrival. I then connect several such short segments into a chain, introduce small pitch shifts, and practice breath control and tonal strength in both ascending and descending motion. First, I unify timbre and continuity of sound. Then, as needed, I sing the figure in different meters, which affects articulation and diction as well as dynamic nuances, ultimately transforming it into my own individual expressive statement.

Although the eighth-note triplet passages are written under a legato slur, in performance one should not strive for legato excessively⁸⁰; A moderate emphasis on the “pearly” quality of the articulation better conveys Otello's affect. This is one of the distinctive features of eighth-note triplets in the performance of Rossini's dramatic coloratura passages.

SIXTEENTH-NOTE STEPWISE GRUPETTZI ENDING WITH A QUARTER NOTE



The combination of a “sixteenth-note group plus a quarter note” is irregular from the standpoint of breath management. First, the breath is divided evenly among the initial four sixteenth notes. Then a single, uninterrupted stream of air spans the next four sixteenths, which together equal one quarter note. This shapes a differentiated approach to breath control.

⁷⁹ G. Rossini, *Otello ossia Il Moro di Venezia*, rid. per canto e pianoforte, Ricordi, 2007, s. 44.

⁸⁰ Alberto Zedda, „Aspetti della vocalità rossiniana nell'opera buffa e nella seria”, Archivio Alberto Zedda [online], brak paginacji, dostęp: 4 XI 2025, <https://www.albertozedda.com/aspetti-della-vocalita-rossiniana-nellopera-buffa-e-nella-seria>

⁸¹ E. Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno Gioachino Rossiniego...*, s. 162.

Once technical fluency has been achieved, dynamics, articulation and diction, timbre, and the linguistic aspect, namely the specific shaping of words and syllables, are added in order to arrive at an individual interpretation. Rossini provides sufficient material at the melodic level. True variability arises in performance. Therefore, in accordance with the composer's intent, it is worth deepening the differentiation of phrases by cultivating "aural sensitivity," much as one learns to recognize subtle differences between images. Through repeated listening and practice, these nuances can be grasped more fully and translated more convincingly into one's own artistic expression.⁸²

From a certain perspective, the combination of a quarter note with sixteenth-note coloratura passages shows similarities to some of the functions of sustained notes. The quarter note may serve either as a preparatory tone before a coloratura passage or as a closing tone after its completion. The structure of sixteenth-note stepwise gruppetti ending with a quarter note appears nine times in Otello's cavatina.

It occurs for the first time at the very beginning, in bar 13. The stepwise motion of the sixteenth notes following the quarter note leads the word toward the final quarter note, strongly accentuating "*sen*to" ("I feel"). This provides an impulse that propels the next phrase forward and simultaneously signals to the singer a moment of caution. Here, a discreet intake of breath is required in order to cope with the longer and denser sequences of gruppetti that follow. Dramaturgically, this configuration stabilizes the utterance and shifts it into the next section, sketching in Otello restraint, decisiveness, and commanding self-control. In performance, the sixteenth notes should be light, bright, and even, without any sense of "striking."⁸³ Energy and diction should be focused on the quarter note. Bar 17 is analogous, with the word "*affetto*" ("affection") carrying an even stronger expressive charge. The later occurrences in bars 68, 77, 93, 97, 102, 104, and 125 serve a similar function and require a comparable technique.

Bar 13



Bar 17

⁸² E. Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno...*, s. 162.

⁸³ Giovanni Battista Lamperti, *Vocal Wisdom: Maxims of G. B. Lamperti*, ed. William Earl Brown, New York: Taplinger, 1931, s. 7

⁸⁴ G. Rossini, *Otello ossia Il Moro di Venezia*, rid. per canto e pianoforte, Ricordi, 2007, s. 37.



Bar 68



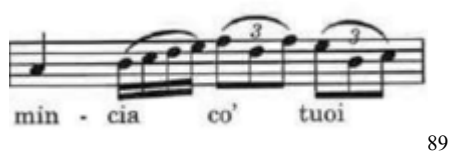
Bar 77



Bar 93



Bar 97



Bar 102



Bar 104

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 48.



91

Bar 125



92

GORGHEGGI: SIXTEENTH-NOTE STEPWISE GRUPETTI ENDING WITH A QUARTER NOTE



93

Using bar 13 (“*sen-to*”) as an example: sing evenly and legato, without a hard attack. Do not accent any of the internal notes, and carry the breath steadily through to the final quarter note “*to*.” A very slight crescendo may be applied. The point of arrival should be clear and well defined. The consonants “*s*” and “*n*” should be articulated before the group, while the vowel should permeate the entire figure. Upon reaching “*to*,” immediately release the vocal mechanism and, if necessary, take a discreet, imperceptible breath before the next phrase.

The function of this figure lies in maintaining a high degree of evenness during singing, while preserving relaxation and firm control. Thanks to stable breath support, it yields a clear, focused tonal strength.

SIXTEENTH-NOTE TRIPLETS

In Otello’s cavatina, there are two sixteenth-note triplets, occurring in bars 21 and 23. They once again strongly emphasize the words “*sen-to*” (“I feel”) and “*petto*” (“breast”), thereby intensifying the emotional expression to a certain degree.

takt21

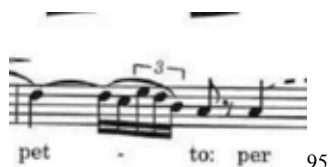
⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 52.

⁹³ *Ibid.*



Bar 23



GORGHEGGI: SIXTEENTH-NOTE TRIPLETS

I treat bars 21 and 23 as two practice models for sixteenth-note triplets. First comes a step upward by a second, followed by a return to the principal note in order to stabilize the vocal position. Each triplet is repeated at the interval of a third, and the entire phrase proceeds diatonically, first ascending and then descending.

ASCENDING AND DESCENDING SCALE PASSAGES

ASCENDING AND DESCENDING SCALE PASSAGES in *Otello*'s cavatina occur six times. They appear for the first time in bar 30. The descending scale passage brings the idea of the "inflamed heart" down from exaltation to calm and closes the section. Bars 86 and 111 repeat the same device.

Bar 30



In bar 116, an almost two-octave descending scale brings the preceding intensity to a calm "landing." This represents inner gathering, composure, and self-control rather than weakness. On a single breath, I carry the even passage across two octaves without local accents. During register transitions, I maintain a unified resonant timbre. I direct the energy toward the point of arrival on the word "*cor*" ("heart"), and once it is settled, I release. An analogous device appears in bar 122.

⁹⁴ G. Rossini, *Otello ossia Il Moro di Venezia*, rid. per canto e pianoforte, Ricordi, 2007, s. 38.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

Bar 116



Bar 131 is the penultimate bar of the entire piece. It begins with a half note on the high A², which serves as the climax and the final “signal” announcing the conclusion. The ensuing descending scale functions like a run-up to the ending. It gathers energy and textual meaning and leads toward the final stroke. After the emotional ascent, an inward consolidation follows.

Bar 131



GORGHEGGI POCHODY GAMOWE W GÓRĘ I W DÓŁ

When studying scale passages in Otello’s cavatina, exercise “b” may be applied. First, sing legato on a single breath, evenly and continuously, in order to sense the “distant point of arrival” and to feel the proper distribution of breath. Once this is mastered, add light, short staccato within each sub-group under the slur as a contrast, while maintaining the continuity of the airflow. This allows for training the transition between continuity and “pointillistic” articulation.

With reference to bar 131, I first begin the half note on the high A² as a culmination and final “signal,” and then carry the almost two-octave diatonic descent toward the cadence. The beginning follows the logic of the exercise. I highlight the extremum and “feel” the octave span, then return to the flowing run of even sixteenth notes. The key points are a clear, “suspended” climactic point, a stable descent, and the transfer of support toward the final point of arrival. Throughout the entire passage, I maintain conscious breath control and subtle regulation of muscular tension

⁹⁹. All of this constitutes the specificity of coloratura of the ASCENDING AND DESCENDING SCALE PASSAGES type in the performance of Rossini’s dramatic coloratura passages.

TRILL

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

⁹⁹ García, New Treatise, Part I, Chapter VII.



The exercise has a clear function and an equally clear method of execution. It should therefore become a regular element of training.

In Otello's cavatina, there is only one trill, in bar 47. It focuses attention on the word "Amor" ("love"), reminds the singer to stabilize the breath and prepare the next phrase, and clearly signals to the listener a virtuosic point of culmination.

Bar 47



Gorgheggi TRILL

I am inclined to treat the trill as a skill that lends itself to systematic training. This exercise can be reduced to a three-stage scheme:

1. A quarter note as an "anchor," slurred into the following sixteenth notes, in order to introduce the figure from the weak part of the bar and to avoid anticipating the onset of the trill and premature exertion.
2. Three groups of sixteenth notes alternating between d¹ and c¹. Small pitch shifts serve to calibrate the coordination of breath and phonation, while the third closes the segment and leads into the next phrase.
3. Culmination: a trill on g², which simultaneously tests stable support and rapid alternation.

In my approach, this minimalist sequence. "anchor. weak entry. micro-variation. culmination." forms the smallest repeatable unit of study, transforming a merely "felt" trill into a reproducible, reliable technique.¹⁰²

Bar 110

¹⁰⁰ E. Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno Gioachino Rossiniego...*, s. 164.

¹⁰¹ G. Rossini, *Otello ossia Il Moro di Venezia*, rid. per canto e pianoforte, Ricordi, 2007, s. 41.

¹⁰² Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno...*, s. 60.



103

In bar 47, I first locate the “anchoring point” and enter softly on the weak part of the bar, in order to avoid anticipating the onset of the trill and premature tension. I treat the three groups of sixteenth notes as a subtle adjustment, carry the entire passage on a single breath, place the consonants before the entrance of the group, and maintain the vowel in a pure, stable shape. I execute the rapid alternation on stable *appoggio*¹⁰⁴ and an even stream of air. After a gentle crescendo and diminuendo, I return smoothly to the target note and close the phrase. The minimal sequence. “anchor. soft entry. micro-adjustment. culmination.” turns “*a-mor*” into a repeatable trill technique. The sound remains bright and focused, without excessive effort.

DESCENDING SCALE PASSAGE PRECEDED BY A STEPWISE TRILL GROUP

In Otello’s cavatina, a descending scale passage preceded by a stepwise trill group appears three times, essentially in the same form. I will discuss it using bars 28–29 as an example. First, a small group emerges, consisting of a “vibrating” stepwise alternation, placed on the weak part of the bar, as if lightly “tossing” the opening syllable of the text. This is followed by the descending scale passage, which carries the energy toward the point of arrival. This resolution directs the listener’s attention to the semantic core of the utterance. It marks a transition from a brilliant uplift to a calm, matter-of-fact declaration.

Bar 28-29



105

PASSAGEWORK RUNS



106

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ Manuel García, *Hints on Singing*, London: Ascherberg, Hopwood & Crew, 1894, Part I: “Respiration (Breathing)”, s. 5; por. s. 20.

¹⁰⁵ G. Rossini, *Otello ossia Il Moro di Venezia*, rid. per canto e pianoforte, Ricordi, 2007, s. 39.

¹⁰⁶ Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno...*, s. 165.

Training in thirds has always been an indispensable element of vocal education. This exercise also proves effective in Rossini's coloratura passages. In contrast to work on scales, which is based primarily on seconds, training in thirds focuses on major and minor thirds. This type of figure is also an important component of cadenzas.¹⁰⁷

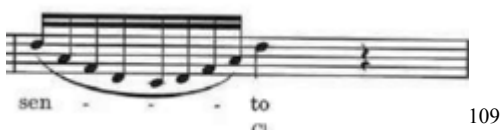
PASSAGEWORK RUNS in Otello's cavatina appear six times. They occur for the first time in bar 74. Following the sextuplet comes an ascending arpeggiated figure in thirds, a "kindling" passage that heightens the sense of hope. The affect is bright and upward-striving. The same configuration appears again in bar 99.

Bar 74



In bar 77, the run takes the form of oscillating thirds. First descending from above, then rising from below and back upward, creating a small "wave." It gathers and confirms the previously kindled affect on the word "*sento*" ("I feel"), while at the same time preparing a renewed accumulation of energy in the following passage. The same configuration appears in bars 79, 102, and 104.

Bar 77



GORGHEGGI: PASSAGEWORK RUNS

This exercise is a vocal training focused on executing passagework based on the dominant seventh chord, with particular emphasis on intonation.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ G. Rossini, *Otello ossia Il Moro di Venezia*, rid. per canto e pianoforte, Ricordi, 2007, s. 44.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

prolongation¹¹¹.

maining merely an elegant ornament.

CONCLUSION OF A RUNNING PASSAGE WITH A REST



ing passage carelessly and without preparation.¹¹³

appears three times. In bar 74, the run rises toward a climactic point and is immediately halted by a

¹¹⁰ E. Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno Gioachino Rossiniego...*, s. 61.

¹¹¹ Manuel García, *Hints on Singing* (London: Ascherberg, Hopwood & Crew, 1894), s. 39, 47.

¹¹² E. Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno Gioachino Rossiniego...*, s. 167.

¹¹³ E.Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno...*, s. 167.

short rest, which offers a brief moment for inhalation and focus. It is a “suspended breath after a flash of hope,” and at the same time a transitional bridge before the actual landing.

Bar 74



Bar 79 and its repetition in bar 99 also end with a rest. In contrast to bar 74, the rest in bar 79 serves a concluding function.

Bar 79



GORGHEGGI: CONCLUSION OF A RUNNING PASSAGE WITH A REST

The exercise is a variant of a passagework run in which, on the prime and the third following the principal note, a repeated intermediate pitch is added, while the fifth and the octave remain unornamented. The octave has a shortened value and an intentionally inserted sixteenth-note rest, which serves to train inhalation in accordance with the timing of the phrase. This element appears in order to conclude the vocal line.



¹¹⁴ G. Rossini, *Otello ossia Il Moro di Venezia*, rid. per canto e pianoforte, Ricordi, 2007, s. 44.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

In order to apply this element to Otello's cavatina, during practice the rest should be treated as a structural point, but neither prolonged nor rushed. The breath should be prepared before the rest, and the entrance after it should be placed punctually, carrying the line as if the rest were not there.¹¹⁷ In this way, continuity of the phrase and of breath support is preserved, and the rest fulfills a rhetorical function without disrupting technique.

In my view, in the high register and under very intense dramatic tension, maintaining a luminous, penetrating vocal projection together with agile precision in handling the rest constitutes the specificity of coloratura of the CONCLUSION OF A RUNNING PASSAGE WITH A REST type in the performance of Rossini's dramatic passages.

Conclusions:

In the cavatina from Otello, although the overall impression may be that of "free virtuosity," the basic figures in fact appear frequently and systematically, shaping the logic of breath, the direction of affect, and the clarity of diction. When practiced to the point of habit. fluid legato, even sixteenth notes, stable *appoggio*, and control of the climactic point. they become the material for mature artistic expression. For tenors in Rossini's operas, the specificity of dramatic coloratura passages is particularly striking. Here, speed and flexibility must coexist with commanding self-control and the weight of the word. Sustained notes function as points of stance, while passagework preserves pulse and meaning. Technique and character meet in a coherent, unified utterance.

2.2. Comic roles

2.2.1 Cavatina of Count Almaviva – "Ecco ridente in cielo" from the opera Il barbiere di Siviglia

The author believes that the uniqueness of the coloratura passages in the comic tenor cavatina of Count Almaviva lies in their need to unite dramatic richness with musical beauty. One cannot exist without the other. For this reason, Rossini precisely balances the development of the plot with the character's emotional changes. The entire cavatina first paints the atmosphere just before dawn, as if depicting the sky on the verge of sunrise, filled with love and vitality. It then, as if portraying the Count's inner world, reveals his dreams and amorous longings. The character's emotions are perfectly expressed through the music, lending the Count greater depth and dimension.

Rossini shapes the character of Count Almaviva as sincere and passionate, yet at the same time elegant. In the opening section of the cavatina, the melody abounds in legato passages of a delicate yet rich sonority. In the middle section, the emotions shift, and the composer employs extend-

¹¹⁷ García, *Hints on Singing*, s. 22–23, 28.

ed coloratura passages, particularly with vivid dynamic contrasts between the upper and lower registers, to convey the Count's inner rises and falls. In the conclusion, the joy of love reaches its culmination and then gradually subsides, bringing the cavatina to a close.

Cavatina of Count Almaviva, "Ecco ridente in cielo," from *Il barbiere di Siviglia* by Gioachino Rossini

Cavatina	Count Almaviva: "Ecco ridente in cielo" from the opera <i>Il barbiere di Siviglia</i>
Number of bars	85
Key (stable or variable)	C major. essentially stable
Meter	Introduction and Section A in 2/4 Section B changes to 4/4
Tempo	Instrumental introduction and cantabile section: Largo / Andante dolce Later: Allegro Finally: a tempo
Overall dynamics	Variable: – in the cantabile, predominantly p–mp – in the allegro, frequent crescendos up to f/ff – passages with fixed dynamics usually lasting 4–8 bars
Articulation	Primarily legato In runs. legato ascending, light detachments descending Accompaniment more frequently staccato
Main coloratura figures	Sustained notes: takt 144, takty 166–168, takt 171, takt 178 Ascending and descending scale passages: takty 142–143, 161–162 Trill: takty 116, 124 Slurring in extended running passages: takty 174–175 Connection of stepwise–tertiary grupetti with a scale passage: takty 169–170 Six-note quintal grupetti: : takty 114, 118, 122
Type of form	Two-section cavatina (cantabile + allegro); closer to AA ¹ than to ABA (without a classical da capo).

Recitative	No recitative within the number; preceded by an instrumental introduction; followed by an ensemble entrance after the cavatina.
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Text and translation of the cavatina “Ecco ridente in cielo”:

Italian Text	English Text
Conte Almaviva Ecco, ridente in cielo spunta la bella aurora, e tu non sorgi ancora e puoi dormir così? Sorgi, mia dolce speme, vieni, bell'idol mio; rendi men crudo, oh Dio, lo stral che mi ferì. Tacetè! già veggo quel caro sembiante; quest'anima amante ottenne pietà. Oh istante d'amore! Oh dolce contento! Felice momento che eguale non ha!	Count Almaviva Behold, in the brightening sky the lovely dawn already rises, and you still do not awaken. How can you yet remain asleep? Arise, my sweet hope, come forth, my beautiful idol; make less cruel, O God, the arrow that has wounded me. Hush! I already see that face so dear to me; that loving soul has at last found compassion. O moment of love! O gentle delight! Happy moment, without equal in the world!

SUSTAINED NOTES

In the cavatina of Count Almaviva, sustained notes occur in four places. For the first time, as the closure of a preceding rapid coloratura passage, a half note serves to emphasize the word “*pietà*” (“mercy”) in bar 144. As mentioned above, this sustained note, functioning as the end of the phrase, should be brought to closure through breath control, that is, by regulating the airflow.

Bar 144



¹¹⁸ Gioachino Rossini, *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Almaviva o sia L'inutile precauzione). Commedia in due atti. Riduzione per canto e pianoforte condotta sull'edizione critica della partitura edita dalla Fondazione Rossini di Pesaro in collaborazione con Casa Ricordi di Milano, a cura di Alberto Zedda, Milano: Ricordi, 2014, s. 25.

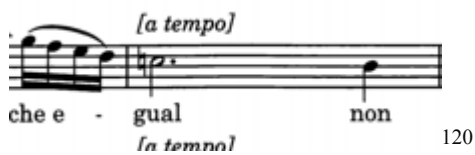
In the next occurrence, on the words “*ma*” (It. *ma*. “but”) and “*dolce*” (“sweet”), both sustained notes fall immediately after a climax and just before the entrance of the next running passage. At this point, the tenor may present a gradual softening (*diminuendo*) and prepare the connection leading toward the final culmination. This can be read as a subtle turn and a gathering of emotional tension (bars 166–168).

Bar 166-168



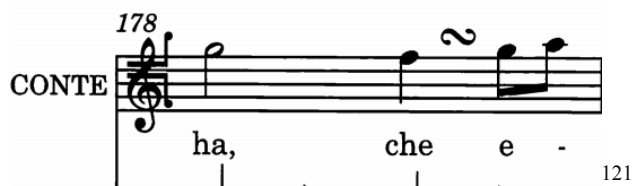
In bar 171, the sustained note serves simultaneously as a semantic accent and as a moment of recalibration. It releases the residual tension following the coloratura runs and prepares the entrance into the ensuing final section.

Bar 171



In bar 178, the final sustained note appears before the closing cadence. In my assessment, it can bring out in the Count (Almaviva) a coloration of “elegant self-assurance” as well as the quality of a “confident attack and precise closure.”

Bar 178



GORGHEGGI: SUSTAINED NOTES

Sustained notes in the cavatina of Count Almaviva display a particular specificity. Owing to the serenade-like character of the piece, they should be shaped with as much tenderness as possible,

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

yet without losing vocal projection. For example, in bar 166 on the vowel “a,” the sound should be gently initiated (without inserting [h], directly on the vowel), then, through a small *messa di voce*, the tone should be gradually led toward the climax of the phrase. Afterward, the proportion of overtones should be reduced without losing breath support, and the note should be closed by suspending the airflow rather than by constricting the larynx. From my performance experience, when practicing this type of sustained note it is advisable to use the vowel “u” more frequently, and only later to shape other vowels on its basis. This helps maintain a stable laryngeal position while avoiding excessive brightening of the timbre. The varied manner of shaping sustained notes reveals one of the distinctive features of this tenor role in Rossini’s comic coloratura passages.

Throughout the entire cavatina, there are two clearly defined ASCENDING AND DESCENDING SCALE PASSAGES, in bars 142–143 and 161–152. The shaping of these rising and falling motions evokes the love hidden in the Count’s heart. At the same time, they increase both musical and emotional tension, perfectly preparing the ground for the subsequent sections of the work.

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Bar

142-143



122

Bar 161

122 *Ibid.*, p. 24.



123

Bar 162



124

GORGHEGGI SCALE PASSAGES UP AND DOWN

Unlike the typically virtuosic runs in Rossini, the scalar passages in *“Ecco ridente in cielo”* possess a serenade-like, lyrical character. The aim here is not to maximize speed or excessive “selectivity”, but rather to shape the coloratura as a continuous, cantabile line. Ascending figures are best carried on a single breath, like an extended sustained tone, while descending figures should be only gently “separated” to allow for intonational adjustment. Vowel modification is exceptionally restrained. For example, in bar 161, within the even grouping, the cluster of pitches functions only as a momentary transition. The entire line remains suspended on the vowel [a]. The phrase “no, non” enters voicelessly from [n], with the color of [o], in order to avoid whitening the timbre. All of this serves to preserve a texture that is “tender yet resonant.” In practice, it is advisable to begin with the vowel [u], which helps stabilize the position of the larynx¹²⁵, and then gradually open toward [a] or [o]. This manner of “singing coloratura as a lyrical, extended line” lends the Count’s part, within Rossini’s comic context, a distinctive hue. The coloratura is not an end in itself or a ve-

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ Johan Sundberg, *The Science of the Singing Voice* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1987), s. 113–115

hicle for display, but rather a subtle means of emphasizing the word and the elegance of the character.

TRILL

The trill is another technique frequently employed by Rossini, and in this cavatina it appears twice. In bars 116 and 124, it respectively emphasizes the accent on the words “dawn” (*aurora*) and “my” (*mio*).

Introduce into the image of dawn a touch of shimmering, trembling light. Let the love of Count Almaviva acquire greater vitality and radiance.

Bar 116



Bar 124



ARCHING IN LONG PASSAGEWORK RUNS



Because singers usually look first at ambitus, pitch height, and the density of coloratura passages, they easily fall under the impression of a “repetition of material.” Actual attempts to sing these passages, however, reveal that the true differences arise in the subtleties of emission and diction. Within the same pattern, a different interplay of legato and staccato, accents, and rhythmic values produces entirely distinct utterances. At the same time, the prosody of the language quietly

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

¹²⁸ E. Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno...*, s. 164.

“conducts” the direction of the melody. A conscious placement of arches and breathing points, so that verbal stresses coincide with the natural flow of speech, allows the “melody” of the language to resonate in sympathy with the music.

The requirement of arching in long passagework runs corresponds closely to bars 174 to 175. They function as a “sprinter-like” introduction, propelling the preparation from bar 173 toward the tutti that closes the sentence in bar 176. In my assessment, this passage particularly highlights the light and luminous Rossinian idiom of the *tenore lirico*. The *legato di agilità* sounds at once exciting and noble, a quality that aptly reflects the character of Count Almaviva.



In my view, Professor Rezler’s recommendations are very useful¹³¹: Short practice sessions, frequent breaks, and several brief blocks spread throughout the day. In principle, the total working time of the engaged muscles should not exceed about three hours per day. It is crucial to maintain minimal tension. This is what guarantees the unique quality of sound. Any excessive stiffness suppresses part of the overtones.

Measures 169–170 correspond to the exercise under discussion.

Bar 69-170



SIX-NOTE GRUPPETTI IN FIFTHS

In Count Almaviva’s cavatina, the six-note gruppetti in fifths appear three times, in measures 114, 118, and 122.

¹²⁹ E. Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno...*, s. 165.

¹³⁰ G. Rossini, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, rid. per canto e pianoforte, Ricordi, 2014, s.27.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 166.

¹³² G. Rossini, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, rid. per canto e pianoforte, Ricordi, 2014, s.27.

In measure 114, the entrance on “the sky brightens” (“cielo spunta...”) lends an intriguing character to the opening and allows for rich tonal shading, thereby directing the affect toward the “beautiful dawn” (“la bella aurora”).

Bar 114



Measures 118 and 122 primarily serve as transitional and coloristic elements, binding the earlier material together and carrying the musical energy forward.

Bar 118



Bar 122



SIX-NOTE GRUPPETTI IN FIFTHS (GORGHEGGI)

In my view, the sextuplets in this cavatina are by no means a “mechanical tapping of separate notes,” but should instead be sung as a single, flowing line. The entire group is treated as one breathing gesture, and in practice special attention should be paid to passages colored by a dominant-seventh harmony, where the leading tone should be more focused, which naturally imparts direction to the phrase. Such an approach prioritizes legato, while “selectivity” remains secondary. As a result, the rapid notes genuinely merge into the lyrical long line. This is also one of the distin-

¹³³ G. Rossini, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, rid. per canto e pianoforte, Ricordi, 2014, s.22.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

guishing features of performance in Rossinian comic coloratura passages of the six-note gruppetti in fifths type.

Conclusions

In “Ecco ridente in cielo,” from the perspective of performance practice, the greatest difficulty lies not in the number of notes but in managing the functional states of the vocal apparatus. This involves the alternating activation and release of different muscle groups: sustained tones leading to relaxation and focus; rapid passages relying on quick, fine contractions supported by a stable airflow; trills requiring clear alternation between two pitches without “widening” the vibrato. Once this rotation of functions becomes ingrained in bodily memory, the material, though seemingly familiar, begins to organize itself almost automatically “under the fingers or in the throat,” and the cavatina regains its theatrical meaning. It is not merely a display for its own sake, but a poetic, individualized utterance.

Technique and dramaturgy are not separated here. Rossini draws on skills developed through exercises, yet he never presents them as pure patterns. He confronts “grammar” with “speech.” Italian prosody, the pulse of the stage, and the psychology of the Count collide, creating a quality unattainable through mere mechanical training of the vocal apparatus. Therefore, this cavatina, despite the abundance of coloratura passages, demands above all a mature control of note values in time, of breath, and of proper vocal production and articulation. These elements are what give the coloratura meaning, and grant Almaviva nobility and truth of expression.

2.2.2 The cavatina “*Vieni fra queste braccia*” from the opera *La gazza ladra*

In the case of the tenor role of Gianetto, his uniqueness lies in the sense of justice he embodies within the opera. Rossini portrays both the unfolding of the plot and the character’s emotional transformations in this cavatina with remarkable precision.

The opening call to Ninetta is suffused with hope for love. Gianetto then expresses his unwavering faith in love. In the subsequent section, with a change of rhythm and an increased density of coloratura embellishments, he evokes the joy and happiness to come. The musical reflection of Gianetto’s inner transformations further underscores the distinctiveness of his character.

The cavatina “*Vieni fra queste braccia*” from the opera *La gazza ladra*, sung by Gianetto.

Important Elements	Analysis
Number of measures	127
Key	D major
Meter	4/4

Tempo	Measures 1–28: Maestoso; measures 29–end: Allegro
Overall dynamics	Basically <i>mp–mf</i> , cadences with <i>diminuendo</i> ; climaxes and the final section grow to <i>mf–f</i>
Articulation	Generally legato / leggiero; in section A ¹ , occasional leaps appear
Coloratura figures	Long sustained notes: 4, 14, 20, 24, 28–29, 53, 86, 105, 106, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116 Eighth-note triplets: 113 Sixteenth-note triplets: 11, 21 Groups with a fixed rhythmic structure filled with ornamentation: 25, 26 Scalar runs ascending and descending: 52, 56, 58, 60, 92, 86, 90, 94 Combined gruppetti (with slight internal variation): 62, 96 Arched phrasing in extended stepwise passages: 65–66, 99–100 Intervallic leaps complemented by downward stepwise motion: 63–64, 97–98
Structure of the cavatina	Two-part form: Part I: section A also has a simple binary structure Part II: asymmetrical mirror form: introduction – B – C – reprise of A – coda
Recitative	NO

Italian Text	English Text
Gianetto	Gianetto
Vieni fra queste braccia...	Come into my arms...
Mi balza il cor nel sen! D'un ver amor, mio ben, questo è il linguaggio.	My heart leaps within my breast. This is the voice, this is the language of true love, my dear.
Anche nel nemico in faccia m'eri presente ognor: tu m'inspiravi allor forza e coraggio.	Even when I stood face to face with an enemy, you were always present in my thoughts. It was you who then inspired me with strength and courage.
Ma quel piacer che adesso, o mia Ninetta, provo, è così dolce e nuovo che non si può spiegar.	But the happiness I now experience, O my Ninetta, is so sweet and so new that it cannot be put into words.

LONG SUSTAINED NOTES

In earlier sections, the composer frequently employed long note values. In this cavatina they appear fifteen times. In connection with the dramatic context. The returning young nobleman Gianetto stands before his beloved Ninetta. He moves from a deeply moving summons, through an affirmation of devotion, to an emotional climax described as “indescribable.” The long notes do not serve to depict uncertainty or hesitation. Rather, Rossini uses them as structural and rhetorical “points of stability.”

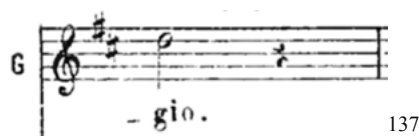
As in earlier occurrences, some of these long notes timbrally prepare the forthcoming coloratura passages and other sections, while others function as closures of coloratura segments. In Gianetto’s cavatina, the first long note appears in measure 4. It is the very first vocal statement. The presence of a fermata reinforces the accent on the word “*Vieni*” (“Come”) and acts as a call, expressing Gianetto’s moving, profound tenderness.

Bar 4



The long notes in measures 14 and 24 serve to close the preceding coloratura passages. They respectively emphasize the words “*linguaggio*” (“language”) and “*coraggio*” (“courage”).

Bar 14

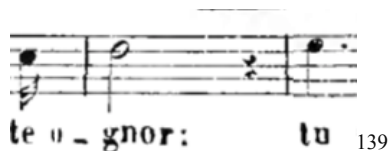


Bar 24



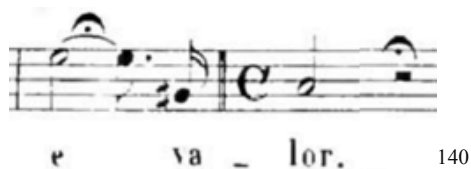
In measure 19, the word “*ognor*” (“always”) becomes particularly prominent. The long note functions as a point of climactic repose and at the same time as a preparation for the descending coloratura, thereby giving the affirmation of “true love” a vivid sense of projection and weight..

Bar 19



In measures 28–29, which occur later in the piece, the fermata transforms the long note into a “rhetorical pause,” functioning as a “full stop” that closes the musical section.

Bar 28-29



¹³⁶ Gioachino Rossini, *La gazza ladra*. Melodramma in due atti. Opera completa per canto e pianoforte, Milano: R. Stabilimento Ricordi (Edizioni Economiche Ricordi), b.r.w., s. 60.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

Takty 53 i 87 są analogiczne; DŁUGIE DŹWIĘKI w obu taktach pełnią funkcję domknięcia odcinka i punktu oddechowego, na mocnej części taktu stabilizują brzmienie, kończąc się łagodnym *diminuendo*. Następne „no, no, no”, wchodzące na słabej części taktu krótkimi, lekko odłączonymi dźwiękami (*staccato*), tworzy kontrast akcent–słaba część oraz semantyczne „echo negacji”, emocjonalnie domykając poprzednią frazę i wprowadzając nową.

takt 53



Measures 53 and 87 are analogous. In both measures, the long sustained notes serve to close the section and act as a breathing point. Placed on the strong beat, they stabilize the sound and conclude with a gentle *diminuendo*. The subsequent “no, no, no,” entering on the weak beat with short, slightly detached notes (*staccato*), creates a contrast between strong and weak beats and a semantic “echo of negation,” emotionally sealing the preceding phrase and ushering in a new one.

Bar 105–106

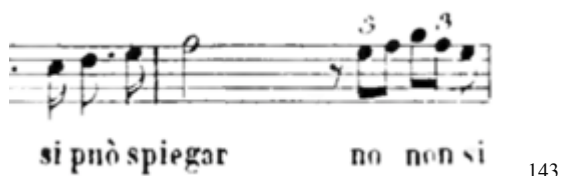


Such long notes, which link the preceding and the following phrase by both closing one and initiating the next, also occur in measures 113–116.

Bar 113

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 66.



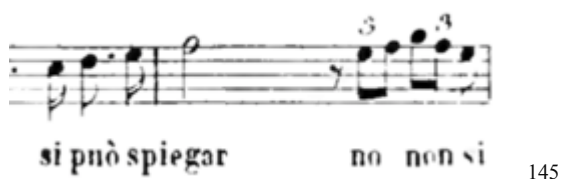
Bar 114-116



EIGHTH-NOTE TRIPLETS

The eighth-note triplets in Gianetto's cavatina appear only once, in measure 113. They enter on the weak beat, yet their even and decisive articulation creates an impression of confidence and determination, which constitutes a defining trait of this tenor role in Rossini's opera.

Bar 113



EIGHTH-NOTE TRIPLET GORGHEGGI

The eighth-note triplets enter on the weak beat. However, entering on a weak beat must not imply a relaxation of vocal posture. On the contrary, it requires an active setup and deliberate differentiation when practicing gorgheggi. The triplet should possess "clarity" in order to convey decisiveness. It is worth applying breath-led, fine détaché, with stable appoggio, to maintain even values and a leggiero character. Each note was initiated with clear resonance. I ensured a light touch of the tip of the tongue against the alveolar ridge (in "no, no, sì," the consonants n/s activate the onset). I avoided pharyngeal constriction and hard bursts of air. The jaw moves minimally; the vowels are narrow and unified. The dynamic range of mp–mf requires the first note to be unweight-

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

¹⁴⁵ G. Rossini, *La gazza ladra*, opera completa per canto e pianoforte, s. 67.

ed, the third to receive a slight forward “impulse,” leading into the next phrase. In the author’s view, these are distinctive features of tenor vocal production in Gianetto’s part in comic coloratura passages.

SIXTEENTH-NOTE TRIPLETS

In measures 11 and 21, gradually ascending sixteenth-note triplets (ascendente) appear. They function as brief emotional “igniters”: they illuminate the meaning of the words *amor mio* (“my beloved”) and *m’inspiravi allor* (“then you inspired me”), and propel the phrase toward the next cadential point.

Bar 11



Bar 21



SIXTEENTH-NOTE TRIPLET GORGHEGGI

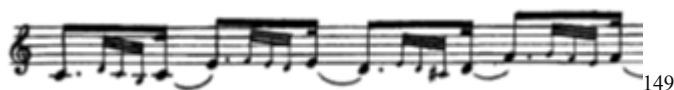
As with the eighth-note triplet gorgheggi, while maintaining a clearly defined “landing point” on the target pitch, it is necessary at the same time to ensure precise intonation of minor and major seconds and continuity of the phrase line. In the author’s view, in the tenor execution of sixteenth-note triplets in Rossinian comic coloratura, the specificity lies in the fact that alongside the required “clarity,” an equally important criterion is “lightness”¹⁴⁸, which is the key to translating technique into the inner affect of Rossini’s comic character.

GROUPS WITH A FIXED RHYTHMIC STRUCTURE FILLED WITH ORNAMENTATION

¹⁴⁶ G. Rossini, *La gazza ladra*, opera completa per canto e pianoforte, s. 60.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ Enrico Delle Sedie, *Arte e fisiologia del canto*, Milano: G. Ricordi, 1876, cap. „Dell’agilità”, [online], access: 5 XI 2025, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015025400360>



The musical notation is not arbitrary. It conveys essential musical information. Its effectiveness depends on your vocal awareness and on the expectations of the audience. A frequent mistake is the “flattening” of the dotted-eighth plus sixteenth figure, that is, equalizing it into even values contained within a quarter note, which departs from the composer’s intention. Proper practice consists first in stabilizing the rhythm and the main figure, then practicing the ornament separately until full control is achieved, and only once you are able to distinguish and manage minimal muscular tensions, reintegrating the ornament back into the main figure. Such work is both enjoyable and effective. It produces a more layered sound and genuinely moves listeners.¹⁵⁰

In Gianetto’s cavatina, measures 25 and 26 on the words “*forza, coraggio*” (“strength, courage”) reinforce the semantic emphasis and accelerate the sense of forward motion, shifting the expression from a declarative tone toward the next, more animated section (Allegro).

Bar 25



Bar 26



GROUPS WITH A FIXED RHYTHMIC STRUCTURE FILLED WITH ORNAMENTATION

This exercise continues to focus on thirds. Its framework is the dotted-eighth plus sixteenth figure. In front of it, a small ornament is added. Three thirty-second notes, slurred into the following dotted eighth. The difficulty lies in the fact that, for the first time, one must rely on a non-uniform airflow. The method is as follows: first practice the basic version, without the ornament. c¹ as

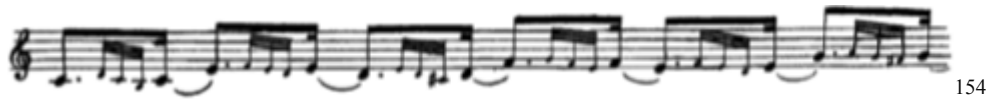
¹⁴⁹ E. Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno Gioachino Rossiniego...*, s. 163.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹ G. Rossini, *La gazza ladra*, opera completa per canto e pianoforte, s. 61.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

a dotted eighth, the same pitch as a sixteenth, then e¹ in the same values. Once this is mastered, proceed to the expanded version.¹⁵³



On the basis of my own performance experience, as well as the knowledge continually emphasized by my professor, I formulate the following conclusion: in tenor performance of Rossinian comic coloratura, particularly in structurally regular phrases filled with ornamentation, the specificity lies in grounding the singing in a strict rhythmic framework as a “skeleton,” while employing agile, variable ornamentation as “tissue,” so as to transform mechanical figures into a kind of “linguistic embroidery” of the character, mannered or comic, and to allow, within order, the illusion of improvisation to blossom.

ASCENDING AND DESCENDING SCALE PASSAGES

Although Gianetto’s cavatina does not contain fully “model” ascending and descending scale passages, several transformed versions of descending scalar motion can be identified: measures 52, 56, 58, 60, as well as their repetitions in 86, 90, 92, and 94. In measure 52, the smooth stepwise motion downward gently brings the highly aroused emotion back down to earth.

Bar 52



Measure 56 can be regarded as a variant repetition of measure 52. It fulfills the role of renewed accentuation and propulsion, carrying the “indescribable” elation forward into the next phrase.

Bar 56

¹⁵³ Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno...*, s. 59.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ G. Rossini, *La gazza ladra*, opera completa per canto e pianoforte, s. 62.



In measure 58, the undulation of the melody, on the words “*quel piacere che...*” (“that delight which...”), through a broad, flowing stepwise descent, depicts the flow of joy and leads the phrase toward the next utterance.

Bar 58



In measure 60, the emphasized words “*mia Ninetta*” (“my Ninetta”) are closed by a gentler stepwise descent, which takes on the character of a call. The expression shifts from a public declaration to an intimate, personal feeling.

Bar 60



ASCENDING AND DESCENDING SCALE GORGHEGGI

Since, in Gianetto’s cavatina, the ascending and descending scale passages take the form of transformed stepwise descents, my work on them began with a basic model: an even, smooth descent. I then added two elements: (1) a single long note, to stabilize the breath on a fixed pitch, after which the scalar descent would begin; (2) rhythmic variants with dotted patterns (long–short /

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

short-long), applied alternately in order to calibrate the intonation of seconds, strengthen the target pitch, and ensure continuity of the line. The entire exercise was carried out with a narrow, stable stream of air, in a *leggiero* manner, with a gentle internal decrescendo.

In the performance of Rossinian comic coloratura, in ascending and descending scale passages the specificity lies in a more openly expressed emotional character and in a gradually increasing density of the airstream, that is, a breath-driven crescendo.¹⁵⁹

COMBINED GROUPS (WITH A SLIGHT CHANGE WITHIN THE GROUP)



As sensitivity to subtle differences between individual gruppetti increases, subsequent exercises are deliberately made more demanding. They require the continuous development of nearly identical patterns and their precise differentiation. Such training significantly enhances flexibility and stability of intonation.¹⁶¹

In Giannetta's cavatina, COMBINED GRUPPETTI (WITH A SLIGHT CHANGE WITHIN THE GROUP) appear twice: in measure 62 and, in repetition, in measure 96. Sequences of sixteenth-note gruppetti built on the same pattern, with slight displacements and internal modifications, on the words "*così dolce e*" create a gradation reminiscent of a "string of pearls." Their function is to underscore the meaning of "sweetness" and to propel the melodic line toward the following phrase. The emotional coloring is bright and joyful, tinged with the intoxication of a candid confession, as sung by Giannetta.

Bar 62



¹⁵⁹ Alberto Zedda, „Il fascino del Rossinismo”, Archivio Alberto Zedda, [online], access: 5 XI 2025, URL: <https://www.albertozedda.com/il-fascino-del-rossinismo>

¹⁶⁰ E. Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno Gioachino Rossiniego*..., s. 164.

¹⁶¹ T *Ibid.*

¹⁶² G. Rossini, *La gazza ladra*, opera completa per canto e pianoforte, s. 63.

In Giannetta's cavatina, in measure 62, the crucial point is a clean, precise execution of the minor second. It must be even and *leggero*, without any "smearing" by glissando. In the ascending minor second, the upper pitch is stabilized through increased forward resonance and a narrowed vowel, while maintaining a narrow, steady airflow and a vibrato of small amplitude, as sung by Giannetta. Practice should begin slowly, using the pattern "target note. neighboring note." Then return to the original tempo, and at the end of each group allow a slight "release of tension,"¹⁶³ so that the execution of the next group connects naturally. The whole passage should sound bright and light, with the character of a confession.

ARCHING IN LONG SCALE-LIKE PASSAGES

In the author's view, measures 65–66 in Giannetta's cavatina and their repetition in measures 99–100 may be understood in terms of arching in long, scale-like passages. Both measures are best carried on a single breath, conceived as one extended phrase. The text "*non si può | si può spie-*" should be treated as an uninterrupted, continuously driven musical motion. It is advisable to apply a subtle crescendo toward the central point of culmination and, before the point of arrival, a decrescendo, creating a rhetorical turn from "one cannot say" toward "one can explain." On the dramaturgical and emotional level, this is a growing, joyful declaration that gradually ignites and blossoms into the target pitch, as expressed by Giannetta.

Bar 65-66



164

In this passage, measures 65–66 should be practiced not only as a single, continuous long phrase in order to build stamina, but also with increased difficulty by incorporating high notes in the vicinity of the *passaggio*. In the middle section, the energy should be slightly increased, while the ending should be subtly narrowed. The cadence must remain clean, without "punching out" successive groups. Maintain steady breath support and an even airflow speed, with vowels moderately narrowed and unified. The fragment repeatedly touches the upper register and the transition zone,

¹⁶³ Domenico Corri, *The Singer's Preceptor*; or, Corri's Treatise on Vocal Music, Edinburgh: J. Johnson, [1810], s. 61, [online], access: 5 XI 2025, URL: <https://archive.org/details/singerspreceptor00corr>

¹⁶⁴ G. Rossini, *La gazza ladra*, opera completa per canto e pianoforte, s. 63.

approximately E–F $\sharp$ –G. Therefore, before reaching E, one should enter the higher vocal setup earlier, allowing the resonance to intensify gradually while controlling the reduction of pressure. Rely on airflow velocity rather than forceful “pushing.” In the upper range, preserve a bright, focused timbre and avoid pressing, as required by the musical line of Giannetta.

INTERVAL LEAPS COMPLEMENTED BY A DESCENDING STEPWISE MOTION



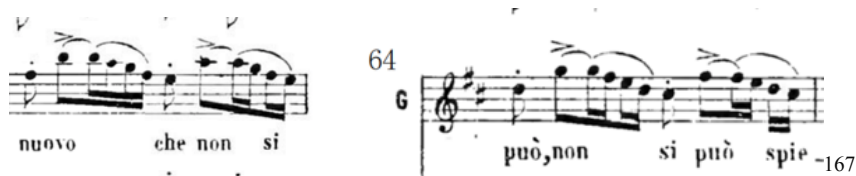
On the basis of previously developed stepwise-second sequences, the singer acquires a stable foundation for controlling long melodic lines and for ongoing micro-adjustment of intonation. In the training of intervallic leaps, these second-based sequences function like “rungs of a ladder,” externalizing the distances between pitches as tangible and repeatable muscular-auditory coordinates. As a result, both the “takeoff” and the “landing” in larger intervallic shifts become simultaneously precise and fluid, while fluctuations of tension before and after the leap are significantly reduced.¹⁶⁶

INTERVAL LEAPS COMPLEMENTED BY A DESCENDING STEPWISE MOTION appear in Giannetta’s cavatina in measures 63–64 and in their repetition in measures 97–98. The perfect fourth leap on the strong beat of the measure, highlighting the words “*può / nuovo*,” functions as a rhetorical emphasis. It is followed by a descending stepwise motion in seconds that releases the accumulated energy at the point of arrival, closing the transition from a surprised exclamation to the assertion “*si può spiegare*,” “it can be explained.” On the dramaturgical level, this passage traces a descent from expansive joy toward a more precise utterance. The affect remains bright, urgent, and confident, propelling the phrase forward toward the next musical unit, as articulated by Giannetta.

Bar 63-64

¹⁶⁵ E. Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno Gioachino Rossiniego...*, s. 166.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*



The figural patterns are shaped on the basis of the harmonic framework prescribed in the exercise. In performance, one should consciously “color” and highlight the tones that serve chordal functions, such as the root, third, and fifth, so that they sound full and focused. At the same time, timbre and resonant placement must be continuously adjusted to the course of the harmony, ensuring that the sound remains consistent with the structure dictated by harmonic principles.¹⁶⁸



When practicing this figure with measures 63–64 of Giannetta’s cavatina in mind, it is advisable to raise the register temporarily. In particular, rehearse the perfect fourth leap from F#2 to B2, taking care not to release the vocal setup or breath support after the higher pitch. The post-leap continuity of support is essential for preserving precision, stability, and the rhetorical clarity of the gesture, as required by the musical line of Giannetta¹⁷⁰. As a result, the entry into the subsequent sections remains stable and fluid.

Conclusion:

Although it might seem that Rossini’s basic figurations play only a marginal role in Giannetta’s solo cavatina, closer analysis demonstrates the opposite. Of the eighteen characteristic coloratura elements identified in the composer’s language, as many as eight figures are employed here. These include sustained notes, various types of triplet passages, ornaments embedded within a fixed rhythmic scheme, scale-like runs, and intervallic leaps filled in by stepwise motion. Such richness of means places this cavatina on a par with Rossini’s larger formal structures. Recognizing that the

¹⁶⁷ G. Rossini, *La gazza ladra*, opera completa per canto e pianoforte, s. 63.

¹⁶⁸ Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno...*, s. 62.

¹⁶⁹ Tamže.

¹⁷⁰ Francesco Lamperti, *The Art of Singing*, rev. ed., trans. J. C. Griffith, New York: G. Schirmer, 1890, s. 17–18

flawless technical mastery of these elements allows them to attain their full artistic dimension helps to explain how a consistently high level of performance is achieved. Every detail refined beyond the minimum technical requirement has the potential to elevate the interpretation to a masterly level. At the same time, the score of Gioachino Rossini is conceived in such a way that a solid realization of all notated ornaments ensures a coherent ensemble effect, while leaving room for exceptional soloists to dazzle with virtuosity without compromising the integrity of the performance, as exemplified by the role of Giannetta.

Chapter 3. Analysis of Vocal Technique in Selected Coloratura Passages from Mozart's Operas, Included on the Author's CD

The coloratura passages selected by the author from arias in Mozart's operas display numerous similarities to the works of Rossini with regard to coloratura patterns, technical demands, and expressive functions. For this reason, the author has decided that in the present chapter he will continue to employ the system of coloratura classification developed on the basis of Rossini's oeuvre for the analysis of Mozart's works. On the one hand, Gioachino Rossini composed slightly later than Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, which makes his approach to coloratura techniques more systematic and mature. On the other hand, the types of coloratura identified by Rossini, such as rapid scale passages, leap-based figurations, and other ornamental techniques, also appear frequently in Mozart's arias. By adopting this mature system of classification, it becomes possible to present more clearly both the technical characteristics and the artistic-expressive functions of coloratura passages in Mozart's compositional output.

3.1 Dramatic Roles:

3.1.1 The aria "*Fuor del mar*" from the opera *Idomeneo*, K. 366

The aria "*Fuor del mar*" from the opera *Idomeneo, re di Creta*, K. 366, is a work of majestic and dignified character. It fully conveys the atmosphere of royal authority that is characteristic of opera seria.¹⁷¹ Characteristic of this aria are dramatic coloratura passages, which are responsible for its elevated tone. Through the melodic writing, they convey Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's striving for nobility and refinement.¹⁷² The author maintains that during the heyday of opera seria, coloratura functioned primarily as a means of expression associated with heroism. This also bears witness to the maturity of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's creative output in this period. Mozart succeeded in capturing both the praise of monarchs and heroes characteristic of traditional opera seria and his own striving for musical diversity and brilliance, fully conveying the characters' inner emotions through these virtuosic ornaments. In the variation sections of this aria, every modification reveals traits of the king's character, such as royal pride and the impulsiveness of his actions, even as he continues to experience fear in the face of the overwhelming power of the sea.

The author suggests that pressure exerted by the external world is the source of Idomeneo's "pain" in this aria. This pressure comes from Ilia and from Neptune, both of whom are set in oppo-

¹⁷¹ Julian Rushton, W. A. Mozart: *Idomeneo*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, especially the chapter "The Genre of *Idomeneo*," pp. 62–68.

¹⁷² Joshua Michael May, *The Rise of the Tenor Voice in the Late Eighteenth Century: Mozart's Opera and Concert Arias*, DMA diss., University of Connecticut, 2014, s. 39.

sition by the king's refusal to offer the sacrifice. The aria thus becomes an outward manifestation of the king's emotional tension, which also reflects his inner, arrogant disposition. For this very reason, the aria occupies a position of central importance within the entire work, namely *Idomeneo*, *re di Creta*, and in the portrayal of its protagonist, *Idomeneo*.

Analysis of the Aria "*Fuor del mar*" from Mozart's *Idomeneo*

Elements of Analysis	Details of Analysis
Total number of measures	174 measures
Key	D major. The work contains tonal changes. The middle section modulates to C major, ultimately returning to the principal key of D major.
Meter	4/4
Tempo	Allegro maestoso
Dynamics	Strong dynamic contrasts. Section A is maintained predominantly in forte, conveying agitation and unrest. The middle section is more restrained and quieter, with a reduction of dynamic intensity. In long coloratura passages, the singer must sustain strong dynamics over an extended span in order to convey persistent tension. At key moments, for example emotional turns, there is a sudden shift to piano, creating dramatic tension.
Articulation / Vocal Technique	The foundation is a smoothly led legato vocal line. The aria contains many long, rapid passages of coloratura, requiring the singer to execute numerous notes on a single breath. In key phrases, isolated short staccato accents appear, for example rapid repetitions of the same pitch to emphasize threat. Nevertheless, the overall texture is dominated by legato. The middle section is more lyrical and stable, with singing that is more even and rounded.

Elements of Analysis	Details of Analysis
Overview of Coloratura Figures	LONG SUSTAINED NOTES: 16,19,21,25,26-27,29,33,36,37,38,39,40,41,42,43,44,45,49,50,52,54,57,60,62-63,67,68,74,75,90,91,92,94,98,108,111,113,117,118-119,121,124,129,130,131,132,143,145,148,150,153,156,159,161,168 SCALE PASSAGES ASCENDING AND DESCENDING: 40-41 , 42-44 , 45-47 , 133-141 , 68-71 TRILL: 75,168 COMBINED GRUPPETTI (WITH A SLIGHT CHANGE WITHIN THE GROUP): 46,61,157-158,160 ARCHING IN LONG SCALE-LIKE PASSAGES: 138-140
Form	Three-part ABA' (with features of sonata form)
Preceded by Recitative	Yes

Italian Text	English Text
IDOMENEO Fuor del mar ho un mare in seno, Che del primo è più funesto, E Nettuno ancora in questo Mai non cessa minacciar. Fiero Nume! dimmi almeno: Se al naufragio è sì vicino Il mio cor, qual rio destino Or gli vieta il naufragar?	IDOMENEO Having emerged from the depths of the sea, I carry the sea within my breast, more fearsome still than the one I left behind, and Neptune, even here, never ceases to threaten me. Cruel god, tell me at least this: if my heart stands so close to shipwreck, what cruel decree of fate now forbids it to sink?

Recitative

Autor zdecydował się umieścić na płycie CD ten recytatyw z następujących powodów:

1. The author decided to include this recitative on the accompanying CD for the following reasons.
The recitative encompasses a wide range of pitch and dynamic levels, and the juxtaposition of vowels with a variety of affects is comprehensive and representative.

2. I would like to discuss a method for preparing the recitative. One may begin by using a “spoken” diction with short rhythmic values¹⁷³, in order to establish an initial sense of weak–strong beat relationships, phrase divisions, and breathing points. This approach transfers directly to the subsequent dramatic coloratura, making rapid passages and entries on weak beats clearer and more controlled. At the same time, working in the same key and meter establishes a harmonic and pulsational framework, which stabilizes intonation and reinforces the singer’s internal sense of pulse.
3. Exclamatory accents in the recitative, for example in measure 10, and the repeated leaps across registers, for example in measure 18, allow the singer to “open” the *passaggio* in advance and to activate the resonating spaces. As a result, upon entering the aria it becomes easier to focus the sound in the upper register and on sustained notes. The subsequent passages then gain emotional momentum and a clear dynamic framework. Coloratura, in this case, is no longer merely a display of virtuosity, but grows naturally out of meaning and affect.

Bar 10



Bar 18



In short, beginning with a recitative sung “as if spoken” allows the singer to establish rhythm, breath, resonance, and semantic clarity. As a result, the subsequent Mozartian dramatic coloratura becomes markedly more stable and grounded.

LONG SUSTAINED NOTES

Because of the rhetoric and structural demands of Classicism, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart frequently employs entrances on the weak beat, suspensions, long sustaining tones that function as

¹⁷³ Manuel García, *Hints on Singing* (London: Ascherberg, Hopwood & Crew, 1894), s. 59

¹⁷⁴ Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Idomeneo*. Drame per musica in tre atti, Klavierauszug nach dem Urtext der Neuen Mozart-Ausgabe von Hans-Georg Kluge, Kassel–Basel–London–New York–Praga: Bärenreiter, 2014 (BA 4562-90), s. 204.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

points of support, and fermatas with cadential purpose in order to highlight meaning and to articulate the connections between phrases. For this reason, long sustained notes occur with particular frequency in Mozart's arias. In Idomeneo's aria *Fuor del mar*, they appear as many as fifty-three times. Taking into account their function within the aria and their impact on vocal execution, the author has selected representative examples and subjected them to detailed analysis.

In the author's view, the long sustained notes at the beginning of this aria are of exceptional importance, as they establish the overall tone of the composition. The two long notes at the opening of measure 16 function as initial "anchors" for the entire passage. The first concentrates the semantic focus while establishing tonality and pulse. The second, falling on the strong beat, provides a gentle sense of closure, completing the alignment of pulse, tonality, and breath. Together, they concentrate the perceptual center of gravity on the key words "*Fuor-del.*" An analogous passage appears in measure 108. As the opening of the reprise, it fulfills the same structural and rhetorical function as in measure 16, reinforcing continuity within the aria from *Idomeneo, re di Creta*.

Bar 16



Similarly to LONG SUSTAINED NOTES in Rossini's dramatic coloratura passages, long notes in Mozart's works continue to serve a binding and transitional function. They close what precedes and initiate what follows, while occurring with even greater density. For example, in measures 39–45 they may be understood as suspensions on the word "*mi-...nacciar*" ("to threaten"), which concentrate meaning and, after taking over material from earlier coloratura passages, set motion in train once again. They stabilize the pulse and direct the perceptual center of gravity toward the ensuing coloratura runs. In my assessment, each of these long sustained notes can be read as an

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 207.

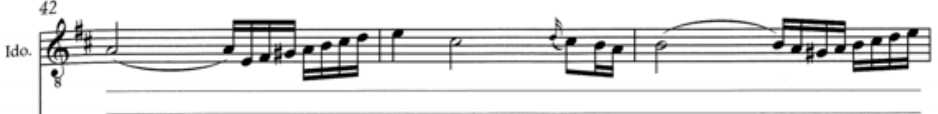
expression of Idomeneo's restrained emotion, underpinned by fear, as embodied by Idomeneo in *Idomeneo, re di Creta*.¹⁷⁷

Bar 39-41



178

Bar 42-44



179

Bar 45



180

The aria contains numerous whole notes and long tones tied across the barline, as in measures 26–27 and their repetition in measures 118–119, as well as in measures 60, 62–63, 143, 156, 159, and 161. This demonstrates that Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart assigns rhetorical and structural functions to long note values. In an instant, they “freeze” the mobility of the preceding passage, creating a stable platform of pitch and affect upon which the semantics of “threat and hatred” are intensified and held in suspension. Structurally, these long notes simultaneously serve as markers of culmination and as preparation for a turning point. It is precisely Idomeneo's restrained, severe authority that exerts pressure and arrests time, becoming an integral component of the dramatic tension of the entire passage, as embodied by Idomeneo in *Idomeneo, re di Creta*.

Bar 26-27

¹⁷⁷ Harry Halbreich, „Idomeneo: Commentario musicale”, *Di cose un po' – Analisi musicologiche* [online], s. 23, access: 17 XI 2025, <http://www.dicoseunpo.it/Analisi_musicologiche_files/Idomeneo_analisi.pdf>.

¹⁷⁸ W. A. Mozart, *Idomeneo*, Klavierauszug, Bärenreiter, 2014, s. 209.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

26

Ido.

8

- ne - - - - - sto__
to - - - - - sen__181

Bar 60

60

Ido. 

- ciar _____
Hass _____

182

Bar 62-63

62

Ido.

8

183

Bar 143

143

Ido.

ces - - - - - sa,
dro - - - - - hen,

184

Bar 156

156

Ido. 

- ciar
Hass

185

Bar 159

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 208.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 211.

183 *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 220.



Bar 161



The aria contains three long note values marked with a fermata. Each of them serves as a stage-like closure while simultaneously reinforcing the textual message. For example, in measures 94 and 98 the emphasis falls respectively on *destino* (“fate”) and *naufragar* (“to sink”). The prolongation that follows under the slur transforms this moment of suspension into a new anchoring point, leading from stillness into renewed motion, and intensifying the dramatic expression of Idomeneo in *Idomeneo, re di Creta* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

Bar 94



Bar 98



Measure 168 constitutes the final point of the entire aria. At the end of the phrase “*minacciar*,” a suspension occurs on the strong beat, forming the ultimate chiusura. It condenses the tension and sense of threat accumulated earlier into a solemn declaration. Structurally, this is a final

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

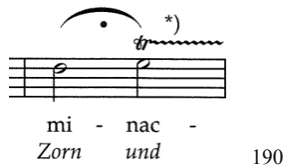
¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 214.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

cadential hold, while dramaturgically it closes the utterance in an attitude of royal restraint and majesty, as embodied by Idomeneo in *Idomeneo, re di Creta* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

Bar 168



LONG GORGHEGGI AND SUSTAINED NOTES

In this aria, long sustained notes can generally be shaped according to the scheme “gentle onset. culmination. light release.” However, the manner of realization varies depending on their function. In initial long notes, the emphasis falls on the point of culmination, for example in measure 16 at the opening of the aria. Here, partial energy is employed to underscore the royal character of the figure and thereby to establish the overall tone of the aria. When long notes function as bridge tones that are meant to “ignite” subsequent ascending and descending coloratura passages, for example in measures 39–44, the same scheme of “gentle onset. culmination. light release” must be executed more rapidly in order to align with the character and momentum of the coloratura, as required by the musical and dramatic profile of *Idomeneo in Idomeneo, re di Creta* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

Long sustained notes functioning as culminations, for example in measures 60 and 62–63 with the extended suspensions on *minacciar*, require an expansion of each phase of the pattern “gentle onset. culmination. light release,” and a slightly slower overall shaping. This demands strong breath support in order to achieve a balance between resonance and airflow. When the long note serves as a concluding and closing tone, as with the fermata in measure 166, the phase of “light release” should be executed swiftly, so that the listener perceives a clear sense of finality. These performance details accord with a principle well known from *gorgheggi*: the same pitch fulfills different functions depending on its harmonic context. This principle is applied with particular refinement in the aria of *Idomeneo* from *Idomeneo, re di Creta* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

In Mozart’s dramatic coloratura, its distinctive character lies in the fact that many long sustained notes fall on, or even cross, the *passaggio*. The singer must therefore maintain timbral uniformity in a zone of heightened tension while clearly articulating the rhetorical pattern of entrance

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 221.

on the weak beat and closure on the strong beat. Long notes are often coupled with key Italian words, such as *minacciar* or *destino*. The moment of “stillness” sharpens semantic focus, after which the accumulated energy is transformed into the ensuing fluid passages. This function, moving from rest into motion, lies at the very heart of *gorgheggi*: the practice of long tones and continuous breath placed in the service of phrase and expression, as exemplified in the dramatic utterance of Idomeneo in *Idomeneo, re di Creta* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

ASCENDING AND DESCENDING SCALE PASSAGES

In Idomeneo’s aria, ASCENDING AND DESCENDING SCALE PASSAGES appear, for example in measures 40–47. The long sustained notes first intensify the tension, after which the ensuing ascending and descending scale figures generate small, dense undulations. Like the sea withdrawing and then surging forward again. In repetition, the auditory impression unfolds as successive “waves” rippling across the surface, vividly reflecting the inner turbulence of Idomeneo in *Idomeneo, re di Creta* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart¹⁹¹. This is not a virtuoso passage designed for display, but a symbol of Idomeneo’s inner turmoil.

Bar 40-41



Bar 42-44



Bar 45-47



¹⁹¹ Harry Halbreich, „Idomeneo: Commentario musicale”, s. 23

¹⁹² W. A. Mozart, *Idomeneo*, Klavierauszug, Bärenreiter, 2014, s. 209.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

Measures 133–141 constitute a *ripresa variata* (a variant reprise) in relation to measures 40–47. The entire tessitura has been raised, and the intervallic span has likewise been expanded. Long half-note values have been transformed into dotted quarter notes. All of this leads to a sharper and more tense expression. The “undulation” becomes higher and broader. In particular, measures 133–138 are closer to the category of ASCENDING AND DESCENDING SCALE PASSAGES.

Bar 133-134



Bar 135-137



Bar 138



After the long note in bar 68, which sets in motion stepwise progressions of seconds ascending and descending, the same motion in bars 69 to 71 proceeds without sustained note values, which further intensifies the tension. In perception, this resembles the ceaseless, recurrent onslaught of waves.

Bar 68

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*



Bar 69-70



Bar 71



In accordance with what I mentioned earlier, the training clearly applies breath management and the relationships between the vocal folds, the supporting muscles, and tension and relaxation, so as to ensure a balanced course of action and to develop flexibility of the vocal apparatus. The author maintains that the specificity of a tenor's execution of Mozartian coloratura of the type SCALE PASSAGES ASCENDING AND DESCENDING lies in the fact that, in order to preserve classical norms and precision²⁰¹, the breath during the singing of stepwise passages must be resilient and supple. This requires the ability to deliver the airflow in a “point-like” manner, so that each note receives a light, elastic impulse of breath.

In Idomeneo's aria, the sections of dramatic coloratura moving upward and downward are carried on the vowel “a”. With the purity of the vowel maintained and dynamic control preserved, this makes it possible to convey the “wave-like” quality of the sound.

TRILL

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

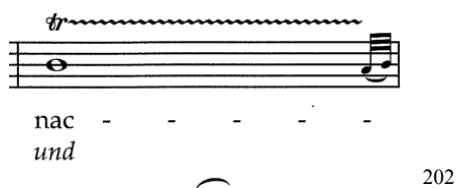
¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 212.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

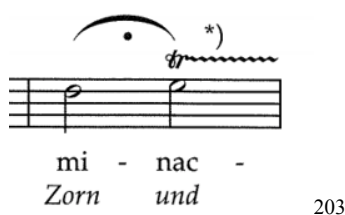
²⁰¹ Music and the Human Experience, „Chapter 10 – The Classical Era”, [online], access: 5 XI 2025, URL: <https://alg.manifoldapp.org/read/music-and-the-human-experience/section/74f52b0b-9368-4968-8cb8-eb7c24def23c>

In Idomeneo's aria, two TRILLS appear. One in bar 75 and the other at the end, in bar 168. The first closes the given section, while the second constitutes the final closure of the entire work. Mozart's characteristic manner of shaping a trill consists of a soft onset, followed by a crescendo, and a strong closing, which more clearly builds a sense of tension and resolution. In both cases, the TRILL occurs on the word *minacciar*, highlighting the overarching theme of fear.

Bar 75



Bar 168



The author observes that an exercise consisting in beginning on the prime note, the tonic, with a long value. A quarter note. Slurred into the following sixteenth note figuration, so that the proper trill pattern enters on the weak part of the bar, is ideally suited to Idomeneo's aria. As I have already mentioned, the scheme "*soft onset, crescendo, strong closure*" is one of the distinctive features of Mozartian coloratura passages. In performance, one must take care to maintain a stable laryngeal position and a high focusing of resonance, and to control the airflow and air pressure with precision, so that the sound develops evenly from a point-like piano to a more expansive forte. At the same time, each repeated note must remain legible, clear, and intonationally precise. In this way, mechanical repetitions are transformed into a statement full of dramatic tension and emotional force.

COMBINED GRUPETTOS

(WITH A SLIGHT MODIFICATION WITHIN THE GROUP)

²⁰² W. A. Mozart, Idomeneo, Klavierauszug, Bärenreiter, 2014, s. 212.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 221.

In Idomeneo's aria, there are a total of four such passages. They appear for the first time in bar 46. In the section devoted to long notes, I mentioned that bars 40 to 47 give the impression of sea waves, whereas bar 46 constitutes their closure. Small, dense figurations, like the retreating tail of a wave, create an undulating, gradually intensifying sense of pressure.

Bar 46

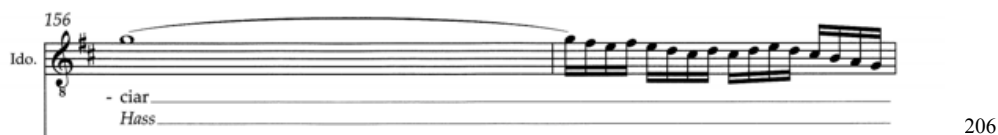


Next comes bar 61, surrounded by bars with long notes. If the long values are understood as Idomeneo's proclamation, then the connecting small figuration groups, which push the energy forward, represent the flow of his inner dread and pressing anxiety. Such an arrangement ensures that each "wave surge" has a point of anchoring, and each anchoring point accumulates energy for the next entry. In my view, this reveals Mozart's classical sense of balance. A similar layout appears in bars 157 to 158 and in bar 160.

Bar 61



Bar 157



Bar 158

²⁰⁴ W. A. Mozart, Idomeneo, Klavierauszug, Bärenreiter, 2014, s. 209.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 220.



Bar 160



The practice of seconds, both minor and major, is crucial, especially when performing selected passages in which micro-variations appear within repeating pitch patterns. This places extremely high demands on the tenor's aural anticipation and muscular memory. The layout in which the bars preceding and following these passages consist of long notes lends the performance a distinctive quality. It creates the effect of an "explosion after restraint" and of a "secondary wave after an explosion." Sections built on long note values require a sound that is maximally controlled and dignified, shaping the character's majesty or contemplation, supported by deep and stable breath.

When the music suddenly shifts to rapid groups with subtle micro-variations within them, the singer must, in a very short time, transform the previously relatively static support, used for long notes, into a resilient, precisely dosed "dynamic" stream of air that drives even the smallest detail. At the same time, the timbre should instantly move from a dignified, declarative quality to an internally agitated, nervous vibration. Such a sudden transformation "from rest into motion" powerfully intensifies the dramatic tension, revealing how Idomeneo's emotions violently oscillate between restraint and the loss of control.

SLURRING IN LONG PASSAGEWORK RUNS

Although there are no legato slurs in bars 138 to 140, their dense passagework and the tense, driving sense of progression lead me to treat these three bars as a single whole in terms of SLURRING IN LONG PASSAGEWORK RUNS. Such an uninterrupted flow gives the impression of step-by-step approach and of pressure building in successive layers²⁰⁹.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁹ Joshua Michael May, *The Rise of the Tenor Voice in the Late Eighteenth Century: Mozart's Opera and Concert Arias*, Doctoral dissertation, University of Connecticut, 2014, s. 38–40

Bar 138-139



210

Bar 140



211

I maintain that in the performance of Mozartian coloratura passages of the type SLURRING IN LONG PASSAGEWORK RUNS, the specificity of the technique lies in fusing long, uninterrupted rapid successions of notes into a single, directed “emotional entity.” Concision and clarity of articulation must be preserved. By means of an extremely even yet internally charged stream of breath, dozens of notes must be seamlessly connected, while a clear emotional arc is planned for the entire phrase. Within a very rapid airflow, the integrity of the classical phrase and its dramatic expression must be sustained²¹².

Conclusion

In “*Fuor del mar*”, coloratura serves above all a structural and rhetorical function. Long notes anchor the pulse, suspend meaning, and delineate phrase nodes. They are followed by scale passages ascending and descending, which transform the energy of “rest” into motion and build mounting tension. Combined gruppettos close or restart the wave, while long runs require slurring. Two trills bind the dramaturgy together. The first closes a section, the second finalizes the utterance. For the tenor, a particular challenge lies in the constant proximity to the passaggio while maintaining clarity of articulation and a clear relationship between the weak and strong parts of the bar. A unified timbre, flexible dosing of breath, and rapid transformation “from stillness into motion” remain the key to conveying the protagonist’s inner unrest.

²¹⁰ W. A. Mozart, *Idomeneo*, Klavierauszug, Bärenreiter, 2014, s. 218.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*

²¹² Stewart Cramer, *Comprimario Tenor Repertoire: An Alternative Approach to Teaching the Developing Operatic Tenor*, rozprawa doktorska, University of Northern Colorado, 2021, s. 143; 157–158

3.1.2 The Aria “*Se all’impero, amici Dei*” by Tito from the opera *La clemenza di Tito*, K. 621

The entire work maintains a serious tone, with Tito at its center, wielding power and demonstrating his royal authority²¹³, while in the lyrical passages the tone softens and Mozart creates a more subdued musical atmosphere, though not in the traditional sense of “weakness.” He presents a king who, even in the face of anger, pain, inner turmoil, and doubts he has experienced, continues to preserve his royal dignity. Immediately after the lyrical section, the mood returns and intensifies²¹⁴, expressing Tito’s final decision following a series of internal conflicts and reflections.

The aria is a crucial dramatic moment of the entire opera. When Tito learns of the betrayal by his old friend, who attempted to murder him, his shock, anger, pain, inner struggle, and reflections ultimately transform into an act of mercy. The decision to pardon his friend. Such a choice requires immense strength of character, magnanimous love for the kingdom, and self-assurance. When Tito finally resolves to secure the loyalty of the realm through mercy, he experiences inner joy, having found a way to govern the kingdom in accordance with his own conscience. In this aria, the king rejoices in his decision to forgive Sesto, a decision reached with difficulty, after prolonged inner संघर्ष and emotional self-control. As Mozart described it, “Tito is not merely an insignificant, lifeless symbol, but a noble ruler with an open heart.”²¹⁵

Tito’s Aria: “*Se all’impero, amici Dei*” (from the opera *La clemenza di Tito*)

Elements of Analysis	Description
Number of bars	130 bars
Key	B-flat major
Meter	4/4
Tempo	Allegro (A, B) → Andante / Andantino (middle section, bars 55–76) → Tempo primo: Allegro (from bar 77)

²¹³ John A. Rice, *W. A. Mozart: La clemenza di Tito* (Cambridge Opera Handbooks), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, s. 1–4

²¹⁴ Elisa Cerri, „Il caso Antonio Baglioni: l’ultimo tenore di Mozart”, „Studi urbinati. Scienze umane e sociali. Serie B” LXXIII–LXXIV (2003–2004), s. 343–354, tu: s. 350–351.

²¹⁵ David Cairns, „Mozart and His Operas” [Tłumaczenie: Xie Yinghua]. Szanghaj: Shanghai Sanlian Bookstore, 2012, s. 238.

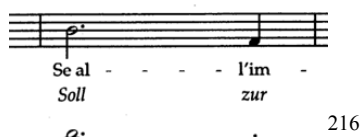
Elements of Analysis	Description
Dynamics	Clearly variable (pp–ff), with passages of <i>sottovoce</i> and numerous crescendos. The same dynamic level usually lasts approx. 4–8 bars.
Articulation	In <i>cantabile</i> sections, legato predominates. In fast passages, articulation is more syllabic and marcato. In places, there is a functional legato–staccato contrast.
Coloratura figures (main)	LONG NOTES: 11, 13, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 25, 27, 38, 40, 41, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 70, 72, 75, 76, 77, 79, 81, 82, 83, 85, 86, 87, 91, 92, 93, 95, 96, 98, 100, 102, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 116; SCALE PASSAGES ASCENDING AND DESCENDING: 98–105; TRILL: 51, 114; COMBINED GRUPETTOS (WITH A SLIGHT MODIFICATION WITHIN THE GROUP): 42–44, 104–105.
Form type	A, B, A ¹
With recitative or without	No

Italian Text	English Text
TITO Se all'impero, amici dei, necessario è un cor severo, o togliete a me l'impero o a me date un altro cor. Se la fé de' regni miei con l'amor non assicuro, d'una fede io non mi curo che sia frutto del timor.	TITO If, to govern the empire, O benevolent gods, a stern heart is required, then either take the empire from me, or grant me another heart. If I cannot secure loyalty in my realms through love, I do not desire such loyalty as is born of fear.

LONG NOTES

In Tito's aria, long notes occur very frequently. The author selects several of the most typical examples for analysis. Foremost among them is the long note in bar 11. As in Idomeneo's aria, it also serves here to establish the tone of the entire work. The sustained "Se" ("If") builds the suspense of a conditional statement and at the same time reveals the restrained, dignified public proclamation of Tito's tenor role.

Bar 11



Numerous LONG NOTES also serve a binding and transitional function. Bar 19, the note G, retains a proclamatory character, while the LONG NOTES that follow in bars 20 to 21 proceed in a descending motion. In these bars, the long values function both as a bridge within the individual measures and as the axis of the entire phrase “*necessario è un cor*” (“a heart is necessary”), constituting, on the scale of the passage, a clear “connection with what has been and an anticipation of what is to come.”

The sustained tone stabilizes the authoritative character. At the same time, the short, driving figure inserted on the word “*cor*,” together with the pause at the end of the sentence, creates a directed suspension and the impression of a half cadence, steering the sense and perceptual weight toward the immediately following strong accent on “*se-vero*.” In my view, these are manifestations of cool, resolute self-discipline, without any need for explosion. This descending chain of long notes is not a “*loss of strength*,” but a calm weighing of arguments, revealing Tito’s royal nature. An analogous passage also appears in bars 85 to 87.

Bar 19-21



The long note in bar 98 prepares the entry of the coloratura and becomes the beginning of the coloratura section.

Bar 98

²¹⁶ Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *La clemenza di Tito*. Opera seria in due atti, Klavierauszug nach dem Urtext der Neuen Mozart-Ausgabe von Eugen Epplée, Kassel–Basel–London–New York–Prag: Bärenreiter, 2001 (BA 4554b), s. 254.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 255.



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The long notes in bars 100 and 102 occur within the very flow of the coloratura, fulfilling the role of a “comma.” They briefly close off the momentum, stabilize the harmonic center, and direct the listener and the sense toward the next phrase. They serve a binding and transitional function, and their symmetrical placement introduces a sense of balance, more clearly segmenting the coloratura passage.

Bar 100



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Bar 102



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Although the F in bar 40 is not the highest pitch, the ascending, dense stepwise progression from bar 39 gradually lifts both the energy and the “vector of listening” upward. In bar 40, on the word “*cor*” (“heart”), the note is placed high and sustained as a whole note, completing a double culmination. Semantic and ambitus-related. It thus forms a small climax. In this way, “heart” is “pinned” in place like the accent of an oath.

Bar 39

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 261.

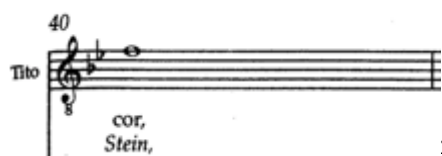
²¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 262.



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Bar 40



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In this aria, long notes continue to serve a closing function. In bars 75 to 76, LONG NOTES with a fermata lead the middle section to a cadential closure. First, the extended value suspends the semantic core “*ti-mor*” (“fear”) high above, consolidating and emphasizing the earlier reflections on “loyalty and severity.” Then a brief descent and a pause with a fermata ground the phrase, creating a clear caesura and a sense of “closure.”²²³ In perception, the energy is deliberately withdrawn from the preceding flow and ascent. The long note closes the emotion, and the pause creates an empty space, like leaving a single beat of silence after a declaration, which unequivocally signals the end of this section.

Bar 75-76



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To master LONG NOTES, the tenor must demonstrate micro-control that goes beyond basic training. In addition to proficiency in a soft onset and a gradual lead toward the climax, one must be

²²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 256.

²²² *Ibid.*, p. 257.

²²³ Elisa Cerri, „Antonio Baglioni, l’ultimo tenore di Mozart”, s. 354.

²²⁴ W. A. Mozart, *La clemenza di Tito*, Klavierauszug, Bärenreiter, 2001, s. 259.

able to carry out this process rapidly, so as to achieve a certain degree of explosive energy. Especially in bar 19, on the note G, near the *passaggio*, the singer may employ *copertura* and a certain degree of closure. By lowering the laryngeal position, softening the attack, and precisely shaping the vowel, it becomes possible to seamlessly bind chest and head resonance, achieving the required volume without breaks or unwanted vibrato²²⁵.

When a long note, functioning as a structural node, is interwoven with *coloratura*, the performer must possess an immediate capacity for respiratory switching. After rapid figurations, the fast airflow must be instantly transformed, through resilient diaphragmatic support, into a stable, long-lasting column of air, ensuring a clean onset, a saturated timbre, and a reserve of energy for the next segment of the phrase.

In long notes that bring closure, the application of an advanced technique of “breath attenuation” is required. The airflow should be reduced evenly without releasing the support, so that the sound smoothly “dissolves” into the rest, creating the impression of a deliberate, considered silence. Each of these technical decisions serves the creation of the image of a monarch who unites rationality and authority. This is precisely what constitutes the specificity of performing long notes in Tito’s aria.

SCALE PASSAGES ASCENDING AND DESCENDING

In bars 98 to 105, SCALE PASSAGES ASCENDING AND DESCENDING, together with long notes and rests, co-create a complete, dramatic process of decision-making. The initial long note, for example in bar 98, functions like a solemn suspension before the ruler’s proclamation²²⁶, accumulating energy for further reflection. The subsequent descending scale passages, interspersed with quarter-note rests, and then again ascending passages and long note values, mirror Tito’s final rational calculation and prudent hesitation before resolution, building a tension of suspension. Finally, the uninterrupted run in bars 104 to 105 signifies that all deliberation is transformed into unshakable will, leading to the B-flat in bar 106, which jointly elevates affect and reason to a culmination. This is no longer mere virtuosity, but a musical image of a complete psychological process, in which the ruler sublimates inner struggle into an outward declaration.

Bar 98

²²⁵ Stewart Cramer, *Comprimario Tenor Repertoire: An Alternative Approach to Teaching the Developing Operatic Tenor*, *rozprawa doktorska* (Doctor of Arts), University of Northern Colorado, 2021, s. 33–36

²²⁶ Heinrich Christoph Koch, *Versuch einer Anleitung zur Composition*, t. II, Leipzig: Böhme, 1787, s. 279–281



Bar 99-101



Bar 102-104



Bar 105



In the author's view, the specificity of this coloratura passage lies in the fact that Mozart compresses, within eight bars, two of the most contradictory elements of tenor technique: the static control of a long note and the dynamic agility of scale passages, transforming them into a dramatic metamorphosis. Within a single breathing cycle, the singer must execute a threefold change of performance mode: from a solemn long tone grounded in stable diaphragmatic support, through a quiet, descending scale passage requiring precise, light glottal contact, and, after replenishing the breath in the rests, immediately launch a continuous, ascending sprint that demands an expansion of the pharyngeal space and modification of the vowels.

This chain of "stabilization, decay, accumulation, explosion," through the vivid contrasts of vocal technique, ennobles the principle of contrasting continuity and breath cut-offs emphasized in

227 W. A. Mozart, *La clemenza di Tito*, Klavierauszug, Bärenreiter, 2001, s. 261.

228 *Ibid.*

229 *Ibid.*, p. 262.

230 *Ibid.*

GORGHEGGI SCALE PASSAGES ASCENDING AND DESCENDING, embodying the monarch's will in the very substance of the voice. Ultimately, on the path toward the pitch B (B ♮), chest and head resonance are fused, and technique itself becomes a dramatic vehicle of the character's transformation, from rational reflection to the declaration of decision.

TRILL

The trill appears in bars 51 and 114, and its structural function extends beyond mere ornamentation. Placed at key formal nodes. At the close of the presentational section (the exposition) and at its corresponding point in the recapitulation. Each time set on the word “*altro*” (“other”). It functions as a musical punctuation mark of Tito's inner resolutions. The resolution following the TRILL marks the definitive grounding of the monarch's will and becomes a signal of the character's transition from hesitation to decision.

Bar 51



Bar 114



In accordance with the principles of **gorgheggi** training (trills), the trills on the word “*altro*” in bars 51 and 114 of Tito's aria display a clear technical specificity. The tenor must produce even glottal impulses and shape precise pitch oscillations through micro-vibrations of the diaphragm with a relaxed larynx, so as to achieve a stable and clearly defined effect at both structurally corresponding points²³³. The trill should begin on the weak part of the bar and develop gradually, with increasing intensity, reflecting the weighing of a decision, and, after its resolution, decisiveness. This device involves the same word placed at symmetrical points, yet on different pitch levels. Through precise breath control and coordinated glottal function, it elevates basic vocal technique to

²³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 257.

²³² *Ibid.*, p. 262.

²³³ Eric Laine, “Vocal Trills: 18th-Century Performance Practice Considerations Viewed Through the Lens of 19th-Century Methods,” *Journal of Singing* 80/5 (May–June 2024): 519–531, DOI: 10.53830/sing.00040

the level of high musical rhetoric, revealing the monarch's transformation from hesitation to decision.

COMBINED GRUPETTOS (WITH A SLIGHT MODIFICATION WITHIN THE GROUP)

In Tito's aria, COMBINED GRUPETTOS (WITH A SLIGHT MODIFICATION WITHIN THE GROUP) appear twice. Their first occurrence falls in bars 42 to 44. As the first coloratura in the entire work, they create, through subtle modifications of individual notes within continuous groups, for example a delicate adjustment of the pitch material in bar 43, an unstable sonic effect on the word "date" ("grant"), symbolizing the monarch's inner trembling at the threshold of decision.

Bar 42



Bar 43-44



At the culmination of bars 104 to 105, dense successions of seconds form complex sound groups at the micro level. These interweaving semitonal voice leadings, set within the broad frame of a scale passage, build a subtle impression of circulation. Small changes in the structure of these groups correspond perfectly to the character's full dramatic profile, from macro-level decision to micro-level psychological hesitation.

GORGHEGGI COMBINED GRUPETTOS (WITH A SLIGHT MODIFICATION WITHIN THE GROUP) serve to fill the interval of a third through stepwise motion. Once this principle has been mastered, moving from seconds to leaps of a fourth and a fifth also becomes beneficial. For example, in bars 42 to 44 of Tito's aria, the tenor, within a structure based primarily on stepwise passages, must precisely control sudden leaps of a fourth and a fifth, for instance in bar 44. These

²³⁴ W. A. Mozart, *La clemenza di Tito*, Klavierauszug, Bärenreiter, 2001, s. 257.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*

brief intervals crossing the *passaggio* zone require that, with a stable laryngeal position, the tension of the vocal folds and the resonance be rapidly adjusted so as to smoothly connect the registers.

Such a technique of alternately responding to stepwise motion and leaps within dense sound groups not only fulfills the requirement of meticulous control of seconds inherent in GORGHEGGI COMBINED GRUPETTOS (WITH A SLIGHT MODIFICATION WITHIN THE GROUP), but also, through immediate register shifts²³⁶ translates the monarch's subtle and complex psychological fluctuations into a concrete vocal drama.

Conclusion:

The analysis of Tito's aria *Se all'impero, amici Dei* confirms that Mozart does not employ vocal elements in a schematic or purely mechanical manner. Even when working with figures such as LONG NOTES, SCALE PASSAGES, TRILLS, or COMBINED GRUPETTOS, he endows them with an individual, dramatic expression tailored to the character. In contrast to vocal exercises, which develop the general efficiency of the vocal apparatus, the composer uses these figures as a musical equivalent of the monarch's thought process. Long notes become signs of authority or contemplation, scale passages depict inner struggle and decision-making, while trills and sound groups with subtle internal modifications reflect delicate hesitation and emotional trembling. In this way, vocal technique, rather than serving virtuosity alone, becomes a vehicle for dramatic content, creating a complex and poetic portrait of a ruler at moments of his deepest inner conflict.

3.2 Comic roles

3.2.1 Belmonte's Aria "Konstanze, Konstanze, o wie ängstlich" from the opera Die Entführung aus dem Serail (K. 384)

The aria portrays Belmonte's complex inner world. On the one hand he is excited, while on the other he feels fear. He wonders whether Konstanze still loves him, and his emotions are highly intricate and filled with hope. The brief recitative-like introduction moves from a tender invocation to a somewhat impatient tone, and then breaks off abruptly, reflecting Belmonte's sudden emotional shift. The entire aria paints a picture of his urgent yet powerless, conflicted feelings, while the recurring coloraturas reveal his inner contradictions²³⁷.

²³⁶ Matthias Echternach, Louisa Traser, Bernhard Richter, "Vocal Tract Configurations in Tenors' *Passaggio* in Different Vowel Conditions: A Real-Time Magnetic Resonance Imaging Study", *Journal of Voice* 28, nr 2 (2014): 262.e1–262.e8, DOI: 10.1016/j.jvoice.2013.10.009.

²³⁷ Joshua Michael May, *The Rise of the Tenor Voice in the Late Eighteenth Century: Mozart's Opera and Concert Arias*, DMA diss., University of Connecticut, 2014, s. 19–20

Belmonte's Aria "*Konstanze, dich wiederzusehen / O wie ängstlich, o wie feurig*" (from the opera *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, K. 384)

Elements of Analysis	Analysis
Number of bars	113
Key	A major. Locally dominant and subdominant functions, brief minor inflections. Conclusion in A major.
Meter	4/4
Tempo	<i>Andante cantabile.</i> Locally <i>pìu mosso</i> / <i>animato</i> in coloratura passages, without a classical <i>stretta</i> .
Dynamics	Clearly variable (pp–f), with <i>sottovoce</i> passages and numerous <i>crescendo/diminuendo</i> .
Articulation	<i>Cantabile</i> with a predominance of legato. In coloratura passages more syllabic/portato articulation. Functional legato–staccato contrast.
Main coloratura figures	SIXTEENTH-NOTE TERTIAN GRUPETTOS: t. 15, 70 SIXTEENTH-NOTE STEPWISE GRUPETTOS ENDING WITH A QUARTER NOTE: t. 15, 70 SCALE PASSAGES ASCENDING AND DESCENDING: t. 19–20, 22–23, 88–89, 102–103 COMBINATION OF STEPWISE–TERTIAN GRUPETTOS WITH SCALE PASSAGEWORK: t. 16, 71 ENDING A RUNNING PASSAGE WITH A REST: t. 10, 29–30, 78–79
Form type	A – B – A' – Coda
With recitative or without	With a short introductory recitative (approx. bars 1–4)

German Text	English Text
Blemonte Konstanze! dich wieder zu sehen O wie ängstlich, o wie feurig Klopft mein liebevolles Herz! Und des Wiedersehens Zähre Lohnt der Trennung bangen Schmerz. Schon zitt'r ich und wanke, Schon zag' ich und schwanke, Es hebt sich die schwellende Brust: Ist das ihr Lispeln? Es wird mir so bange; War das ihr Seufzen? Es glüht mir die Wange; Täuscht mich die Liebe, war es ein Traum?	Belmonte Konstanze, Konstanze, to see you again, you! Oh, how anxiously, how fervently my loving heart beats! And the tear of reunion rewards the torment of fearful separation. Already I tremble and waver, already I quail and hesitate; my breast swells with emotion. Is that her whisper? I grow so uneasy. Is that her sigh? My face burns. Is love deceiving me? Was it only a dream?

Recitative

In the recitative introduction to this aria, bars 1 to 4, Mozart, using a highly condensed musical language, lays the foundation for the emotional tone of the entire work, combining hesitation and longing. For the performer, this recitative is the key to entering the role. The two exclamations “Konstanze!” require precise control of breath and vocal timbre²³⁸. The first should be carried on a full, continuous breath, with a clear, yearning sound. The second, rising by a fourth in sequence, should sound stronger, with a deliberate touch of tension and tremor in the timbre, in order to reveal the feverish uncertainty behind the intensified intonation.

In the course of performance, the singer should sense the dialogue between the vocal line and the accompaniment, like a search for an echo in silence, and bring the inner self-dialogue outward. At the same time, the harmonic deviations demand that one not rest on the beauty of the vocal line alone, but work in close cooperation with the accompaniment, using subtle rubato and a deliberately slightly “floating” intonation to co-create a state of suspension. Unease and agitation.

This recitative is not merely an emotional preface. It also constitutes a condensed test for the singer. It examines the strength of dramatic expression, breath control, and musical communication

²³⁸ Mary Cyr, „Declamation and Expressive Singing in Recitative”, w: Opera and Vivaldi, red. Michael Collins, Elise K. Kirk, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984, s. 233–257.

with the partners. In this way, it prepares the performer both physiologically and psychologically for the full outburst of the aria that follows²³⁹.

Bar1-4

Nr. 4. ARIE

Rezit.
BELMONTE

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SIXTEENTH-NOTE TERTIAN GRUPETTOS



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In the process of vocal training, an indispensable stage is the mechanical consolidation of basic figures, which corresponds to systematic gym workouts that guarantee the maintenance of form. However, in performance practice, in direct confrontation with the score, these isolated elements undergo a profound transformation. The composer combines individual, well-trained technical “building blocks” into complex and unique sequences, thereby generating an almost unlimited variety of articulatory, dynamic, and breath- and tension-management challenges. The key aspect that gives meaning to these complexities is their interpretative function, which draws directly from the content of the text. It is precisely the semantics and prosody of the words that determine how a given figure should sound, each time endowing it with a new, specific significance that goes far beyond its purely technical, exercise-based dimension.

In Belmonte’s aria “*O wie ängstlich*,” SIXTEENTH-NOTE TERTIAN GRUPETTOS appear twice. In bar 15 and in its repetition, bar 70. These figurations, carried in a narrow, meandering motion of seconds and thirds with repetitions, vividly imitate the slightly trembling beats of the heart and the quickened breath caused by emotional agitation. When the text reaches the word “*liebevoll*es,” this intricate pattern sonically renders the semantics of “full of love.” That almost

²³⁹ Stewart Cramer, *Comprimario Tenor Repertoire: An Alternative Approach to Teaching the Developing Operatic Tenor* (University of Northern Colorado, 2021), s. 135–136

²⁴⁰ Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*. Singspiel in drei Aufzügen, Klavierauszug nach dem Autograph von Kurt Soldan, Frankfurt–Leipzig–London–New York: C. F. Peters, b.r.w., s. 37.

²⁴¹ Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno...*, s. 161.

overflowing tenderness and inner stirring. Transforming a technical scale-based figure into a living image of the protagonist's inner world.

Bar15



Another type of exercise involves groups of four sixteenth notes, connected by a phrasing slur, forming a figure based on tertian–stepwise motion. The basis of its construction, as in the previous drills, is a diatonic scale progression that establishes a clear intervallic scheme. The singer's primary task in this context is to develop precise control of the exhaled airstream, which must be perfectly synchronized with the given rhythm. The key skill cultivated by this exercise is the smooth adaptation of air pressure and respiratory muscle activity to the constantly changing pitch. In this way, the vocalist learns not only the mechanical reproduction of figures, but also the maintenance of a homogeneous tone and stable intonation within dynamic, though relatively small, melodic leaps, forming the foundation for the later artistic realization of ornaments in repertoire.²⁴³



In bar 15, the singer may apply even, finely dosed pressure, so that each thirty-second note springs out resiliently, while the sound remains bright and transparent rather than heavy. At the same time, within the extremely short note values, the consonant “v” (phonetically [f]) must be clearly activated and the purity of the vowel preserved²⁴⁵. This requires maximum responsiveness of the articulatory organs and the avoidance of tension in the oral cavity that could disrupt the flow

²⁴² W. A. Mozart, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Klavierauszug, C. F. Peters, b.r.w., s. 37.

²⁴³ Rozlach, *Metodo pratico di canto moderno...*, s. 57.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁵ William Odom, Benno Schollum, Christina Balsam Curren, *German for Singers: A Textbook of Diction and Phonetics*, 3rd ed., San Diego: Plural Publishing, 2025, rozdz. 16 „The Sounds of w, v, f”, §2 „v”.

of sound. At this point, seconds and thirds cease to be a mechanical exercise and become a micro-image of turbulent affect. For this reason, precise control of breath and diction is crucial here.

SIXTEENTH-NOTE STEPWISE GRUPETTOS ENDING WITH A QUARTER NOTE

Earlier, in Chapter Two, in connection with the cavatina from **Otello**, I mentioned SIXTEENTH-NOTE STEPWISE GRUPETTOS ENDING WITH A QUARTER NOTE. Here, once again, the reference is to bar 15 and its repetition, bar 70. Although the ending does not take the form of a quarter note, in this coloratura the eighth note fulfills a similar function. It creates a moment of suspension that accumulates tension before the eruption of the subsequent rapid figures. In this way, a refined balance between motion and stillness is achieved.

In bar 15, the first eighth note functions as a respiratory point of support, preparing a stable onset for the dense figures that follow. The second eighth note serves as the closing tone of the preceding group of rapid notes. When performing such a phrase, the tenor should employ a soft onset, initiating the vibration of the vocal folds while avoiding an overly forceful glottal attack.

SCALE PASSAGES ASCENDING AND DESCENDING

In Belmonte's aria, there are four passages of a scale-like character that display refined dramatic expression. For example, in bars 19 to 20 and 22 to 23, the upward and downward motion employs the subtle tension of ascending minor seconds and the natural release of descending major seconds, vividly conveying the complex emotional state of reunion. Simultaneous joy and pain.

Bar 19-20



Bar 22-23



²⁴⁶ W. A. Mozart, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Klavierauszug, C. F. Peters, b.r.w., s. 37.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

In bars 88 to 89 and in their repetition, bars 102 to 103, the bright timbre of the ascending major third and the repetitive pattern in the descending stepwise passage deftly imitate the rhythmic pulse of excitement.

Bar 88-89



Through subtle modifications of the intervallic structure within these scale passages, Mozart transforms mechanical exercise figures into a precise projection of the character’s inner world, making technical scale runs a key vehicle of dramatic tension.

With regard to several instances of SCALE PASSAGES ASCENDING AND DESCENDING in this aria, specifically in bars 19 to 20, 22 to 23, and 88 to 89, the technical specificity lies in executing, near the first passaggio (approximately e’-f#’), an instantaneous switch from “ascending legato with a landing on a long note” to “descending selective articulation,” all without compromising the uniformity of onset or timbre.

Specifically, in the ascending section one should, within appoggio, maintain a constant air-flow, apply a light copertura, and make subtle vowel modifications. The entry should occur on the weak part of the bar, and the long value at the apex should be treated as a “culmination,” while avoiding any elevation of the larynx. In the descending section, the sixteenth-note groups within the slur should be realized as micro-staccato: a clear onset and a focused concentration of breath serve to calibrate intonation, preventing downward sliding and the loss of correct pitch. German consonants ([d], [t], [z], [s], etc.) should be articulated in advance, so that the vowel carries the pitch²⁴⁹. Rests should be treated as points of support and reset, not as moments of relaxation or collapse. Such an approach accords with the practice paradigm “ascending legato, descending selectively” and allows the tenor, in the passaggio zone, to maintain a bright, unified vocal line as well as clear German diction.

COMBINING STEPWISE–TERTIAN GRUPETTOS WITH SCALE PASSAGEWORK

In Belmonte’s aria, in bar 16 and its repetition in bar 71, Mozart’s technique of combining a scale passage with an interval has a clear structural function. The configuration of an ascending leap

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

²⁴⁹ Valentin Lanzrein, Richard Cross, *The Singer’s Guide to German Diction*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2018. Supplementary material on the publisher’s website, section “Initial Consonant Anticipation.” URL: https://global.oup.com/us/companion_websites/9780190238414/resources/diction/consonants/initial/ (accessed: 5 November 2025).

of a perfect fourth, immediately followed by a descending scale passage, creates within the work's structure a complete module of "leap-filling." The quartal leap itself produces an immediate increase in tension.

Bar 16



With regard to bar 16, the specificity of the tenor part manifests itself in two respects:

- (1) A leap of a perfect fourth occurs here, crossing the first passaggio up to F#. At the moment of the leap, a subtle shift of timbre from "bright" to "lightly covered" should be executed. With stable appoggio, an even airflow must be maintained, the vowel should be narrowed in advance (by slightly protruding the lips, gently raising the tongue, and lifting the soft palate), and on F# a gentle copertura should be applied, touching the apex lightly, without pressing the larynx²⁵¹.
- (2) The gruppettos and the stepwise passage that follows must be bound together by a single breath. The inner sixteenth notes should be carried primarily in legato, and the neighboring tones preceding the leap of a fourth, the second and the third, should be treated merely as ornamental touches, without accent and without slowing the pulse.

ENDING A RUNNING PASSAGE WITH A REST

In this aria, Mozart employs ENDING A RUNNING PASSAGE WITH A REST as an exceptionally subtle sign of rhetorical punctuation. A short run suddenly breaks off when the meaning reaches the semantic center of "tenderness" (bar 10 and in other repeated passages). The rest, like a heartbeat that does not follow, suspends this gentleness in the air and causes the listener to almost hold their breath.

Bar 10

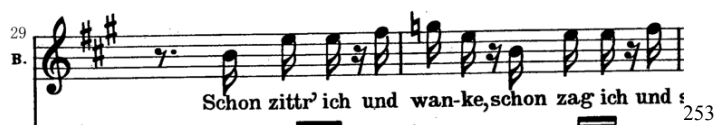
²⁵⁰ W. A. Mozart, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Klavierauszug, C. F. Peters, b.r.w., s. 37.

²⁵¹ Kenneth W. Bozeman, „The Role of the First Formant in Training the Male Singing Voice”, *Journal of Singing* 66, nr 3 (styczeń-luty 2010), s. 291–297, URL: https://faculty.lawrence.edu/bozeman/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2014/03/Bozeman_JOS-2010_Jan-Feb-.pdf (dostęp: 5 XI 2025).



In bars 29 to 30, the meaning of the phrase “*Schon zitr’ ich und wanke*” (“I already tremble and waver”) is emphasized precisely through the use of rests.

Bar 29-30



In bars 78 to 79 and in other repeated passages, when the image of “unease and burning cheeks” appears, the same technique is transformed into a pulse of “acceleration–pause.” The rapid figures carry a rise in emotional temperature, and the rest that follows, like the alternation of the strong part of the bar with an “empty” one, silence, intensifies unease and anticipation in a fleeting moment of stillness.

Bar 78-79



The recurring run–rest pattern constitutes Belmonte’s inner monologue, like a dialogue of questions and answers between the “self” and the imagined beloved. Each rest both closes a sentence and yields space to the next, shaping a “punctuational” heartbeat and a gentle emotional pulse. In Mozart’s comic idiom, ENDING A RUNNING PASSAGE WITH A REST is not “emptiness,” but an integral part of rhetorical form. The composer often prescribes, within a sixteenth-note rest, a

²⁵² W. A. Mozart, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Klavierauszug, C. F. Peters, b.r.w., s. 37.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

precise “place” for breath and reset. A breath taken exactly within notated time. In accordance with the principle: repeat the passing tone and, without ornamentation, settle it on a perfect consonance, a fifth or an octave.

With regard to this aria:

Bar 10. After a minor second there is an immediate rest. This requires the pitch to be set and the vowel to be formed before the rest. The rest itself serves only for a micro-inhalation and the recovery of the point of support, so that the return does not slide intonationally on the minor second.

Bars 29 to 30. Near F#/G, the passaggio zone, the rest is integrated with the surrounding notes. During the rest, the tenor should apply a light *copertura* and reposition the larynx, maintaining a focused airflow and a soft onset on the weak part of the bar. One should avoid raising the larynx on the strong part of the bar and any abrupt change of timbre.

Bars 78 to 79. In the case of a leap of a sixth with a rest in the middle, the rest should be treated as a “hinge.” The first half should be carried through with a continuous breath, transferring the energy of the leap into the rest. During the rest, the oral setup and resonance are reset. After the rest, one should “land” lightly, brightly, and cleanly with the next onset.

General principles. Breathe strictly within notated time, enter on the weak part of the bar, with a light closure on the strong beat. Ascending motion should preserve continuity and covering, while descending motion should employ more differentiated articulation for intonational clarity. The rest serves for instantaneous calibration of breath and resonance, ensuring that even in the passaggio zone Mozartian brightness, proportion, and elasticity are maintained²⁵⁵.

Conclusion:

At first glance, it may appear that only a small number of basic figures are used in the artistic passages of Belmonte’s aria. A detailed analysis, however, reveals that within this relatively short section the composer employs five fundamental coloratura techniques. This apparent restraint is in fact a distillation and condensation of expressive means.

Once we recognize that these perfectly trained technical patterns can be endowed with a precise and expressive artistic form. For example, by transforming a mechanical scale passage into a carrier of dramatic tension. It becomes clear what constitutes the key to sustaining a high level of interpretation in this aria. All of the elements discussed above form a fundamental core that not only enables virtuosic execution, but also conveys the complex layers of Belmonte’s emotional world.

²⁵⁵ Stewart Cramer, *Comprimario Tenor Repertoire: An Alternative Approach to Teaching the Developing Operatic Tenor* (Doctor of Arts diss., University of Northern Colorado, 2021), rozdz. III “Consideration 3: Breath Management”, s. 77–93; “Consideration 5: Agility”, s. 103–112

3.2.2 Analysis of Belmonte's Aria "*Ich baue ganz auf deine Stärke*" from the opera *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (K. 384)

The aria appears at the beginning of Act III, where the tenor Belmonte implores for the strength of love. He is moved and inspired by it, and his heart grows in strength. The aria does not employ a highly complex libretto, but its brief words are repeated in different melodies, expressing different emotions. The same texts are also used to contrast various types of melodic writing²⁵⁶. In contrast to the aria "*Konstanze, Konstanze,*" which I previously selected for analysis, this operatic aria is characterized by inner unrest and disorientation, followed by gradually emerging determination. The corresponding coloratura passages are complex, and the various types of coloratura and melodic writing in this aria suggest that Belmonte's emotions steadily gain firmness. Although the aria forms part of a comic context, the character retains a sense of delicacy, while the superimposition of melodies and rhythms creates dramatic tension. More than anything else, Belmonte's tenor role reveals his determination to rescue Konstanze.

Aria "*Ich baue ganz auf deine Stärke*" (from the opera *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, K. 384)

Elements of Analysis	Analysis
Number of bars	164
Key	E-flat major
Meter	4/4
Overall dynamics	mp-p-mf
Articulation	Section I a greater number of short note values and pointillistic contrasts, with occasional staccato Section II predominance of legato. Section III legato as the foundation, with a return to the pointillistic contrasts from Section I.

²⁵⁶ Thomas Bauman, *W. A. Mozart: Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (Cambridge Opera Handbooks), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987, rozdz. 5, s. 75–82.

Main Coloratura Figures	LONG NOTES: 21, 22, 23, 25, 28, 30, 31, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 44, 51, 52, 55, 56, 62, 87, 88, 89, 90, 94–97, 99, 100, 101, 103, 106, 108, 109, 113, 116, 117, 118, 119, 141, 142, 145, 148–149, 151, 157; EIGHTH-NOTE TRIPLETS: 153–154; PASSAGEWORK RUNS: 153–154; SCALE PASSAGES ASCENDING AND DESCENDING: 61–62, 123–124, 126–127, 156; ENDING A RUNNING PASSAGE WITH A REST: 121, 125, 129–132
Form	A – B – A' – Coda
Recitative	bez recytatywu

Aria text:

German Text	English Text
Blemonte Ich baue ganz auf deine Stärke, Vertrau', o Liebe, deiner Macht, Denn ach! Was wurden nicht für Werke Schon oft durch dich zu Stand' gebracht, Was aller Welt unmöglich scheint, Wird durch die Liebe doch vereint.	Belmonte I place my complete trust in your strength, I trust, O Love, in your power. For ah, how many deeds have so often been brought to fulfillment through you. What appears to the whole world to be impossible, love is nevertheless able to unite.

LONG NOTES

Although this is a comic aria, it in fact expresses elevated feelings. In arias of this type, Mozart masterfully draws exceptionally beautiful, expansive melodic lines that themselves require ample breathing space in order to unfold. LONG NOTES are an organic part of these extended phrases and an important source of their emotional tension. The composer fills them with subtle harmonic changes, so that they do not become monotonous but instead pulse with inner energy. In this aria there are as many as 42 LONG NOTES. The author once again selects for analysis those examples that are most representative.

In Belmonte's aria, at the beginning, in bars 21 to 23, Mozart immobilizes the first sentence through three successive long notes, arranged according to the order "action, degree, object."

In bar 21, the long note on "Ich" ("I") is the most crucial. Like the first "acoustic pillar" of the entire piece, it stabilizes the declarative tone and the syntactic-metrical pulse, giving the whole utterance its stance. In bar 22, the prolongation of the word "ganz" clearly amplifies the semantics of "fully" or "entirely" and, in perception, divides the sentence into a tripartite structure, preparing what follows. In bar 23, the suspension on "dei-" brings the object of reliance to the foreground and fulfills a binding function.

These three long notes translate the logic of the text into "audible time," and the first of them, by simultaneously establishing tone and stance, becomes a point of reference for the later placement and function of long note values.²⁵⁷

Powtórzenie tego zabiegu pojawia się w taktach 99-101.

takt 21-23



In bar 30, the long note on "Lie-be" isolates the key word "love," creating an intra-sentential suspension and emphatic emphasis. It carries the effect of a "proclamation of love," functioning as a signal point of culmination within the two-sentence structure of the first period and unequivocally directing attention toward the object. Love itself.

Bar 30



In bars 51 to 52 and in their repetition, bars 55 to 56, the long notes arrest the phrase "wird durch die Liebe," allowing the key word "Liebe" to resonate clearly. Its renewed utterance serves a

²⁵⁷ Ulrich Konrad, "On the 'Versions' of W. A. Mozart's *Abduction from the Seraglio* K. 384," *Music Research Institute, Hanyang University*, no. 21 (2007), pp. 129–152, esp. pp. 145–148 (analysis of Aria No. 17 with references to mm. 21–32 and 79–90).

²⁵⁸ W. A. Mozart, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Klavierauszug, C. F. Peters, b.r.w., s. 134.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

function of confirmation and reinforcement. These two identical long notes also mark a clear caesura between sentences and between the parts of the period, constituting an unambiguous preparation for the entry into the next coloratura section.

Bar 51-52



Bar 64 constitutes the “arrest” of this coloratura section. The continuous run here converges into a single sustained note on the word “doch,” immobilizing the preceding passage. This long note highlights the meaning of the adversative conjunction (“and yet” or “nevertheless”), like a comma in a sentence. It marks closure and clearly signals to the listener that the coloratura has come to an end.

Bar 64



In bars 87, 89, and 91, three successive long notes on the words “aller” (“the entire”), “Welt” (“world”), and “durch” (“through”), shaped by a precise stepwise ascent in seconds (F–G–A), create an exceptionally persuasive musical rhetoric. These figures go beyond the framework of ordinary melodic writing and become profound dramatic signs. They transform the very preposition “durch” into a visualized gesture of action, making the listener almost “see” Belmonte as he, step by step and unshakably, through the power of love, overcomes every obstacle and ascends to the summit of his inner conviction. In this way, they perfectly ennoble the transition from purely musical means to dramatic meaning.

Bar 87

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 135.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 136.



Bar 89



Bar 91



At the end of the development section, in bars 94 to 98, Mozart writes a four-bar, extremely tense long note on the dominant. This extraordinary suspension of the voice on the dominant function and the delay of resolution build expectation and, dramaturgically, go far beyond ordinary phrase connection, creating a moment of profound psychological suspension and accumulation of affect. After the turbulent culmination, the music does not resolve immediately, but almost immobilizes time.

This prolonged suspension on the word “vereint” (“unites”) symbolizes the deep calm and absolute certainty that Belmonte finds in the power of love, as if holding his breath, inwardly affirming this conviction at the deepest level, and entering the forthcoming, triumphantly shaped recapitulation in this state.

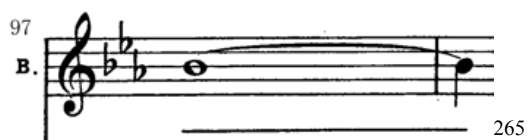
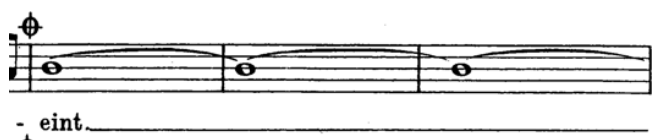
A repetition of this device appears in bars 148 to 149.

Bar 94-98

²⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 137.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*



Mozart uses long notes in this aria as a “time of utterance.” There are many of them, and they often enter on the weak part of the bar and close lightly on the strong beat. In this work, bars 30 and 55 to 56 lie precisely in the vicinity of the *passaggio* and constitute a threshold belonging to the spoken register. The vowel should be unified in advance, the airstream slightly narrowed, and a bright resonance maintained²⁶⁶, so as to pass smoothly from the middle register upward. The end of the long value should be closed softly, yielding space to the subsequent passages. Bars 87, 89, and 91 function as the “steps” of a small climax. Three successive upward degrees. The sound should grow and become ennobled, without added weight, while preserving textual clarity and a transparent vocal line to achieve balance. Bars 94 to 98 bring an extraordinarily long suspension. This is a touchstone of breath and control. One may apply a subtle *messa di voce* here, constantly maintaining a stable point of support and an even airflow, so that the “structure” remains alive rather than collapsing. After the triplets in bars 153 to 154, it is necessary to return immediately to lightness in order to bind the cadence together.

In summary, the Mozartian long note in comedy is not an addition to virtuosity, but a crucial “time of speech and structure.”

EIGHTH-NOTE TRIPLETS

EIGHTH-NOTE TRIPLETS appear only once, in bars 153 to 154, and fulfill a refined dramatic function²⁶⁷. The highest note of the entire aria, B $\flat$, returns, and the ascending arpeggios in triplets function here as a “transducer of affects.” They transform the calm introduced by the earlier sections with long note values into motion filled with excitement and uplift, yet without any loss of majesty. This regular rhythmic pattern lends the music an inner elegance and composure, as if Belmonte’s hymn in praise of love were reaching its summit and the inner state were being translated into an audible, measured motion.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁶ Matthias Echternach, Fabian Burk, Marie Köberlein, Christian T. Herbst, Michael Döllinger, Michael Burdumy, Bernhard Richter, „Oscillatory Characteristics of the Vocal Folds Across the Tenor *Passaggio*”, *Journal of Voice* 31, nr 3 (2017): 381.e5–381.e14, DOI: 10.1016/j.jvoice.2016.06.015;

²⁶⁷ Peter Pesic, „The Horn of Enlightenment: Mozart’s Operatic Use of the Clarinet”, *Cambridge Opera Journal*, FirstView (2024), DOI: 10.1017/S0954586724000028

By this device, without disturbing the underlying metric pulse, Mozart creates a gentle, quasi-rubato transition, through which the triplets rise from a simple exercise figure to a natural emanation of the character's spiritual state.

Bar 153–154



In the process of learning GORGHEGGI EIGHTH-NOTE TRIPLETS, it is not sufficient to master the evenness of the triplets alone. In bars 153 to 154, the continuous triplet eighth notes stretch the ending “-eint” into a “flowing time.” The chain-like pattern rises all the way to the high B ♭. For the tenor, it is crucial to treat the entire passage as a single, timbrally unified breath line, with a unified vowel, a relaxed tongue and jaw²⁶⁹. Without forcefully accenting the strong part of the bar, one should glide evenly, as in an exercise, so that muscular tension during the ascent is activated gradually, yet without stiffening the vocal apparatus. The high B ♭ should not be a “hard climax,” but rather lightly touched and immediately released. Attention and energy should be preserved for the following long note, which confirms and “summarizes” the sentence.

SCALE PASSAGES ASCENDING AND DESCENDING

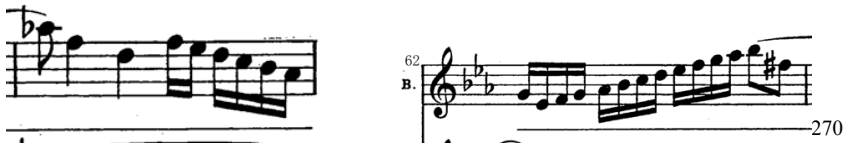
SCALE PASSAGES ASCENDING AND DESCENDING appear four times.

In bars 61 to 62, the stepwise passage, through its fluid motion, softens the strong textual accents, adding gentleness to Belmonte's tenor character. Literal emphasis is avoided, and an impression of lightness is brought to the fore.

Bar 61–62

²⁶⁸ W. A. Mozart, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Klavierauszug, C. F. Peters, b.r.w., s. 140.

²⁶⁹ Pier Francesco Tosi, *Observations on the Florid Song; or, Sentiments on the Ancient and Modern Singers*, tłum. J. E. Galliard, London: J. Wilcox, 1743 (repr. 1905), s. 74–75 (o równej artykulacji nut w Divisions) oraz s. 79 (o zakazie „znaczenia” koloratury językiem/podbródkiem i o równości czasu). [online] dostęp: 5 XI 2025, https://belcantobootcamp.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Observations_on_the_Florid_Song_Or_Senti.pdf

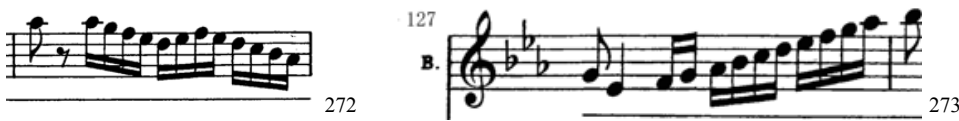


In bars 123 to 124 and 126 to 127, the stepwise passages resemble a “repetition in a dialogue with oneself.” Through repetition and the directional shaping of the melodic movement, they build in Belmonte a subtle, light emotional interaction, consistent with the lively yet reflective lightness of Mozartian comedy.

Bar 123–124



Bar 126–127



In bar 156, a compact scale passage closes the coloratura section. The tension is gently released, without building a new climax, but with a closure that leaves a clear space for the aria’s finale.

Bar 156

²⁷⁰ W. A. Mozart, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Klavierauszug, C. F. Peters, b.r.w., s. 136.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

²⁷² *Ibid.*

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 139.



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With reference to the concept of “chain-like passages” in GORGHEGGI SCALE PASSAGES ASCENDING AND DESCENDING, the scale passages here may be treated as sectional exercises woven into sentences. In bars 61 to 62, the initial descent first “shifts” the center of gravity, cools the breath and the affect, and then an even progression lifts the beginning of the phrase. In bars 123 to 124, two successive ascents form an “opening—confirmation,” with the second, without added weight, merely stabilizing the momentum. Next, in bars 126 to 127, there is first a general descent as a restraint of emotion, followed by an ascent that directs attention toward the ensuing suspension. Finally, in bar 156, a short scale figure gently releases tension and rounds off the closure.

The specificity of Mozartian comedy lies in the fact that stepwise passages here serve primarily to connect and soften, while the true “time of speech and structure” is carried by the successive long notes.

PASSAGEWORK RUNS

Bars 153 to 154 are not only EIGHTH-NOTE TRIPLETS, but also PASSAGEWORK RUNS. They have already been discussed in the section devoted to EIGHTH-NOTE TRIPLETS.

ENDING A RUNNING PASSAGE WITH A REST

In this aria, ENDING A RUNNING PASSAGE WITH A REST occurs four times. In bar 121 and in its repetition, bar 125, the sudden rest following a rapid run acquires deep dramatic significance. These carefully planned suspensions are not merely places to breathe, but important punctuation marks of the inner monologue, building expectation, like a brief silence just before the arrival of certainty or conviction. By contrast, in bars 129 to 132 we find numerous rests in an alternating “breath—continuation” pattern. They subtly trace the trembling rhythm of Belmonte’s inner state as he speaks of the “miracle of love.” In this way, Mozart ensures that each rest becomes a crucial bridge between rational declaration and emotional outburst²⁷⁵.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

²⁷⁵ David Huron, *Sweet Anticipation: Music and the Psychology of Expectation*, Cambridge (MA): MIT Press, 2006. URL: [https://mitpress.mit.edu/9780262582780/sweet-anticipation/\(dostep: 5 XI 2025\)](https://mitpress.mit.edu/9780262582780/sweet-anticipation/(dostep: 5 XI 2025)).

Bar 121



Bar 129-132



In accordance with the concept discussed earlier, Mozart inscribes “breath” into the musical notation itself. Immediately after a run, a short rest appears, which enforces breathing and a “reset” within musical time, rather than according to the performer’s subjective will.

In this work, bar 121 represents the model “rapid run → sudden stop.” The tenor must, in an instant, gather the breath, set the vocal apparatus, and take up the phrase anew. The rest functions like a comma: it orders the sentence and stabilizes the mechanics. Bars 129 to 132 shape such micro-units in layers. The ambitus ascends, and after each rest one must immediately restart at a higher level. The difficulty lies in executing a micro-inhalation despite the short rest without disturbing the meter, resuming the sound with a unified vowel, a clean and soft onset, and a “narrow yet stable” airflow, without constricting the vocal apparatus.

An element frequently employed in Mozartian comedy is the coexistence of rests and coloratura. These “run + rest” configurations are not displays of virtuosity, but serve to give meaning to words and affects, making finesse and proportion audible. The singer must treat the rest and the group as a single unit: a small inhalation, rapid repositioning, and light opening. Attention should then be carried into the ensuing phrase and the long note that confirms and fixes the meaning²⁷⁸.

Conclusion

Belmonte’s aria *Ich baue ganz auf deine Stärke* from the opera *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (K. 384) reveals that Mozart’s vocal technique in comedy serves not merely virtuosity, but above all the dramaturgy of the character’s emotions.

²⁷⁶ W. A. Mozart, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Klavierauszug, C. F. Peters, b.r.w., s. 138.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

²⁷⁸ Richard Miller, *Solutions for Singers: Tools for Performers and Teachers*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2004, s. 159–163

Long notes, for example in bars 21–23 and 94–98, although numerous (42 in total), function as a “time of speech and structure.” Mozart enforces a precise rhetorical pattern of “soft entry – culmination – gentle closure,” demanding controlled breath and vowel purity even in challenging registers, in order to shape the dynamics of Belmonte’s psychological transitions, from unrest to calm.

Figures such as eighth-note triplets, bars 153–154, or scale passages, for example bars 61–62 and 123–124, are not mechanical exercises, but rather “structures that reveal affects.” They require from the tenor evenness, lightness, and timbral coherence in order to translate the character’s inner states into elegant, flowing musical utterances.

The constructions “running passage plus rest,” for example bars 121 and 129–132, are crucial to the punctuation of the inner monologue. Rests are not merely places to breathe, but elements of dramaturgy that build expectation and reflect Belmonte’s emotional hesitation. The tenor must skillfully connect rapid passages with controlled inhalations, without losing the sense of meter.

In summary, the difficulty of this aria lies in adapting technique to a subtle rhetoric of emotion. Mozart demands from the tenor complete control of breath, vocal color, and articulation, so that every element becomes an organic part of the character’s “musical speech,” demonstrating the composer’s genius in transforming technical challenges into profound artistic expression within the realm of comedy.

Chapter 4. Comparison of the Performance Specificities of Dramatic and Comic Coloratura Passages in the Operas of Mozart and Rossini. An Analysis of Similarities and Differences

4.1 Comparison of the Cultural Contexts of Mozart's and Rossini's Creative Output

Mozart lived in Europe in the second half of the eighteenth century, in the period known as the “Age of Enlightenment.” Enlightenment thought emphasized the power of reason, science, and human progress, ideas that found full expression in Mozart's music. His oeuvre is permeated with reflection on human nature, freedom, and fraternity. Especially in his operas, Mozart engaged with social issues and the human emotions associated with them. From a compositional perspective, the style of his works is rooted in the ornamentation of Classicism, and his operas constitute a harmonious synthesis of Gluck's reformist concepts with Haydn's classical elegance, creating the distinctive style of the Viennese school²⁷⁹.

Rossini, by contrast, lived in early nineteenth-century Italy, at a time of independence movements, political tensions, and social changes that exerted a strong influence on his musical output. Although his oeuvre is predominantly comic or historical in character, Rossini's music reveals a clear interest in freedom and human rights. The deep-rooted tradition of Italian opera, focused on the beauty of melody and vocal virtuosity, formed the foundation of his style. Owing to his youthful creative maturity and his extraordinary speed of composition, Rossini earned the nickname “the Italian Mozart.” He studied Mozart's works and, to a certain extent, absorbed and further developed some of their stylistic features. During Rossini's period of activity, Romantic music was flourishing, yet the development of Italian opera itself was relatively slow. It was only through Rossini that it regained its former brilliance. One may say that whereas Mozart composed on the basis of his predecessors' achievements, Italian opera of the Romantic era became a unique paradigm created independently by Rossini. Donizetti, Bellini, as well as Puccini and Verdi, all built their operas upon the foundation laid by Rossini. Rossini not only breathed new life into Italian opera, but also provided invaluable creative models and inspiration for future generations of composers.

In the author's view, there are many similarities between Mozart and Rossini. Although they were separated by historical periods, their creative output shares numerous common features, especially from the perspective of singers. Both composers were extraordinarily gifted and led colorful lives, and the social changes they experienced in their respective countries profoundly shaped their

²⁷⁹ Gilles De Van, *L'opera italiana: La produzione, l'estetica, i capolavori*, Roma: Carocci, 2002, s. 94,

work. Their extensive travels contributed to the diversity of their compositions. Both Mozart and Rossini introduced innovations into opera. Mozart established compositional models in terms of musical structure, melodic invention, and emotional expression, while Rossini formulated the principles of a new stylistic language that exerted a tremendous influence on nineteenth-century operatic creation. Both were not only masters of the music of their own times, but, through their distinctive styles and innovative spirit, became pillars of the further development of operatic art.

4.2 Comparison of Dramatic Coloratura in the Works of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Gioachino Rossini (based on the material discussed in Chapters 2 and 3)

For a systematic identification of similarities and differences in the domain of dramatic coloratura in Mozart and Rossini, this subsection adopts as comparative material the excerpts discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, namely: in Rossini. *Tancredi* and *Otello*. In Mozart. *Idomeneo* and *La clemenza di Tito*. The four works cited meet three key criteria that provide a solid foundation for further analysis. First, all belong to the category of *opera seria*, displaying comparable levels of dramatic tension and a similar scale of affects, which limits the impact of thematic differences on the core comparison. Second, the selected numbers. arias and duets. are assigned to the tenor protagonists at pivotal moments. situations of intense emotional conflict or solemn proclamation. thus ensuring that the use of coloratura remains closely linked to dramaturgical requirements. Third, the indicated passages constitute representative examples of each composer's coloratura techniques, allowing their fundamental creative characteristics to be directly apprehended.

The central tenor roles in these four works. in Rossini: Argirio (*Tancredi*) and Otello (*Otello*). in Mozart: Idomeneo (*Idomeneo*) and Tito (*La clemenza di Tito*). although originating in different periods of opera and placing distinct technical demands on singers, exhibit a far-reaching commonality in terms of character function, emotional complexity, dramaturgy, modes of musical embodiment, and technical foundations. This further confirms the validity of the chosen excerpts. As characters with a heroic profile, all are burdened with a high level of responsibility and share the key attribute of "authority" (power and majesty). a trait fundamental both to the tenor's interpretation of these roles and to the content conveyed by the coloratura passages. At the same time, each character is permeated by a deep inner conflict. Argirio is torn between dynastic duty and personal feeling, Otello is entangled in a vortex of love, loyalty, and betrayal, Idomeneo suffers from the violation of a vow, and Tito faces a choice between friendship and the prerogatives of power.

On the dramaturgical plane, tension in all four cases intensifies through complex interweavings of conflict. Argirio builds dramatic weight through reconciliation with a former adversary and a shared resistance to an external threat. Otello, as a result of misunderstandings and intrigues, moves inexorably toward tragedy. Idomeneo's conflict is focused on the rupture between an oath and reality, while Tito creates his dramatic layer through the decision to forgive.

On the musical level, these arias concretize affects by means of expanded coloratura. Argirio, in *Se amistà verace, e pura*, manifests gravity and resolve. Otello, in *Ah sì, per voi già sento*, explosive passion. Idomeneo, in *Fuor del mar*, pain and anger. Tito, in *Se all'impero, amici Dei*, the tension between magnanimity and inner struggle. From a technical standpoint, all these roles require stable breath control, an even timbre, and precise shaping of the phrase. The singer must unite subtle affective work with a high level of technical proficiency in order to fully reveal the inner world of each character.

In summary, the selection of works that meet the stated criteria of commonality, together with a focus on key tenor roles, allows variables unrelated to the object of comparison, such as subject matter or stage situation, to be minimized as far as possible. This, in turn, enables the analysis to concentrate precisely on differences in coloratura arising from the distinct historical conditions and aesthetic frameworks of the two composers. As a result, a paradigmatic transformation becomes clearly visible, from Classicism to early Romanticism, in the dramaturgical function of coloratura, in the means of expression, and in the vocal stance required of the performer.

4.2.1 Comparative Overview of Categories and Review of the Material (from Table 4.2-1)

Based on Chapters 2 and 3 of this dissertation, I present below a summary of the classification of dramatic coloratura passages in the analyzed works of Gioachino Rossini and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

Table 4.2-1. Comparison of Categories of Dramatic Coloratura in Rossini and Mozart

Category	Rossini – <i>Tancredi</i> (Duettino)	Rossini – <i>Tancredi</i> (Duettino)	Mozart – Idomeneo (<i>Fuor del mar</i>)	Mozart – Tito (<i>Se all'impero</i>)
LONG NOTES	✓	✓	✓	✓
SCALE PASSAGES ASCENDING AND DESCENDING	✓	✓	✓	✓
TRILL	–	✓	✓	✓

EIGHTH-NOTE TRIPLETS	✓	✓	–	–
SIXTEENTH-NOTE TRIPLETS	✓	✓	–	–
DESCENDING SCALE PASSAGE PRECEDED BY A STEPWISE-TRILL GROUP	✓	✓	–	–
PASSAGEWORK RUNS	–	✓	–	–
SIX-NOTE QUINTAL GRUPETTOS	✓	–	–	–
SIXTEENTH-NOTE STEPWISE GRUPETTOS ENDING WITH A QUARTER NOTE	–	✓	–	–
ENDING A RUNNING PASSAGE WITH A REST	–	✓	–	–
COMBINED GRUPETTOS	–	–	✓	✓
SLURRING IN LONG PASSAGEWORK RUNS	–	–	✓	–

From the comparison of categories in this table it follows that, in dramatic coloratura passages, both Rossini and Mozart employ LONG NOTES, SCALE PASSAGES ASCENDING AND DESCENDING, and the TRILL. Despite this identity of material, the two composers differ in the functions assigned to individual passages, their placement within phrase syntax, the logic by which figures are combined, and their technical orientation. These differences reveal the distinctive characteristics of their respective styles.

4.2.2 Long Notes in Dramatic Coloratura Passages

Comparison of the Characteristics of Long Notes in Dramatic Coloratura Passages:

The shared characteristics of long notes consist in their dual support of structure and dramatic expression. In dramatic coloratura passages in both Mozart and Rossini, long notes serve above all a function of “dramatic narration” and fulfill, on the levels of form and affect, three common roles, closely bound to the semantics of the text.

Structural binding function. In both composers, long notes act as “connecting bridges,” closing coloratura fragments and initiating new sections. For example, in the aria from *Idomeneo*, the notes in bars 16 and 108 function as “anchoring points” for the opening and the repetition of a section. In the duet from *Tancredi*, the notes in bars 181 and 214 clearly close coloratura passages, forming transition nodes to subsequent segments.

Affect-intensifying function. Long notes concentrate key emotional nodes and, by prolonging duration, intensify the character’s emotional state. In the aria from *La clemenza di Tito*, the note in bar 11. the extended *Se.* underscores the solemn, restrained tone of Tito’s utterance. In the cavatina from *Otello*, the note in bar 108 functions as a “point of accumulation,” preparing the increase in tension in the coloraturas that follow.

Adhesion to textual semantics. In both composers, long notes fall precisely on stressed syllables, exposing the semantic core. In the aria from *Idomeneo*, the notes in bars 94 and 98 anchor the words destino (“fate”) and naufragar (“to founder”), reinforcing the tragic vector of the utterance. In the duet from *Tancredi*, the note in bar 155. the prolonged *Or* (“now/lo”). emphasizes the declarative character of the phrase, while bars 193 to 195 focus attention on cadrà (“will fall”), making the resoluteness of the stance palpable.

Differences in the use of long notes. Number, functional dominants, and relation to style.

The divergence of practices stems from the contrast between classical “structural rationality” and early Romantic “dynamics of tension.” It manifests itself in three dimensions: quantitative distribution, functional profile, and relation to stylistic idiom.

1) Quantitative distribution: Mozart’s “density” vs. Rossini’s “restraint.”

In Mozart, long notes are far more numerous and form a “densely woven grid.” In the aria *Fuor del mar* (*Idomeneo*), there are 53 such instances, and in *Se all’impero, amici Dei* (*La clemenza di Tito*) there are 47. In Rossini, by contrast, there are 14 in the duet from *Tancredi* and 13 in the cavatina from *Otello*. This difference reflects the divergent constructive roles of coloratura. In Mozart, it is subordinated to the classical need for “clarity of phrase and harmonic stability,” where densely placed long notes mark phrase nodes and stabilize the harmonic framework (for example, *Idomeneo*, bars 39–45. a series of long values functioning as “rhythmic anchors,” counteracting the loosening of structure by agile coloratura). In Rossini, by contrast, coloratura is oriented toward “kinetic fluidity,” and long notes function as “buffers” between sections rather than as the skeleton of form.

2) Functional dominants: Mozart’s “structural primacy” vs. Rossini’s “dynamic serviceability.”

In Mozart, the function of long notes is fundamentally structural. Beyond binding segments, they signal “harmonic nodes,” “partial closures,” and “metrical-rhythmic stabilization.” In *Idomeneo*

(bars 39–45), long values not only connect sections but also consolidate the harmonic direction, ensuring that the ornamentality of the coloratura does not obscure harmonic logic. In bar 168, with a fermata, they serve as a “cadential suspension,” closing the aria in the spirit of classical “aesthetics of closure.” In *La clemenza di Tito*, bars 75–76, also with a fermata, constitute a “partial closure” of the middle section. The combination of a long note and a rest creates a controlled “emotional pause.”

In Rossini, long notes are subordinated to the technical–expressive dynamics of coloratura. In Otello’s cavatina, bars 108, 124, 126, and 131 function as “pre-entry warm-ups,” facilitating technical connections between runs. In the duet from *Tancredi*, bars 219 to 229, the transition from an “individual declaration” to a “collective invocation” rests on the constructive support of a long note, which transforms the emotional dimension of the coloratura rather than merely organizing the form. Bar 233 functions as a “peak point of energy,” closing the tension rather than balancing it in a classical manner.

3) **Relation to style:** Mozart’s “classical rationality” vs. Rossini’s “early Romantic tension.”

In Mozart, the conception of long notes resonates with an ethos of “gravity and rationality.” For example, in *Idomeneo* (bars 26–27, 60, 62–63), the “arrested” values shape Idomeneo’s majesty and tragic stature. In *La clemenza di Tito*, bar 40, the long note on *cor* (in the upper register) confirms the ruler’s steadiness and authority, in accordance with classical role typology.

In Rossini, long notes emphasize the “variability and gradation of affect.” In the duet from *Tancredi* (bars 197–199, 201–202, 204, marked *sottovoce*), the combination of “reduced projection plus prolonged value” depicts a transition from “individual satisfaction” to “inner resonance.” In Otello’s cavatina (bars 69 and 94), the contrast of duration, set against dense sixteenth-note figuration, foregrounds the semantic weight of *nembo* (“storm cloud”), intensifying the character’s tragic profile and aligning with the early Romantic drive toward individualization.

Given the multidimensional nature of the comparison (number, function, style), the differences are summarized synthetically in the table below.

Elements of Analysis	Mozart	Rossini
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Fundamental shared features	Structural coherence: long notes function as anchoring points for sections, localizing the beginning of a segment or marking transitional nodes. Affect reinforcement: the prolongation of duration intensifies the character's emotional state and highlights key affective nodes. Adherence to the text: long notes fall precisely on stressed syllables, strengthening the expression of the semantic core.	Structural coherence: long notes function as points of closure for coloratura sections, facilitating transitions between adjacent segments. Affect reinforcement: the long note serves as a point of accumulation or emotional turn, preparing the further development of expression. Adherence to the text: long notes anchor key words of the text, exposing the character's stance and semantic dominants.
Quantitative distribution	High density of distribution. The number is markedly higher. In the two analyzed arias, 53 and 47 long notes were recorded, respectively.	Restraint of distribution. The number is clearly lower. In the two analyzed numbers, only 14 and 13 long notes were recorded.
Functional dominants	Predominance of structural function: stabilization of harmonic progression so that the ornamental density of coloratura does not obscure harmonic logic; fulfillment of partial cadential closures. through markings such as fermatas. clearly delineating the boundaries of sections; function of "rhythmic anchors," marking phrase nodes and maintaining structural balance.	Predominance of dynamic serviceability: preliminary preparation ("warm-up") before the entry of coloratura; technical binding of demanding coloratura sections; propulsion of affective change and shaping the turn from restraint toward emotional expansion; closure of kinetic coloratura tension, functioning as a peak of energy or a cadential/final node.

Stylistic alignment	Conformity with the classical idiom of “rationality and gravity”: emphasis on the majesty of the character and a sense of tragic fate; reinforcement of typifying role traits (for example, royal steadiness and decisiveness), in accordance with classical aesthetic logic.	Conformity with the early Romantic idiom of “emotional tension and individualization of the character”: achieved through the contrast between long notes and dense figuration, intensifying the semantic weight of the text and the dramatic tension; modeling dynamic transformations of affect (for example, from an individual declaration to a collective invocation), with a pronounced emphasis on the individualized profile of the protagonist.
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Comparison of the Performance Characteristics of Long Notes in Dramatic Coloratura Passages:

In terms of the shared characteristics of long notes in both composers, the classical technical model of “soft entry – gradual growth toward a culmination – release” applies, forming the basis for shaping every long-note line. This is a foundational technique derived from the bel canto tradition and the practice of *gorgheggi*, and it constitutes the core of work on such passages. Both in the “warming” long notes preceding coloratura runs in Rossini and in the “rhetorical suspensions” in Mozart, the singer must demonstrate stable breath support (*appoggio*), precise use of resonance, and the maintenance of a homogeneous timbral quality throughout the entire dynamic span. Of key importance is also the principle that “the same pitch, placed in a different harmonic and dramatic context, requires differentiated vocal emission.” This imposes on the performer a duty of musical discernment and of subordinating technical means to the specific context and affect.

At the same time, there are significant differences between the two composers in terms of technical emphasis and the artistic aims underlying the shaping of long notes. These differences constitute the central axis of the present comparison.

Technical Function and Artistic Aim.

In Rossini, long notes serve primarily to activate the vocal apparatus and regulate the state of the sound. In the duet from *Tancredi*, they explicitly function as “pre-entry” preparations for coloratura passages: they are intended to “open” the resonance and, through prolonged duration, to increase the flexibility of the breath. The artistic aim here is direct and outward, for example the brightening of timbre (from darker to lighter) in order to build heroic brilliance, or, in declarative passages, the unification of pulse and harmony through a stable “column of sound.”

In Mozart, the technique of long notes is more deeply rooted in musical rhetoric and character psychology. The dynamic trajectory of a long note simulates fluctuations of affect and the weight of thought. In *Idomeneo*, the proportions of the individual phases of the long note correspond to the hero’s fear and self-control. In *La clemenza di Tito*, a shorter crescendo–diminuendo arc is meant to create an effect of “explosive” energy, revealing the tension concealed beneath the ruler’s rational authority.

Register Challenges and the Choice of Vocal Timbre.

In Mozart, long notes assigned to royal roles are often placed in the transition zone (the *passaggio*) or above it, which poses high demands on the performer. The singer must maintain unity and purity of timbre in an area of increased tension and clearly realize the classical rhetoric of “entry on the weak beat – closure on the strong beat.” The technique of “covering” (*copertura*) is helpful here, for example in *La clemenza di Tito* on the pitch G². Subtle regulation of laryngeal position and precise shaping of vowels allow for an imperceptible blending of chest and head resonance, while preserving carrying power and avoiding vocal breaks.

In Rossini, the registral range is often broader. In the lower register, an appropriate participation of chest resonance is emphasized in order to build a heroic timbral profile, for example the low A in *Otello*, whereas in the upper register a bright, penetrating emission is expected. The technical core lies in the flexible transfer of the resonance focus between registers, so as to unite timbral unity with its purposeful differentiation.

Use of Breath Energy

In Rossini’s system, long notes often function as breath–energy buffers between two technical presentations. In performance practice, they require continuous and elastic breath support (*appoggio*), directly preparing the virtuosic passages that follow.

In Mozart, by contrast, the long note itself constitutes part of the dramatic action. The management of breath energy is therefore more varied and dramaturgically charged. For example, a long note functioning as a structural node demands from the singer an immediate transition from rapid figuration to a stable sustained value. When serving as a point of closure for a section, it re-

quires the application of an advanced technique of “breath attenuation,” that is, an even diminuendo on the breath, so that the sound dissolves smoothly into silence and creates a meaningful pause.

In summary, in Rossini the performance of long notes in dramatic coloratura is subordinated to flexible and efficient support of a flowing melodic line and virtuoso display passages. The sonic ideal aligns with the *serio e brillante* paradigm, emphasizing brilliance and outward projection.

In Mozart, by contrast, long notes demand a full internalization of technique within musical rhetoric and character formation. Dynamic shaping, timbral control, and breath management consistently serve to reveal the character’s complex inner world and the deep structure of the drama. This difference, from external demonstration of technique to internal dramatic integration, clearly delineates the distinct vocal-dramatic aesthetics of the two masters.

4.2.3 Scale Passages Ascending and Descending in Dramatic Coloratura Passages

Comparison of the Characteristics of Ascending and Descending Scale Passages in Dramatic Coloratura Sections

On the basis of the analyses carried out in Chapter 2 (the duet from *Tancredi* and the cavatina from *Otello* by Gioachino Rossini) and in Chapter 3 (the arias from *Idomeneo* and *La clemenza di Tito* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart), it is possible to compare the manner in which ascending and descending scale passages are employed in dramatic coloratura sections by the two composers.

With regard to shared characteristics, both Rossini and Mozart treat scale passages as an essential means of generating musical momentum and shaping the kinetic profile of the phrase. These passages serve dramaturgical expression: systematic rises and falls in pitch reflect the ebb and flow of affect. Differences, however, emerge in the dramaturgical function and musical intention underlying these passages.

Function and intention. Structural accent versus psychological profile

In Rossini, scale passages often fulfill a clearly external and structural role, reinforcing a specific dramatic moment. In the duet from *Tancredi* (bars 124–125, 136–137; see Chapter 2), the descending passage is accompanied by a wide intervallic leap that directly and emphatically highlights the word *vincitrice*, producing an unequivocally triumphant effect. In the cavatina from *Otello*, recurring descending passages, for example in bars 30 and 116 (see Chapter 2), primarily serve a closing function. They “lead down” heightened tension toward calm, illustrating the transition from an emotional outburst to controlled mastery.

In Mozart, by contrast, scale passages tend to serve the portrayal of a sustained, fluid inner state rather than isolated, point-like dramaturgical accents. In the aria from *Idomeneo* (bars 40–47

and the variant in bars 133–141; see Chapter 3), ascents and descents intertwine with long notes, creating a dense, wave-like profile. This is not pure virtuosity, but a musical sign of “inner turmoil,” precisely depicting the protagonist’s constant fear and anxiety. In *La clemenza di Tito* (bars 98–105; see Chapter 3), scale passages, in conjunction with rests and long values, construct a complete psychological process: from rational weighing and hesitation before a decision to the ruler’s final, firmly established resolve.

Comparison of the Performance Characteristics of Ascending and Descending Scale Passages in Dramatic Coloratura Sections

With regard to shared characteristics, the performance of scale passages in both composers requires advanced breath control as a fundamental technical basis.

Both in Rossini’s wide-ranging passagework runs and in Mozart’s precisely profiled phrasing, the singer must maintain stable breath support (*appoggio*) in order to ensure homogeneity, continuity, and durability of the sound²⁸⁰.

However, the technical emphases and artistic aims in the performance of scale passages differ between the two composers, resulting in distinct performance characteristics.

1) Core of the Technique: “Sound Formation” versus “Rhetoric”

In Rossini, the technique of singing scale passages emphasizes the cultivation of flexibility, precision, and sonic penetration. Training practice follows a clearly functional order. In *Tancredi*, vocal placement and line are stabilized through “filling the octave frame with sixteenth notes,” after which the work proceeds to intervallic leaps devoid of support from adjacent stepwise motion, in order to test the accuracy of the phonatory apparatus and its resistance to strain. Technical details are subordinated to the outward effect. On the highest notes of the scale, greater glottal closure is employed, along with high, forward vowel shaping, for example [a] shifting toward [i], combined with an economical, narrowed airflow, in order to achieve carrying power through brightening of timbre rather than merely increasing loudness. The artistic aim is a brillante sound with a strictly controlled trajectory.²⁸¹

In Mozart’s approach, the performance of scale passages is subordinated above all to musical rhetoric and character psychology. The performer should command an “elastic” breath support, enabling pointwise delivery of air, so that each note in the passage receives a light, flexible impulse

²⁸⁰ P. J. Watson, Thomas J. Hixon, „Respiratory kinematics in classical (opera) singers”, *Journal of Speech and Hearing Research* 28, nr 1 (1985), s. 104–122, DOI: 10.1044/jshr.2801.104.

²⁸¹ Damien Colas, „Melody and Ornamentation”, w: *The Cambridge Companion to Rossini*, red. Emanuele Senici, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, s. 104–106

consistent with classical norms and with clarity of phrasing. In *La clemenza di Tito* (bars 98–105), the challenge lies in an instantaneous switching. within a single breath cycle. between differentiated technical modes: from a long, solemn value grounded in stable diaphragmatic support, through a delicate descending passage requiring precise, light glottal adduction, then a brief replenishment of breath in the rest, followed by the immediate launch of a continuous ascending run that demands expansion of the pharyngeal space and refined vowel articulation. This technical chain. stabilization → attenuation → accumulation → explosion. is ultimately meant to transform vocal technique itself into a carrier of dramaturgy, concretizing the psychological path from rational reflection to resolute declaration.

2) Artistic Postulate: Virtuosoic Display versus Dramaturgical Internalization

In Rossini, scale passages are accompanied by an emphasis on the sound itself as an aesthetic object. They function as sites for the display of technical proficiency and performative control. Practice is based on contrasting exercises, alternating legato and selective articulation, whose aim is to “seal the breath channel” and to develop elasticity and stability of tone under conditions of complex technical demands.

In Mozart, by contrast, scale passages do not function as isolated displays of virtuosity. They constitute an organic component of the character’s emotional or cognitive process. For example, in the coloratura passage of *Idomeneo* (bars 40–47), the singer’s task is to maintain the purity of a single vowel and control of timbre while simultaneously conveying the “wave-like” motion of the scale. The artistic goal is to reveal the protagonist’s sustained inner agitation, rather than to foreground virtuosity itself.

4.2.4 Trill in Dramatic Coloratura Passages

Comparison of the Characteristics of the TRILL in Dramatic Coloratura Sections

On the basis of the analyses presented in Chapters 2 and 3, it can be stated that in both composers the trill is placed at nodal points of the form and closely linked to key words, thereby reinforcing musical rhetoric. Regardless of whether in Rossini it functions as a striking focal effect, or in Mozart serves to articulate formal divisions, the trill goes beyond mere ornamentation and fulfills clearly defined musical and dramaturgical intentions.

However, differences between the two composers emerge with regard to frequency of use, structural function, and dramaturgical aim.

1) Frequency of Use and Structural Function

In Rossini's aria from *Otello*, the trill appears only once (bar 47). This restrained usage realizes a local closure of a *brillante* character and functions as a "bridge": it reinforces a key word and prepares the entry of the next phase of the piece.

In Mozart, the trill occurs more frequently and operates in a strictly structured manner. In *Idomeneo*, two trills (bars 75 and 168) serve, respectively, as a cadential closure of a section and as the final closure of the entire aria, thereby creating a clear hierarchy of formal levels. In *La clemenza di Tito*, the trills (bars 51 and 114) are placed symmetrically at the ends of the exposition and the recapitulation, fulfilling the role of "special markers" within the form.

2) Dramaturgical Aim and Psychological Dimension

In Rossini, the trill (on the word *Amor*) has a more direct and outward aim: it focuses the listener's attention and intensifies the emotional coloring of the key word.

In Mozart, by contrast, the trill carries deeper psychological and dramaturgical meaning. Its typical dynamic course. "entry on the weak beat → crescendo → closure on the strong beat". in itself builds tension and its release. More importantly, the trill is often closely linked to a leitmotivic idea. In *Idomeneo*, it recurs on the word *minacciar* ("to threaten"), transforming the ornament into a sonic sign of "fear." In *La clemenza di Tito*, it consistently accompanies the word *altro* ("other"), vividly depicting the inner weighing of arguments before a decision, while its resolution signals the final consolidation of will. the completion of the path "from hesitation to decision."

With regard to shared characteristics, in both composers the execution of the trill is based on stable breath support (*appoggio*) and strives for intonational precision and clearly articulated, "selective" oscillations. As in other categories of *coloratura*, this is a fundamental prerequisite for trill quality.

However, the paths of technical realization differ between the two composers.

In Rossini (for example in *Otello*, bar 47), the trill is executed within a single breath unit. Emphasis is placed on a stable airflow and firm glottal closure, which ensures rapid, even oscillations of pitch and dynamics. The artistic aim is. while maintaining a bright, focused, and unforced timbre. to transform a single word (for example "a-mor") into a repeatable, striking ornamental element.

In Mozart (in *Idomeneo* and *La clemenza di Tito*), the trill takes the form of a complete, goal-directed dynamic process. The characteristic pattern "entry on the weak beat – crescendo – closure on the strong beat" requires precise control of airflow and breath pressure through the diaphragm, so that the sound develops from a point-like piano into a carrying, well-supported forte.

This is not merely a matter of changing volume, but of constructing and releasing dramaturgical tension.

In *La clemenza di Tito*, this technique attains the status of a rhetorical figure. The symmetrically placed trills on the same word *altro* (bars 51 and 114) embody the protagonist's psychological trajectory. from hesitation (the entry and growth as signs of weighing arguments) to decision (the strong closure as confirmation of will).

4.2.5 Comparison of Other Coloratura Categories and Their Distinctive Features in Dramatic Coloratura Sections in Mozart and Rossini

On the basis of the comparative table of the classification of dramatic coloratura in Rossini and Mozart (Table 4.2-1), it is evident that, apart from the three shared categories—LONG NOTES, SCALE PASSAGES ASCENDING AND DESCENDING, and the TRILL—the two composers display clear differences with regard to specific types.

In Mozart, the characteristic categories concentrate around COMBINED GRUPETTOS (present in *Idomeneo* and *La clemenza di Tito*) and SLURRING IN LONG PASSAGEWORK RUNS (present in *Idomeneo*).

In Rossini, the system of dramatic coloratura shows greater morphological diversity, encompassing, among others: EIGHTH-NOTE TRIPLETS and SIXTEENTH-NOTE TRIPLETS (in *Tancredi* and *Otello*), a DESCENDING SCALE PASSAGE PRECEDED BY A STEPWISE-TRILL GROUP (in *Tancredi* and *Otello*), PASSAGEWORK RUNS (in *Otello*), SIX-NOTE QUINTAL GRUPETTOS (in *Tancredi*), SIXTEENTH-NOTE STEPWISE GRUPETTOS ENDING WITH A QUARTER NOTE (in *Otello*), as well as ENDING A RUNNING PASSAGE WITH A REST (in *Otello*).

Thus, in terms of both the number and the degree of specification of categories, Rossini's system of dramatic coloratura clearly surpasses that of Mozart. The reasons for this difference can be explained as follows.

Mozart, as a representative of Classicism, designs coloratura primarily in the function of "structural balance and rational expression." The classical postulate of clarity of phrase, harmonic stability, and formal symmetry leads Mozart to concentrate on fundamental types such as LONG NOTES, SCALE PASSAGES, and the TRILL, which precisely fulfill the tasks of highlighting phrase nodes, reinforcing the harmonic framework, and sustaining melodic coherence. Even in the case of COMBINED GRUPETTOS or SLURRING IN LONG PASSAGEWORK RUNS, the aim remains the fluidity of the classical line and the closure of structure, without excessive fragmentation of typology that could disturb balance and rational order.

Rossini, working at the threshold of Romanticism, responds to the aesthetic shift toward intensified dramaturgy, the individualization of characters, and the display of virtuosity. Coloratura ceases to be merely subordinate to structure and becomes a carrier of dramatic conflict and affect. Therefore, alongside the basic types, Rossini develops numerous categories with contrasting and intensifying functions, such as eighth-note and sixteenth-note triplets, which enhance kinetic energy through rhythmic densification; the descending scale passage preceded by a stepwise-trill group, which sharpens the dramatic direction of the musical line; passagework runs that escalate tension as a technical figure; and the closure of runs with rests, which creates striking contrasts of tension. The emergence of these subtypes results from the expansion of the function of coloratura in response to the new dramaturgical needs of early Romanticism, leading to the greater diversity of Rossini's system.

4.2.6 Conclusion

On the basis of a systematic comparison of dramatic coloratura in Mozart and Rossini, it can be stated that differences in typology, function, and performance aesthetics reflect a fundamental division between two aesthetic formations: classical structural rationality and early Romantic dramaturgical expression. In Mozart, coloratura is subordinated to clarity of form, balance, and the discipline of affect. The typology remains concise, and performance emphasizes the internalization of technique as a tool of musical rhetoric serving the shaping of the character's psychology²⁸². In Rossini, by contrast, coloratura is oriented toward the exteriorization of emotion, the individualization of the character, and pure vocal virtuosity. As a consequence, a richer and more highly differentiated typology emerges, and performance technique focuses on shaping a brilliant (*brillante*) timbre and dynamic elasticity of sound²⁸³. This evolution—from an element serving structural purposes to a means that propels dramatic action—clearly delineates the historical trajectory of the shift in operatic aesthetics from Classicism toward early Romanticism.

4.3 Comparison of Comic Coloratura in Mozart and Rossini (based on the material discussed in Chapters 2 and 3)

In this subsection, the objects of analysis are the numbers discussed in Chapters 2 and 3: in Rossini, the aria of Count Almaviva from *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and the aria of Gianetta from *La gazza ladra*; in Mozart, two key arias of Belmonte from *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*. These

²⁸² Dorian Bandy, „Mozart's Operatic Embellishments”, Cambridge Opera Journal 33, nr 1–2 (2021), s. 1–23, zwl. s. 1–3

²⁸³ Leonella Grasso Caprioli, „Singing Rossini”, w: Emanuele Senici (red.), The Cambridge Companion to Rossini, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, s. 189–193.

works form a corpus with a homogeneous generic profile. They originate from mature comic output and combine lightness of affect with a high degree of formal refinement, thus constituting ideal material for identifying the specific characteristics of coloratura within the opera buffa convention.

In each of the selected numbers, coloratura appears at lyrical moments assigned to the three tenor protagonists—Count Almaviva, Gianetta, and Belmonte—and remains closely linked to character formation and the construction of a comic stage atmosphere. At the same time, it reveals idiomatic techniques of the comic style, ranging from Rossini's agile ornamentation to Mozart's elegance of line, thereby laying the foundation for further comparison.

Despite differing biographies and plot situations—Count Almaviva and Belmonte are aristocrats, while Gianetto is an officer—these roles display clear shared characteristics. First, they combine noble refinement with undiminished ardor. They are not buffoonish figures, and their “noble tone” must be conveyed through the quality of sound, which becomes a key interpretive factor. Second, a common trait is unwavering fidelity and consistency in love, which forms the emotional backbone of the coloratura passages and directs their expressive character. Third, at the level of action, all three narratives contain an element of “rescue.” Count Almaviva, assuming the name Lindoro, devises a plan to approach Rosina. Gianetto, in a situation of danger, remains faithful to Ninetta. Belmonte risks entering a foreign harem in order to free Konstanze from captivity. Courage and ingenuity, whether in the stratagems of a suitor or in determination in the face of adversity, become the driving forces of comic intrigue.

In summary, the selection of numbers with convergent generic characteristics and the focus on roles with a high degree of affective and narrative coincidence make it possible, while maintaining a homogeneous dramatic type, to minimize the influence of thematic and status-related differences. This enables a precise identification of the fundamental differences in the conception of comic coloratura in Mozart and Rossini.

4.3.1 Comparative Overview of Categories and Review of the Material (from Table 4.2-3)

Based on Chapters 2 and 3 of this dissertation, I present below a summary of the classification of comic coloratura passages in the analyzed works of Gioachino Rossini and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

	Rossini Il barbiere di Siviglia (Almaviva 'Ecco ridente in cielo')	Rossini <i>La gazza la- dra</i> (Gianet- to 'Vieni fra queste brac- cia')	Mozart <i>Die Entfüh- rung...</i> (Belmonte 'Konstanze... O wie ängstli- ch')	Mozart <i>Die Entführung...</i> (Belmonte 'Ich baue ganz auf deine Stärke')
LONG NOTES	✓	✓		✓
TRILL	✓			
EIGHTH-NOTE TRI- PLETS		✓		✓
SIXTEENTH-NOTE TRIPLETS		✓		
SIXTEENTH-NOTE THIRD-BASED GRUPETTI			✓	
SIXTEENTH-NOTE STEPWISE GRU- PETTI ENDING WITH A QUARTER NOTE			✓	
PASSAGEWORK (SCALAR RUNS)				✓
ASCENDING AND DESCENDING SCA- LE PASSAGES	✓	✓	✓	✓
COMBINATION OF STEPWISE-THIRD GRUPETTI WITH A SCALE PASSAGE	✓		✓	
SLURRING IN EX- TENDED RUNNING PASSAGES	✓	✓		
GROUPS WITH A FIXED RHYTHMIC STRUCTURE FIL- LED WITH ORNA- MENTATION		✓		

COMBINED GRUPETTI (WITH A SLIGHT INTERNAL VARIATION)		✓		
INTERVAL LEAPS COMPLEMENTED BY A DESCENDING STEPWISE MOTION		✓		
ENDING A RUNNING PASSAGE WITH A REST			✓	✓
SIX-NOTE FIFTH-BASED GRUPETTI	✓			

Table 4.2-3. Classification of Comic Coloratura Categories

From the comparison presented in the table it follows that the only category common to all four works is SCALE RUNS UPWARD AND DOWNWARD. In addition, LONG NOTES (Mozart *Ich baue ganz auf deine Stärke* and two arias by Rossini), EIGHTH-NOTE TRIPLETS (Mozart *Ich baue...* and Rossini *La gazza ladra*), and THE COMBINATION OF SECOND–THIRD GRUPETTI WITH A SCALE PASSAGE (Mozart *Konstanze*, *Konstanze – o wie ängstlich* and Rossini *Il barbiere di Siviglia*) show at least one point of convergence between Mozart and Rossini.

Even where such co-occurrence exists, however, these categories differ in their syntactic placement, structural function, and the logic of their interconnections.

4.3.2 Scale Runs Upwards and Downward in Comic Coloratura Passages

Comparison of properties:

Based on the empirical analyses in Chapter 2. *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Almaviva’s aria *Ecco ridente in cielo*) and *La gazza ladra* (Gianetta’s aria *Vieni fra queste braccia*), and in Chapter 3. *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (the two key arias of Belmonte: *Konstanze... O wie ängstlich* and *Ich baue ganz auf deine Stärke*), the characteristics of upward and downward scale runs in comic coloratura in the works of both composers can be summarized as follows.

The shared features, as in dramatic coloratura, consist in shaping the kinetic energy of the phrase through rising and falling motion and in serving the expression of affect. In the comic context, however, the emphasis shifts toward “small-scale, everyday” emotional nuances rather than conflicts charged with high dramatic intensity. Consequently, in both Rossini and Mozart, scale runs in the comic convention do not aim at the “explosive” accumulation of tension typical of dramatic

coloratura²⁸⁴, but instead assume a gentler form, adapted to the more lifelike, quotidian expression of the emotions of comic characters²⁸⁵.

The basis of the differences becomes evident in the “comic adaptation of the function of scale runs and their affective orientation.” In Rossini, scale runs serve above all as an emotional underlay and as a means of binding phrases together, fulfilling the role of a more external suggestion of affect. For example, in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, the runs in bars 142–143 and 161–162 subtly signal Almaviva’s concealed adoration. They do not escalate tension, but quietly raise the emotional temperature. In *La gazza ladra*, the transformed descending runs (bars 52, 56, 58, and 60) either soften Gianetto’s heightened state by drawing it into a gentler register, or prepare an intimate aura for the invocation “mia Ninetta.” In essence, these passages realize an emotional transition and propel the phrase forward, avoiding the reinforcement of formal scaffolding that is typical of dramatic coloratura.

In Mozart, by contrast, scale runs highlight a “light introspection,” functioning as a refined psychological response. In *Die Entführung aus dem Serail — Konstanze... O wie ängstlich* — the small ascents and descents (bars 19–20 and 22–23) sketch a gentle state of joy mingled with apprehension in Belmonte, without the dramatic shock characteristic of tragic coloratura. In bars 88–89 and 102–103, the runs imitate a delicate emotional pulse rather than portraying dramatic anxiety. In *Ich baue ganz auf deine Stärke*, the scale run in bars 61–62 softens the textual accent, while those in bars 123–124 and 126–127 shape a calm inner dialogue. The subtle undulation of the scale adheres precisely to the internal fluctuations of comic characters, in contrast to dramatic coloratura, where scale runs more often serve to delineate resolute decisions or abrupt psychological turning points.

In the comic coloratura passages of both Rossini and Mozart, the performance of scale runs rests on a shared technical foundation: stable breath support (*appoggio*), continuity of airflow, and a unified vowel shape. In practice, this entails, among other things, maintaining a fully sustained melodic line in ascending motions and realizing the classical syntactic pattern of “entry on the weak beat – closure on the strong beat,” while in descending motions making subtle intonational adjustments. Within this common technical basis, however, the two composers reveal distinct aesthetic preferences, which can be identified in three dimensions:

1) **Shaping of the melodic line and vowel color** (Rossini)

²⁸⁴ Mary Hunter, *The Culture of Opera Buffa in Mozart’s Vienna: A Poetics of Entertainment*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999, rozdz. „Arias: Some Issues” oraz „Appendix Two: Musical Forms in Opera Buffa Arias”, URL: https://api.pageplace.de/preview/DT0400.9781400822751_A25057327/preview-9781400822751_A25057327.pdf (dostęp: 6 XI 2025).

²⁸⁵ Damien Colas, „Melody and Ornamentation”, w: *The Cambridge Companion to Rossini*, red. Emanuele Senici, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, s. 104–123, DOI: 10.1017/CCOL9780521807364.009.

In *Il barbiere di Siviglia – Ecco ridente in cielo* – the scale runs are treated as an “extended singing line.” Ascending motions require cantabile, cohesive phrasing, without excessive emphasis on speed or selective articulation, while the descents serve merely to refine intonation subtly. Vowel articulation remains restrained: once the laryngeal position has been stabilized on [u], there is a smooth transition toward [a]/[o] in order to create a light, serenade-like timbre. In *La gazza ladra – Vieni fra queste braccia* – the transformed descending runs require starting from an even, “academic” pulse. Through the alternation of dotted values, the intervallic relationships and points of tonal placement are clarified. A narrow, stable airflow preserves lightness, while the gradual increase in the “density of breath” builds a comic aura of expectation.

2) Technical precision, articulation, and management of the *passaggio* (Mozart)

In *Die Entführung aus dem Serail – Konstanze... O wie ängstlich* – the singer must switch rapidly, within the first *passaggio* zone, from a “cohesive attainment of pitches” in ascending scale runs to micro-détaché in descending ones. In the upper range, timbre is unified through slight vowel modification and covering (copertura); in the lower range, subtle separation is applied, with consonantal articulation shifted to the weak beat (e.g. [d], [t], [z], [s]) so that a pure, stable vowel can sound on the strong beat and intonation does not “sink.” In *Ich baue ganz auf deine Stärke*, the scale runs function as “structural bridges”: descending motions “release tension,” while ascents “confirm direction.” The final compact run closes the phrase. The entire passage remains governed by the principle “one breath – one line – one vowel.”

3) Aesthetic profile and musical function

In Rossini, continuity of the line and restrained differentiation of vowels create a bright, transparent atmosphere. Scale passages function as connective tissue and as a means of gently reinforcing the affect.

In Mozart, by contrast, precise vocal mechanics and attentive management of the transition zones transform the scale passage into an internal organizer of time and psychology. The scale can become a vehicle for the gentle shaping of tension, that is, for guiding and softening the dramaturgy. Both composers observe the principle “legato upward, discreet separation downward.” Rossini, however, preserves maximum cantabile even in descending figures, reducing selectivity to the indispensable minimum, whereas Mozart, through tightly controlled micro-détaché and pauses, reshapes breath and the pulse of the phrase, achieving, respectively, the outward brilliance of comedy in Rossini and inner ingenuity in Mozart.

4.3.3 Long Notes in Comic Coloratura Passages

Comparison of the Properties of Long Notes in Comic Coloratura

Similarly to dramatic passages, in both Rossini and Mozart long notes serve to bind the structure together (closing the preceding segment and initiating a new one), to focus the affect (intensifying emotion at points of key semantic weight), and to adhere to textual accentuation (the prolongation of key words or stressed syllables). The differences emerge primarily in their quantitative distribution and in the organization of their semantic and rhetorical functions.

1) A different quantitative distribution

Consistent with the observations made for dramatic coloratura, long notes occur more densely in Mozart. In Belmonte's aria *Ich baue ganz auf deine Stärke* approximately 42 such instances can be identified (mm. 21–23, 30, 51–52/55–56, 64, 87/89/91, 94–98, 148–149, etc.). Here, long note values effectively co-create an almost skeletal framework of syntax and harmony. In Rossini, by contrast, Almaviva's aria *Ecco ridente in cielo* contains only four such locations (mm. 144, 166–168, 171, 178), while Gianetta's cavatina from *La gazza ladra* features around fifteen instances (mm. 4, 14, 19, 24, 28–29, 53, 87, 105–106, 111–112, 113–116, etc.), with a distinctly point-like distribution. This quantitative disparity reflects differing relationships between coloratura and structure. Mozart stabilizes the phrase and harmonic framework through a dense network of long note values. Rossini, on the other hand, allows coloratura to flow more freely, using long notes only to mark key nodal points.

2) Different semantic organization and rhetorical strategy

In Rossini, long notes more often color the meaning of words and shape the scenic atmosphere. A suspension on *dolce* in Almaviva intensifies the gentle, lyrical tone; in Gianetta, the prolongation of *Vieni* establishes the imperative character of the call, while numerous formulas of “strong onset plus gentle diminuendo” guide the emotion toward the next period.

In Mozart, by contrast, long notes more frequently function as structural signals. In Belmonte, the prolongations on *Liebe* and *durch* operate simultaneously as emphatic accents and as markers of phrase division; the extended dominant in mm. 94–98 links the semantics of *vereint* with an “unresolved” harmonic function, clearly tracing a path from “psychological suspension” to “re-assertion.” In short, Rossini employs long notes primarily to propel the narrative forward and to highlight verbal meaning, whereas Mozart uses them to organize musical syntax, harmony, and musical time.

In light of the analyses in Chapter 2. *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Almaviva: *Ecco ridente in cielo*) and *La gazza ladra* (Gianetto: *Vieni fra queste braccia*), as well as Chapter 3. *Die Entführung aus*

dem Serail (Belmonte: *Ich baue ganz auf deine Stärke*), the shared characteristics of long notes remain consistent with those found in dramatic passages. Their core elements are stable breath support (*appoggio*), the classical arc of “soft onset. crescendo. diminuendo” (that is, *messa di voce*), meticulous regulation of resonance, and vowel uniformity. In comedy, however, vocal emission must be adapted to a lighter idiom: excessive “dramatic” intensity and brilliance should be avoided in favor of lightness and subtlety. In both aesthetics, the long note is meant to sustain the continuity of the line at a moderate level of support, without “explosive” energy. What is required is vowel unity and resonance control aligned with the semantics of the text (“clear, projecting tone” in Rossini, “transparent line” in Mozart). Technique here serves a free, unpretentious comic aura, rather than majesty or violent conflict.

Differences:

Rossini

The emphasis is placed on meticulous shaping of timbre and on clarifying the character’s expressive profile.

In *Ecco ridente in cielo*, the long note should have a “serenade-like” quality: soft yet penetrating. An onset directly on the vowel with a refined *messa di voce* is recommended. The vowel [u] stabilizes the laryngeal position before a smooth transition toward [a]/[o], which prevents excessive brightening of the timbre and imparts an aristocratic, warm hue.

In *Vieni fra queste braccia*, a richer palette of means is required. Long “connecting” tones (e.g., mm. 105–106) should be gently softened at the end and followed by a quick replenishment of breath, while maintaining a high resonance focus. The pitch a^2 (m. 111) demands firm breath support with a predominance of head resonance and a slight vowel modification. In the *passaggio* area around $F\sharp^2$ (mm. 113, 115), early covering (*copertura*) and a subtle narrowing of the vowel are necessary to even out the timbre. The sum of these details produces Gianetto’s individual profile: a sound that is luminous and resolute, yet without excessive volume.

Mozart

In *Ich baue ganz auf deine Stärke*, the numerous long values become a true “time of language.” The recommended model is “**soft onset – firm closure.**” Technically, three situations stand out:

(1) in the *passaggio* zone (e.g., mm. 30, 55–56): prior unification of the vowel and gentle covering (*copertura*);

(2) sequences of ascending long notes (mm. 87, 89, 91): a gradual increase in intensity without “hardening” the timbre;

(3) very long notes (mm. 94–98): stable *appoggio* and a micro-*messa di voce* so that a “living sound substance” emerges rather than static immobility.

Diction and articulation remain a priority. Mozart requires that the vowel carry the pitch on the strong beat, while consonants are gently anticipated. The melodic line must remain transparent and logical, with a refined psychological function assigned to pauses and closures.

As a result, **Rossini** shapes sound toward a bright, extroverted aura. The long note binds phrases together and colors the affect. **Mozart**, by contrast, internalizes technique: long values organize syntax, harmony, and the character’s “psychological time,” all while preserving a light, comic idiom.

4.3.4 Eight-Note Triples in Comic Coloratura Sections

Comparison of the Properties of EIGHTH-NOTE TRIPLETS in Comic Coloratura

In comic passages, eighth-note triplets do not constitute virtuoso material that carries an entire phrase; rather, they appear only occasionally, at nodal points. In the analyzed numbers by both composers, they occur singly and immediately before a change of section or a local climax, thus simultaneously fulfilling the function of an “affective switch” and a “segmentational signal.”

Differences:

- Rossini (*Vieni fra queste braccia*, m. 113) places the triplet on the upbeat. It requires an even, decisive pulse and serves to clearly outline the direction of the entrance while reinforcing metrical cyclicity. The dramatic effect is an emphasis on Gianetto’s confidence and determination.
- Mozart (*Ich baue ganz auf deine Stärke*, mm. 153–154) employs an ascending, arpeggiated triplet that reaches the highest pitch of the aria (B ♮). Without disturbing the basic meter, the triplet smoothly transforms the calm established by the preceding long notes into a growing emphasis, creating a gentle transition and a gradual intensification of tension.

In short, with Rossini the triplet ignites energy more rapidly and clearly articulates the phrase, enhancing the outward brilliance of comedy. With Mozart it functions as an inward, orderly progression in time, leading the emotion toward its peak through gradual ascent. Both strategies, though different in mechanics, serve clarity and lightness of comic expression.

On the basis of the analyses in Chapter 2 (*La gazza ladra*, Gianetto’s aria *Vieni fra queste braccia*) and Chapter 3 (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Belmonte’s aria *Ich baue ganz auf deine*

Stärke), it can be concluded that in both composers the performance of eighth-note triplets is governed by the principle of “serving the profile of the comic character.” The performer should maintain an even pulse (so as not to disrupt flow), exercise dynamic restraint (a gentle, elegant affect), and, through diction and control of timbre, integrate technique seamlessly into the comic idiom. The triplet is to function as an acoustic image of the character, not as a carrier of dramatic tension.

4.3.5 Combining Stepwise–Tertial Grupetti With a Scalewise Passage in Comic Coloratura Sections

Comparison of the Properties of the Technique of COMBINING STEPWISE–TERTIAL GRUPETTI WITH A SCALEWISE PASSAGE in Comic Coloratura Sections:

In comic coloratura passages by Rossini and Mozart, the technique of **COMBINING STEPWISE–TERTIAL GRUPETTI WITH A SCALEWISE PASSAGE** serves light, subtle dramatic action. Its shared denominator is functionality. Both composers treat it as a structural connector that smoothly propels the phrase forward, in keeping with the comic idiom. This is done without excessive intensification of affect, while preserving clarity and the natural flow of the musical line.

Differences in function and constructive logic:

Rossini - *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Almaviva, t. 169–170)

The passage is placed in the final phase of the ascent toward the upper register. Its purpose is to smooth the transition and bring the phrase to closure. After the culmination is reached, the accumulated tension is gently released through a descending scale passage, which naturally leads to a bright, light conclusion of the musical period. The logic is linear and emphasizes an elegant descent from above, perfectly aligning with Almaviva’s gently romantic profile.

Mozart - *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (Belmonte, t. 16 i powt.)

The grupetti are introduced at the very beginning of the musical sentence. A brief upward leap of a perfect fourth generates a momentary tension, which is immediately released by a descending scalewise filling. This creates a self-sufficient “leap–filling” module that, from the outset, establishes the intonation and directional flow of the phrase while subtly reinforcing the inner emotional agitation of Belmonte.

In comic coloratura passages, the technique of **COMBINING STEPWISE–TERTIAL GRUPETTI WITH A SCALEWISE PASSAGE** in both composers first captures attention through a brief stepwise–tertial ornament or a small leap, after which short descending scale passages gently bring the melodic line back into equilibrium. This produces a transition from accent to fluid contin-

uation. The segments are seamlessly bound together without disturbing the lightness and naturalness characteristic of the comic idiom.

Performance-related differences:

Rossini - *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Almaviva, t. 169–170)

The emphasis is placed on smoothing intervallic leaps and maintaining a light timbral quality. In fourths and larger leaps, the performer should execute them on a single breath and with a unified vowel. Upon reaching the high pitch, the quality of the sound must be stabilized immediately. During the subsequent descent, subtle micro-détaché should be applied in order to preserve intonational precision while keeping the larynx relaxed. This cyclical “leap–filling” model serves the clean completion of the passage and the gentle shaping of the melodic line.

Mozart - *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (Belmonte, t. 16 i powt.)

The demands are more precise and structurally oriented. In a leap of a perfect fourth across the passaggio, a delicate timbral transformation should be carried out, from a brighter emission toward a lightly covered tone. It is helpful to narrow the vowel in advance and, on F#, to apply gentle copertura without laryngeal pressure. More importantly, the gruppetto and the ensuing scale passage should sound on a single breath, in a continuous manner. The sixteenth-note values are realized predominantly legato, in accordance with the syntactic principle of a “soft onset followed by a firmer closure.”

4.3.6 Comparison of Other Coloratura Categories and Their Distinctive Features in Comic Coloratura Passages in the Works of Mozart and Rossini

Based on Table 4.2-3 and the material discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, it can be specified more precisely that in comic coloratura Rossini and Mozart draw on different sets of figures and shape them dramaturgically in distinct ways.

Rossini

The selected sets of figures serve above all to externalize the characters’ joyful affect. In *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Almaviva’s aria *Ecco ridente in cielo* employs the TRILL (t. 116 aurora, t. 124 mio), whose fine oscillations of pitch imitate the “liveliness of dawn” and the “sparkle of infatuation,” conveying comic effect through situational vividness. The SIX-NOTE FIFTH-BASED GRUPPETTI, regular figures built on the framework of the perfect fifth, lend the coloratura a “pearled brilliance,” reinforcing Almaviva’s profile as a suitor. ARCHING IN LONG RUNNING PASSAGES, present both in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and in Gianetta’s aria *Vieni fra queste braccia* from *La gazza ladra*, realizes a single-breath dynamic arc (soft attack → crescendo → gentle release), so that rapid figures evoke an effect akin to “laughter”: light, shimmering, and free of pathetic weight.

The applied figures concentrate on Belmonte's inner profile. In *Konstanze... O wie ängstlich*, sixteenth-note triplet groupetti (m. 15, *liebevolles*), articulated through a compact tertian motion, imitate an accelerated heartbeat. The comic effect here arises from the tension accompanying the anticipation of the expected meeting. Sixteenth-note stepwise groupetti ending on a quarter note (mm. 15, 70) are based on the contrast "rapid figurations plus a sudden quarter-note halt," creating a meaningful pause and an impression of the "unspoken." The termination of a running figuration with a rest appears in both arias (m. 10, *liebevolles*; m. 121, *gebracht*). It reveals the protagonist's inner decision-making process, allowing sincerity to surface naturally. By contrast, in *Ich baue ganz auf deine Stärke*, the passagework figurations (mm. 153–154), shaped with gentle arpeggiated motion, are treated not as a field of sheer virtuosity but as a means of organic gradation of tension and of clarifying the musical phrase.

4.3.7 Conclusion

On the basis of the above comparison of the categories and properties of comic coloratura in Rossini and Mozart, it becomes clear that although both composers draw on the same fundamental resources, especially ascending and descending scalar passages, they differ in their logic of use and in artistic conception. Rossini favors techniques that promote outward fluency and colorful expression, such as trills, figures built on a quintal framework, and the arching of long running passagework. These devices shape the character's lively temperament and delineate a distinctly comic aura. His musical thinking tends toward linear development and the forward propulsion of the phrase²⁸⁶.

Mozart, by contrast, focuses on the inner syntax of the phrase and on subtle psychological nuance. Stepwise–tertian combinations, the closure of figurations through rests, and passagework or arpeggiated runs support clear German prosody and a precise organization of emotional flow, making coloratura a rational component of an ongoing musical narrative.²⁸⁷

In the realm of comic coloratura, this difference takes the following form: Rossini projects timbre and expression outward, whereas Mozart cultivates structural coherence and cohesion from within. This divergence confirms the distinctness of their musical aesthetics and, at the same time, through a high degree of technical specialization, yields two equally valid and radiant models within the treasury of comic opera.

²⁸⁶ Damien Colas, „Melody and Ornamentation”, w: *The Cambridge Companion to Rossini*, red. E. Senici, Cambridge: CUP, 2004, s. 104–123, DOI: 10.1017/CCOL9780521807364.009

²⁸⁷ Mary Hunter, *The Culture of Opera Buffa in Mozart's Vienna: A Poetics of Entertainment*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999, rozdz. „Arias: Some Issues” oraz „Appendix Two: Musical Forms in Opera Buffa Arias”, URL: [https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt7rwmh\(dostęp: 6 XI 2025\)](https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt7rwmh(dostęp: 6 XI 2025))

Summary

This dissertation is devoted to the specificity of coloratura passages in the tenor voice in selected dramatic and comic excerpts from the operas of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Gioachino Rossini. The point of departure was the observation that tenor coloratura parts, often associated primarily with brilliance and display, in fact fulfill complex structural and dramaturgical functions. Their performance requires a conscious integration of high technical proficiency with precise interpretation of text and affect. The author bases the analysis on the system of *gorgheggi* developed within Rossini's oeuvre, extending it to Mozartian material and confronting the resulting conclusions with personal performance experience and studio practice, including a CD recording.

Chapter Two discusses selected dramatic and comic coloratura passages in Rossini, with particular attention to the roles of Argirio and Otello, as well as comic roles such as Almaviva and Giannetto. The classification of figures, including long notes, ascending and descending scalar passages, triplets, trills, groupetti, and others, reveals the Rossinian idiom as oriented toward kinetic fluency, sonic brilliance, and outward expression, combined with a high degree of technical organization. Long notes, although less frequent, function as structural "buffers". They prepare the vocal apparatus for subsequent passages and reinforce key dramaturgical points, often in a *serio e brillante* manner.

Chapter Three applies the same categorical framework to Mozartian material, analyzing, among others, the arias of Idomeneo and Tito, as well as Belmonte's comic arias. In Mozart, long notes, suspensions, and fermatas occur with much greater density, forming a reinforcing "grid" for harmony and phrase syntax. Coloratura is more strongly subordinated to formal clarity, the internal logic of musical sentences, and the precise psychological delineation of character.

A significant part of the dissertation is devoted to practical conclusions for tenor singers and pedagogues. The author emphasizes that the practice of *gorgheggi*, especially **long notes** and various types of scalar and figuration-based passages, should be approached not merely as technical training but always in relation to the dramaturgical function of a given passage. Conscious differentiation of the phases "soft onset, culmination, and light release" within long notes, breath planning with regard to the overall phrase, and the maintenance of a unified, saturated timbre in the *passaggio* region are crucial for both Rossinian and Mozartian repertoire. The dissertation demonstrates that reading coloratura as an integral element of musical narration rather than as mere display leads to fuller and more convincing interpretations of tenor roles.

The contribution of the study therefore lies in the integration of analytical and performative perspectives, in the application of the *gorgheggi* system to a comparative examination of the works of Rossini and Mozart, in the clarification of the functions of specific types of coloratura in dramatic and comic tenor roles, and in the formulation of concrete pedagogical recommendations. These findings may serve as a point of reference both for further research into tenor coloratura technique and for pedagogical and stage practice, supporting the development of informed, historically grounded interpretations of the works of both composers.

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