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The García Family: A Musical Journey between Spain and the U.S.

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Presentation

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On November 29, 1825, renowned Spanish tenor Manuel del Pópulo Vicente Rodríguez García (1775-1832), best known as Manuel García, joined his family in performing *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (*The Barber of Seville*), an opera by Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868), at the Park Theatre in New York City. The event would mark a major turning point, not only for the lyric arts, but for the North American music scene more broadly: Manuel García's family had performed the first Italian opera in the United States, in full costume, and accompanied by a professional orchestra.

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The U.S. musical and social environment of the time was not conducive to the success of the genre. As James Radomski explains, American elites, with their markedly puritanical and Anglo-Saxon disposition, were not inclined to favor the arrival of such an openly emotional genre. Moreover, although the U.S. public was already familiar with the subgenre of the ballad opera, it did not seem generally interested in opera as a form of entertainment (Radomski, 2000, p. 188). Despite this widespread disinterest, the García family managed to turn their first performance into a resounding success, with the support of the entrepreneur Dominick Lynch Jr. (1786-1857).

*Editors' note: This text is an English translation, offered by the Observatorio, of the Spanish original submitted by the author (see 086-06/2023SP)).

The impact of this landmark performance reverberated not only through the opera world, where it signaled the Italian repertoire's arrival in North America, but also in the field of vocal performance and pedagogy. The 'García Technique,' a vocal methodology developed by Manuel García and his family, continues to influence the discipline to this day, with numerous instructors and performers considering themselves heirs to this tradition. Moreover, both at the time and in later decades, numerous musical works would draw inspiration from members of the García family, most notably María Malibran (1808-1836).

Ultimately, the García family's performances would help build musical bridges between American audiences and the traditions of Italian and Spanish opera, anticipating the wealth of musicians who would find success on both sides of the Atlantic in subsequent decades.

Although the García family's New York phase has received substantial discussion in the biographies of its respective members, particularly in accounts of the lives of Manuel García and María Malibran, their legacy in the United States remains a topic that merits further attention and study by musicologists as well as historians. Our contribution, therefore, aims to expand research on the subject in three core directions: to deepen our understanding of the genesis, development and reception of the García family's presence in the United States; to explore the family's influence in both the lyrical and instrumental disciplines of the era; and to study their interpretive and pedagogical legacy in the decades following their performances in New York, and in other cities across the country.

Several sources on the subject agree that the García family introduced Italian opera to the United States. In his encyclopedic biography, *Manuel García (1775-1832): Chronicle of the Life of a Bel Canto Tenor at the Dawn of Romanticism*, Radomski,

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considered a top international authority on the Spanish tenor, devotes a chapter to the García family's years in North America (1825-1826). In his view, the family's arrival to New York marked an event of almost incomparable magnitude, perhaps only rivaled, in terms of public expectation and curiosity, by the Beatles' first visit to the United States in 1964 (Radomski, 2000, p. 189). In her discussion of the subject in "Lynch Has Been in Paradise as to Music: The Irish American in Paris and the Diva Who Inspired Him to Introduce Italian Opera to New York in 1825" (2023), Molly Nelson-Haber reinforces the García family's central role in introducing Italian opera to American audiences.

The family's performances would have a major impact on New York's musical life at the time, with repercussions that are still felt to this day. As the esteemed researchers Alberto Romero Ferrer and Andrés Moreno Mengíbar explain in their remarkable work, *Manuel García: de la tonadilla escénica a la ópera española (1775-1832)*, a city wholly unfamiliar with the works of Rossini surrendered at the feet of the Spanish tenor and his musical family (2006, p. 115). For Charlotte Bentley, the García family's performances planted the seeds of the American public's passionate, though not always peaceful, relationship with Italian opera (2022). Similarly, as Katherine K. Preston notes, the Garcías' arrival in 1825 also marked the early emergence of the travelling opera troupe model in the United States (1993, p. 1).

The family's experience in America would also yield important transformations in their personal and professional lives. It was during their New York period that Manuel García would produce some of his most notable creative works, the operas *L'amante astuto*, *La figlia dell'aria* and *Don Chisciotte*—the latter based on the universal classic by Miguel de Cervantes and premiering in Paris upon García's return to Europe. It was also during their time in the United States that María Malibran, on the heels of her early success in Europe, would emerge as the great opera star of her era. The singer would stay in the country longer than her family, idolized by American audiences and, for decades, would be considered the artistic reference to which all other singers were

compared (Lawrence, 1988, p.15). New York was also the site of important performances by Joaquina Sitches (1780-1864), Manuel García's wife and the mother of María Malibran, as well as Pauline Viardot (1821-1910) and Manuel Patricio García (1805-1906), who performed on the family's American tour.

This volume emerged from a virtual conference titled "The García Family: A Musical Journey between Spain and the U.S.," which was held on October 13, 2022 under the auspices of the Observatory of the Spanish Language and Hispanic Cultures in the United States, a research center of the Instituto Cervantes at Harvard University. Speakers at this event included Walter A. Clark, Professor of Musicology at the University of California, Riverside; Patricia Kleinman, musicologist, member of the Spanish Society of Musicology, and founder and director of "Proyecto CompositorAs"; Anna Tonna, a mezzo-soprano specialized in the Spanish repertoire and the works of Rossini; Molly Nelson-Haber, specialist in the history of Italian opera in the United States; and myself, Isabel Pérez Dobarro, a pianist, researcher, and professor at the Centro Superior Katarina Gurska in Madrid, and a Visiting Professor at the London Performing Academy of Music.

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At this conference, Clark addressed the influence of Spanish music and musicians in North America, emphasizing the García family's role as pioneers in the musical relationship between Spain and the United States. Tonna, for her part, offered an interpretive perspective on the performances and compositional legacy of Manuel García and María Malibran, sharing several recordings of works by both, some of which had never been released.

This volume offers a deeper examination of the themes explored by Nelson-Haber and Kleinman at this event. Nelson-Haber provides a detailed analysis of the circumstances that led to the New York premiere of *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, recounting

how the determination of Dominick Lynch Jr., a figure with significant influence over the cultural elites of the city, combined with the artistic and entrepreneurial talent of the García family to produce one of the most important events in the musical history of the United States. In her work on the subject, Nelson-Haber surveys the succession of circumstances and events that led to the production of such an improbable performance, as well as its reception among both audiences and critics, María Malibran's success as undisputed diva and heir to the great Giuditta Pasta (1797-1865), and the subsequent performances of the Garcías, who would put on a total of seventy-nine performances, featuring nine different operas, in the ten months following their premiere in the United States.

Kleinman's text explores the influence of the 'García Technique' in the United States. The method was originally developed by Manuel García, elaborated by his son, Manuel Patricio, and over the course of the 19th century would emerge as an established tradition and an emblem of artistic excellence. The capacity of the 'García Technique' to adapt to the changing vocal demands of romantic opera would ensure its survival over time, and the method would find disciples in figures as disparate as Beverly Sills and Meryl Streep. Kleinman's study thus traces the connections between the García family's first performance in New York in 1825 to the present, through an exploration of this pedagogical tradition.

Lastly, in my contribution, I explore María Malibran's influence on the emerging music publishing business in the United States during the first half of the 19th century. Following the García family's first performance in New York, music publishers began printing sheet music that, for publicity purposes, included the textual annotation "sung by Signorina García," and later, following the star singer's marriage, "sung by Madame Malibran." The sheer quantity of publications referencing María Malibran attests to the tremendous influence the singer had beyond the stage during those decades in the U.S.

The present volume explores a history that forever changed the musical trajectory of the United States, and with it, the world of opera. It tells the story of a family whose members fundamentally shaped 19th century vocal performance, with influences that transcend to the present day. Guided by their story, we embark on a journey to write an essential page in the cultural history and international relations of the United States.

1. From Leap of Faith to Lasting Legacy: The New York Sojourn of the “Incomparable García Family”

Molly Nelson-Haber
Independent Scholar

Abstract: The first performance in America of a staged, fully costumed, and professionally orchestrated Italian opera, Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, at New York's Park Theatre on November 29, 1825, represented a watershed moment in the history of music in America. Seldom, however, do accounts of this momentous evening and the five seasons of regular Italian opera performances (through September 30, 1826) that ensued, descend to the personal level. This essay offers a glimpse into the hopes, dreams, and motivations of the *dramatis personae* who masterminded, promoted, directed, and supported artistically this risky adventure: the Irish-American music patron Dominick Lynch Jr. (1786–1837) and the Italian opera soprano Giuditta Pasta (1797–1865) and her manager-husband, Giuseppe, but most importantly the celebrated Spanish tenor and composer Manuel del Pópulo Vicente Rodríguez García (1775–1832) and members of his musically talented family. Thus, our focus throughout remains on the Garcías' unflagging efforts, performing as superbly trained operatic pioneers, to awaken American sensibilities to the pleasures of continental Europe's most elegant and refined pastime: a night at the opera.

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Keywords: García, Malibran, Lynch, Pasta, Park Theatre, *Barbiere*, New York.

1.1. *An American in Paris*

In November 1824 Dominick Lynch Jr.—thirty-seven-year-old widower and father of five, bon vivant and trend-setter, music lover, and ‘master spirit’ of New York’s fledgling third Philharmonic Society—disembarked at Le Havre on his first-ever European sojourn. On his business agenda: to secure his fortune through shrewd speculations in Bordeaux wine and brandy futures to be sold by subscription out of his elegant establishment at Number 40 William Street, eight blocks south of the Park Theatre facing City Hall Park. On Lynch’s personal agenda: to rekindle his youthful friendship with America’s acclaimed man of letters, Washington Irving, who since 1815 had been living abroad. As for his life-long obsession, Lynch planned to seek out all the wonders and delights of the Parisian musical scene.

The Lynch-Irving reunion—the two became inseparable companions in Paris—would prove symbiotic. Lynch’s lively descriptions of old acquaintances and goings-on in far-off New York would assuage Irving’s homesickness, besides helping to cure his chronic creative self-doubt. Irving’s pen would correct Lynch’s memorandums regarding the wine and spirits trade, leading to spectacularly successful speculations.

Most fortuitous for opera-starved musical cognoscenti back in New York, Irving introduced Lynch to the Italian opera currently being performed thrice weekly in the Salle Louvois. While living in Paris, Irving frequently patronized this jewel-box of an opera house, but for Lynch the experience was the revelation of a lifetime. Sitting next to Irving, Lynch listened attentively as his friend expertly coached him on the art of *bel canto* singing, its repertory, and its greatest living singers. During a performance of Giovanni Paisiello’s comic opera *Nina, o sia la Pazza per amore*, Lynch—himself an accomplished musician with a mellifluous singing voice—found himself fatally ensorcelled by the presiding divinity of the Parisian *dilettanti*, the Italian soprano Giuditta Pasta. Her superb artistry, as well as her naturalness and truth of expression

in portraying her characters, awakened in Lynch a passion for Italian opera. Lynch resolved to find the means to transplant genuine Italian opera to New York—whatever the cost.¹

Resting his pen on April 16, 1825, Irving listened attentively as Lynch read aloud a draft letter to John Jacob Astor (1763-1848), co-proprietor of New York’s premier theatre, the Park, where Lynch proposed having an Italian opera troupe perform Tuesdays and Saturday nights, replacing the regular dramatic corps on those nights.

Irving’s long-standing rapport with Giuditta Pasta enabled Lynch to become acquainted with, and to begin to court, the diva at every opportunity—in hopes of eventually inducing her to leave Europe and come dazzle New York as the gorgeously costumed star of an Italian opera troupe of first-rate vocal artists. Though gratified by Lynch’s attention, Pasta voiced serious misgivings. The administration of the Théâtre-Italien in Paris threatened to deny her a leave-of-absence, however brief, to sing elsewhere until she agreed to a five-year contract to sing exclusively in Paris. Besides, as one of the highest-paid performers in Europe, Pasta was fast approaching the pinnacle of her career. She was understandably loathe to risk everything for an engagement in a city that lacked the basic component for success: a dedicated opera house. She also feared exposing her young daughter, Clelia, as well as her ever-present mother, Mamma Rachele, to a long, possibly treacherous, sea voyage.

As Pasta had yet to say no, Lynch persisted, charming her with handwritten epistles in schoolboy French addressed to “the queen of *beaux arts*” and calling on her at her Hôtel d’Espagne apartment on the Rue Richelieu. Pasta diplomatically suggested that Lynch redirect his energies to recruiting for his New York opera troupe “The Incomparable Garzia Family,” as she would later describe her friends to Dominick

¹ For a detailed account of Lynch and Irving’s time together in Paris from November 10, 1824, to September 16, 1825, see Nelson-Haber (2023, pp. 71-85).

Lynch. At age fifty, Manuel García was well past his prime, though still capable of delivering thrilling performances, especially when partnered with dramatic singing stars such as Giuditta Pasta. That had been the case in Paris in 1821, his glory year. The young Giuditta had just come into her own, and on June 5, 1821, the first time she was paired onstage as Desdemona opposite García’s fearsome Moor in Rossini’s *Otello*, the two of them electrified their public. “Together they were to be a sensation, comparable to Geraldine Farrar and Enrico Caruso, or Kirsten Flagstad and Lauritz Melchior, in the twentieth century” (Radomski, 2000, p. 149-150). More recently, in London in 1825, Pasta had sung in concerts with García’s seventeen-year-old daughter, Maria Felicia, a contralto whose vibrant, often capricious personality and phenomenal talent Giuditta genuinely worshiped. Maria’s twenty-year-old brother, Manuel (“Manolito”), had recently begun appearing in concerts with his father. Over the years, Maria’s mother, Joaquina,² had corresponded faithfully with Giuditta. Currently semi-retired while raising her third child, Pauline, Joaquina possessed a mature mezzo-soprano voice, perfect for *comprimario* roles. All of the Garcías were masterly musicians: flawless sight-readers, improvisors, and accompanists. In that family alone, Giuditta assured Lynch, he would find the core of his opera troupe: conductor, arranger, stage director, and meticulously trained *bel canto* singers.

1.2. “A Promised Land”

Giuditta Pasta’s husband and manager, Giuseppe (“Peppino”), had remained in London after his wife’s latest brief engagement at the King’s Theatre. A lawyer by training, Peppino had also aspired to launch his own singing career. But a chronic throat ailment extinguished that ambition, and now his only occupation was negotiating his wife’s lucrative theatrical contracts. Feeling like a liability on his family, he had succumbed to crippling self-loathing—until energized by news from his wife

² Born María Joaquina Sitches y Isarri, she made her first public appearance in Madrid under the stage name Joaquina Briones. In Naples she used the name “Giuseppina Garzia.” In Paris she called herself “Madame García.” She invariably signed her letters “J. García” or “Joaquina García.” In New York she was usually billed as “Signora García.” To this day the García family has never employed the diacritic i-acute in their surname.

regarding Lynch's opera project. He began blitzing his wife with letters, putting enormous psychological pressure on her to respond positively to Lynch. Peppino would soon threaten to go to New York without his wife.

At Giuditta's urging, in mid-July 1825 Lynch went to London to call upon the García family. From the moment of his arrival, he was stunned to hear on everyone's lips the name "Mademoiselle García." He found the music-loving public rhapsodizing about this teenage child of renowned tenor Manuel García. María García had just debuted spectacularly at the Italian opera in London. On June 11, a last-minute cancellation had the débutante—with no rehearsals whatsoever—rushed onstage to sing Rosina to her father's Count Almaviva³ in Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. Peppino had been there at the King's Theatre to witness María's triumph, which soon became the talk of the London social season.

In his glowing review in *The Morning Post*, this critic invoked the word 'genius' to describe the teenager's extraordinary talent:

The *Rosina* of Saturday night was Mademoiselle Garcia, the daughter of the great tenor singer of that name, and known for the last two or three seasons by her delightful and promising exertions in the Concert Room. It was not, however, the common expectation that her first appearance, at an age scarcely beyond that of childhood, would produce a first-rate performance of one of Rossini's most finished and favoured characters. But merely to say that her *Rosina* was first-rate is not to do justice. The combined effect of her singing, acting, and personal charms, rendered the part altogether more complete than we have ever seen it in any other hands. With moderate talent, the unequalled advantages of her education must have made her a fine musician; but it is quite evident that beyond this she possesses a genius and feeling which education can never impart. Her singing was not only finished in the highest degree, but her embellishments frequently displayed a taste, the originality of which was proved by its independence of the style of her parent and teacher. (Anon. [Anonymous], 1825b)

Excusing Maria's "want of power" on the grounds of her extreme youth, the critic declared hers and her father's "the finest representation of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* that we ever witnessed."

³ Il Conte d'Almaviva, the eponymous tenor role created by Manuel García in *Almaviva o sia L'inutile precauzione*, the original title of Gioacchino Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, which premiered in Rome on February 20, 1816.

Since March 1825, Maria had been singing alongside her father—and sometimes alone—at many public and private concerts and music parties thrown by members of high society, often singing Spanish songs of her father’s composition:

At this moment there are no performers so highly in vogue in the private parties of people of fashion, as Signor Garcia and his daughter. They sing some Spanish things, exquisite in their kind. Mademoiselle Garcia frequently takes the vocal part, and her father accompanies on the guitar. The airs have a burden in which the company often joins. These performances are exceedingly beautiful and effective. The lady is yet very young and her style by no means formed; nevertheless, she is a superior singer. (Anon., 1825a, p. 143)

The father-daughter duo remained highly sought after, well into London’s late summer social season:

There have been a multitude of private concerts during the month, and among other a party *al fresco* at Mrs. Coutts’s. Among other novelties: Garcia and his daughter, *habited as Spaniards*, sung airs and duets, *accompanying themselves on the guitar*. These things are very beautiful and are chiefly his own compositions. *Why are they not published?* They contain very curious traits of national feeling. In some they are accompanied by a chorus, in which all the party sighs, in others all laugh. The favourite with us is *St. Antoine [sic]*. (Anon., 1825d, p. 477-478)

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Back in Paris, Giuditta Pasta thrilled to her absent husband’s letter of August 20, 1825, announcing that Dominick Lynch had already engaged their friends the Garcías for his Italian opera troupe. “Such news,” Peppino wrote, “has given me enormous pleasure, and a new existence: Mr. Linch [*sic*] has arranged everything and both he and the Garzia [*sic*] family are overwhelmed with joy now that the plan is settled” (Stern, 2011, p. 176). Further down in his letter, however, Peppino announced to his wife his own resolve to join the Garcías on their voyage to New York. He clearly meant to force her to choose between him and her flourishing career.

Giuseppe’s multi-page letter the following day informed Giuditta that “Direttore Linch” [Dominick Lynch] had decided to grant their friend Manuel García *carte blanche* to assemble the rest of the company. This time, instead of threatening abandonment to induce Giuditta to say yes, Peppino appealed to his wife’s confessed love of money. (Pasta’s biographer estimates that the soprano earned £1,000 for her recent four-

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week summertime engagement at King’s Theatre, and an additional £2,050 from paying concerts, patrons’ gifts, and her benefit performance of May 26, 1825—well over \$200,000 in today’s currency [Stern, 2011, p. 166-167].) Assuming his lawyerly mode, Peppino gushed:

Everyone concurs that in New York they are crazy for music, especially Italian music, and that for the first ones who will have the luck of putting together a troupe of Italian singers, that country will be a promised land. In fact, there is no precedent, because in no other country in Europe has anyone attempted to establish an Italian theatre under more favorable circumstances and with greater expense than what the impresarios of the Italian theatre in New York are providing.⁴

In the same letter, Peppino related widespread gossip that the American co-manager of the Park Theatre, Stephen Price, who was in London, was offering astronomical sums to several opera singers, to induce them to go to New York. In fact, the “boastful” and “reckless” (Macready, 1875, vol. 1, p. 308) “impresario” had leaked to the British press that, at great expense, he himself had undertaken to form an Italian opera troupe and to accompany it on a ship to New York. But Price would remain in Europe for the next fourteen months, letting his co-manager, Edmund Simpson, run things at the Park. When Price did return to New York, one year later, on September 3, 1826, he stayed only thirteen days, time enough to relinquish his interests in the Park Theatre, before setting sail on September 16, for London, where he assumed the sole lesseeship and management of Drury Lane Theatre.

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Thus Peppino was either misinformed, or he did not fully grasp Manuel García’s ambitions in deciding to take his family on a speculative venture to New York. Throughout a singing career that took him to Turin, Naples, Rome, Paris, and London, the *primo tenore* had always enjoyed a guaranteed salary, whether nightly or per engagement, however brief. But becoming artistic director and manager of his own opera troupe would assure him more control and a better chance of profit. With the approval of Park Theatre co-proprietor John Jacob Astor, what Dominick Lynch offered

⁴ Giuseppe Pasta to Giuditta Pasta, London, 21 August 1825. Autograph in Italian, New York Public Library at Lincoln Center, Pasta Collection. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations into English are the author’s own.

Manuel García was the chance to become sole entrepreneur of what Peppino had casually called “an Italian theatre” in New York. García himself would cover the principal singers’ salaries. He would split the night’s gross receipts with Edmund Simpson. In return for García’s fixed payment of \$250 per night, Simpson would cover all other expenses of the theatre and of that night’s performance: rent, utilities, door attendants, stagehands, copyists, costumes, chorus-master, choristers, handbills, and newspaper advertisements (figures given are those of 1825, not today’s).⁵ In short, should Giuditta Pasta decide to join the enterprise, Manuel García himself would be paying her salary—out of his profits from each night’s performances.

García signed no agreement in London, but these were the terms Lynch led him to expect Edmund Simpson to agree to in New York. And according to Solidor Milon, a cellist in the Park Theatre orchestra, this was indeed the understanding that Manuel García and Edmund Simpson reached. Despite the risk, García viewed this arrangement as a dream come true, a godsend, and believed—along with Peppino—that “New York was a gold-mine—where awaited them a non-discriminating public willing to pay high prices for culture” (Radomski, 2000, p. 186). As artistic director of his own opera company, García would be free to choose the repertory, assign the parts, schedule the rehearsals, and stage direct the very production in which he would himself sing a leading role.

Thus we can imagine the enthusiasm with which Manuel García proceeded to add to his troupe eight more singers and backstage artists: the semi-retired bass-baritone Felice Angrisani; *basso buffo* and librettist Paolo (or Pablo) Rosich; tenor Giovanni Crivelli, son of Gaetano Crivelli; Angelo Ferri, a set designer who could also sing; Don Fabian; Giovanni Cardini, a singing teacher; and Cristofaro Constantini.

⁵ Solidor Milon committed these details in writing in his letter dated March 9, 1833, published in J.T. (1833, p. 52).

Meanwhile, on September 13, 1825, Lynch made a flying trip to Paris to consult with Gioachino Rossini on selecting and engaging a first soprano—only a stand-in for Giuditta Pasta, Lynch hoped, while she made up her mind about New York—willing to join New York’s opera company. A twenty-six-year-old Conservatoire student named Elisabeth Barbieri⁶ leaped at Lynch's offer on behalf of García—as who would think of declining \$10,000 per annum (approximately \$300,000 in today’s currency)? This was the same sum that Peppino wagered would have induced his wife to join García's company. Elisabeth Barbieri would not arrive in Liverpool in time to sail with the rest of the troupe. She would reach New York on November 26, 1825, on the *Columbia*.

Three days later, Dominick Lynch and Washington Irving enjoyed a brief reunion at Lynch’s hotel. Their farewells were interrupted by Felice Angrisani dropping by to announce, in Irving's words, that "García is fixed to go to America" (Irving, 1970, p. 518). Irving too was about to leave Paris. He would spend four months in the Médoc and then move on to Spain. Irving's three-and-a-half-year residence in that country, soaking up Moorish and Castilian culture, would famously inspire him to produce his picturesque, highly romanticized *History of the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus* (1828), *Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada* (1829), *Voyages and Discoveries of the Companions of Columbus* (1831), and his essay collection, *The Alhambra* (1832), which “he infused [...] with ‘a dash of that Arabian spice which pervades everything in Spain’” (Kagan, 2019, p. 140).

His troupe poised to meet on the docks of Liverpool on the first of October, Manuel García penned to Giuditta Pasta a touching farewell letter, tinged with undisguised hope that sooner or later she would come join him in New York, yet full of warmth, humor, and genuine affection for her and her family. “What a sensation we would make if you were with us!” he writes.

⁶ In the press and in the libretti for the operas performed, perhaps to avoid confusion with the opera *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, her name is often rendered *Barbieri*.

My dear friend,

It was a great pleasure to receive your very kind letter which I will keep so as to show it to my wife and daughter, who at this moment are waiting for me in Liverpool, and who I know will derive much pleasure in reading it. I'm not losing hope of seeing you in the United States in a little while—for the crown of my happiness. I have given [Peppino] 80 pounds sterling [per Giuditta's request, to finance her husband's expenses], so that when you have earned more money than you know what to do with, you can send it to me in New York. And what would be even better would be that you brought it to me yourself—you understand? As for the rest, you may be sure that all he may need I will gladly take care of. And that he will lack for nothing so long as I exist. If in any case I can be useful to you, you already know that you can count on me as a good friend, as I know you are also to me. [...]

What a sensation we would make if you were with us! [...]

Adieu, my good one, my dear friend, I am and will always, *always* be yours.⁷

Dominick Lynch and his thirteen-member Italian opera troupe, including Peppino Pasta, alone and as morbidly depressed as ever, boarded the packet ship *New-York* on the first of October. After enduring a five-and-a-half-week voyage across the Atlantic, they stepped ashore in Manhattan on November 7. They had no time to lose. “The company will present Rossini's *Barbiere di Siviglia* as soon as possible,” Peppino announced in his first letter to his wife from New York. Walking about the city for the first time, Peppino felt certain he sensed “an impatience to hear Italian music” (Stern, 2011, p. 219).

Peppino had left Europe hoping that he too might sing on the stage of the Park Theatre in some of the troupe's productions.⁸ Unhappily for him, medical problems thwarted his aspirations. But through his letters to his wife back in Paris, Peppino would serve as an excellent eyewitness to the venture, beginning with close-up glimpses of its patron and its future star, Maria Felicia García. “[Lynch] is a shrewd man, and very likable, as men of good breeding should be. He is crazy about music. He talks only of la Pasta and considers la [Maria] Garzia a great talent because, he says, sometimes she reminds him of la Pasta.” Furthermore, Peppino recalled,

⁷ Manuel García to Giuditta Pasta, Paris, 21 September 1825. Autograph in Italian, New York Public Library at Lincoln Center, Pasta Collection.

⁸ Giuseppe Pasta to Giuditta Pasta, London, 21 August 1825. Autograph in Italian, New York Public Library at Lincoln Center, Pasta Collection.

Not a day on the ship passed that he did not make her sing Ombra [adorata], Che farò, etc., etc. She brought all the music that you sing along with her, and goes over it often, and as she remembers the smallest details, points them out with glee. He [Lynch] has a genteel character but gets so excited when he speaks of you that he seems to be another person. Linck [Lynch] is regarded here as a model of good society and as the Oracle in music. (Stern, 2011, p. 219-220)

1.3. “A Bold and Most Costly Experiment”

By eight o’clock on the historic evening of November 29, 1825, the most fashionable audience in memory had filled every pit, box, and gallery seat in the city’s elegant Park Theatre. New York’s cultural elite—and the merely curious— were about to witness the first production in America of an opera sung entirely in Italian, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, starring Rossini’s famous first Count Almaviva. When the orchestra began the overture, shivers of excitement were palpable. After the scarlet curtain rose and the first-act characters successively appeared—first Fiorello (Giovanni Crivelli), then Count Almaviva (Manuel García Sr.), Figaro (Manuel García Jr.), Rosina (Maria García), Bartolo (Paolo Rosich), and Don Basilio (Felice Angrisani)—they were warmly applauded. Bravos, bravissimos, and calls for encores punctuated the three-and-a-half-hour performance.

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Dominick Lynch’s presence that evening was of course duly noted by those who recognized him. Many of his friends rooted unabashedly for the success of what they privately called “Lynch’s opera troupe.”⁹ He must also have enjoyed the support and loyalty of the journalists of the major print media of the day. Presumably he asked his patronage of the Italian opera to remain anonymous: Lynch’s name appears in print only once in connection with the enterprise.

⁹ Charles King to John Alsop King, New York, 19 November 1825. New-York Historical Society, R. King Papers, Box 22, Folio 8.

But New York’s fledgling music critics felt no constraint about reporting every other detail of the historic opening night and the city’s cultural awakening. The next morning, superlatives and encomiums dominated the reviews, such as this one from *The New-York Evening Post*:

In what language shall we speak of an entertainment so novel in this country, but which has so long ranked as the most elegant and refined among the amusements of the higher classes of the old world. But report can give but a faint idea of it. Until it is seen, it will never be believed that a play can be conducted in *recitative* or singing and yet appear nearly as natural as the ordinary drama. We were last night surprised, delighted, enchanted, and such were the feelings of all who witnessed the performance. The repeated plaudits with which the theatre rung were unequivocal, unaffected bursts of applause. (November 30, 1825)

Seemingly spontaneously, however, press and public alike came up with a sobriquet for Maria Felicia García, inspired no doubt by her bewitching impersonation of Rossini’s heroine Rosina. Fondly dubbed *the Signorina*, she would be called nothing else so long as she remained in New York. By dawn she was the city’s darling, “the magnet who attracted all eyes and won all hearts.” The critic for *The New-York Evening Post* swooned over the Signorina: “She seems to us a ‘cunning pattern of excelling nature’ equally surprising us by the melody and tones of her voice and by the propriety and grace of her acting” (November 30, 1825).

Dominick Lynch concurred. “This little Signorina is really astonishing,” he wrote straightaway to Giuditta Pasta, thanking *her* for all she had done to make this moment possible, and predicting that “this Signorina” would become *the* prima donna of Europe.

My dear Madame Pasta,

I have only a moment to inform you that last night we had the first Italian opera that ever took place in America—and was received with enthusiasm. And as it is you, as the queen of music, who are the cause of the introduction of this music to this country, I inform you of its complete success. Signorina García as Rosina was charming. García’s Count Almaviva you know. The ensembles were astonishing for an orchestra unaccustomed to this type of music. Yes, it is you to whom the Americans owe this pleasure! It is you who enchanted me with your music and who made me think of this project—and I did so out of sheer *amore* as an amateur. I am happy to tell you that your friends, the García family, are certain of a good outcome. This little Signorina is really astonishing—as an actress as well as a singer. I told you that, after you retire and rest

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on your laurels, she will be the prima donna of Europe; for, if my opera project in London succeeds, I am determined to bring her there, if she will consent. And I am sure that I have not spoken too highly of her talents. For a person so young, they are extraordinary. Mr. Pasta is doing well and is quite amazed at the success that the opera has had. [...]

Believe me always to be your faithful friend,¹⁰

Over the next ten months, the Garcías would present seventy-nine performances of nine operas. Besides *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, there would be Rossini's *Tancredi e Amenaïde*, *Otello*, *Il turco in Italia*, and *La cenerentola*; Mozart's *Don Giovanni*; Zingarelli's *Giulietta e Romeo*; and García's *L'amante astuto* and *La figlia dell'aria, o Semiramide*.

The García 'season' actually comprised six 'seasons' of differing lengths from November 29, 1825, to September 30, 1826, offering subscribers reduced-rate tickets for thirty performances initially, then twenty, then ten, another ten, then eight, and lastly, ten final performances—eighty-eight in all, though with no refunds on the eleven cancellations in ten months. Season tickets at a discount (the practice in London) was an *innovation* in New York. Subscribers and advance ticket holders had numbered and reserved seats, another innovation. Previously, the opening of the theatre doors signaled a mad rush for the 'best' seats.

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With only eight singers, however, García could rehearse only one opera at a time. Four of those singers being family members, awkward casting resulted: father and daughter, mother and son, and brother and sister enacting stage lovers.

Rossini's comic masterpiece, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, would provide most of the troupe's momentum for the coming months. What largely sustained its popularity was the Signorina's brilliant idea of turning the Lesson Scene in the second act into a virtual mini recital, thanks to her linguistic versatility, enabling her to enthrall her adoring

¹⁰ Dominick Lynch to Giuditta Pasta, New York, November 30, 1825. Autograph in French, New York Public Library at Lincoln Cwenter, Pasta Collection.

public with songs of all genres.¹¹ On November 29, and December 3, 1825, she interpolated her father's "Bajelito nuevo," which was encored. On the third night of *Il Barbiere*, instead of "Bajelito nuevo" in the Lesson Scene, Maria sang "Home, sweet home" (see below). The fourth night, she sang Bishop's ballad "And ye shall walk in silk attire" to her own accompaniment on the piano. When encored, she sang "Home, sweet home" instead. Eventually, during every *Barbiere*, Maria would sing three songs in the Lesson Scene: a Spanish song, a French song (usually Auber's "Une rose bien fleurie" from *Emma*), and a popular English, Scotch, or Irish ballad, such as "Cushlamachree."

"Home, sweet home," composed by the Englishman Henry Bishop to a text by the American poet John Howard Payne (coincidentally an intimate friend of Washington Irving), remained the most popular song in America for a century (Hamm, 1979, p. 165). Maria Felicia sang this song to uproarious applause during the Lesson Scene of many performances of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* from 1825-26. To those New Yorkers whom she befriended, she made John Howard Payne's poetry of loss and longing speak volumes about her own situation. Here she was, an adolescent on foreign soil, an ocean away from her childhood friends (Evelina Hullmandel, Adele Nourrit, Carolina De Sparre, to name a few) performing on stage for perfect strangers at her father's bidding. No wonder her singing often made members of the Park Theatre orchestra weep, according to Park Theatre violinist Ureli Corelli Hill (1835-37).

Despite Maria's many charming interpolations, when Rossini's *Il Barbiere* held the stage for the first five Italian opera nights running, the three-month subscribers squawked. García had no choice but to stall for time while preparing the next opera for performance. This pattern would repeat six more times in seven months. Only by July 1826 was the troupe able to consistently vary its repertory nightly.

¹¹ María García had already initiated this practice on the stage of King's Theatre in London: in the Lesson Scene of every performance of Rossini's *Barbiere* she introduced "one of those Spanish songs [of her father's] which she sings so delightfully. We do not generally approve of introductions into masterpieces like the *Barbiere*, but these have been so charming, so full of grace, that it is quite impossible to quarrel with them" (Anon., 1825c, p. 375).

García's ego made a dire situation worse. Instead of immediately following *Il Barbiere* with another Rossini favorite, García chose to present, on December 17, 1826, *L'amante astuto* (*The Cunning Lover*), a two-act opera that he and his librettist, Paolo Rosich, had just completed.¹² *L'amante astuto* was practically identical in plot to that of Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. In both, the major dramatic situation involves a young and beautiful heroine, Rosalia (María García), who is about to be married off to a decrepit old man, Anacleto (Paolo Rosich), whom she despises, while her beloved, Raimondo (García Sr.), must dissemble and assume various disguises (a fortune teller, a music master, and the heroine Rosalia's own grandmother) to ensure that does not happen. There is even a music lesson scene. As had happened before every performance of Rossini's *Il barbiere*, the announcement in the *New-York American* for the troupe's final performance of *L'amante astuto* that evening stressed that the Signorina would sing an English, French, and Spanish song in that opera's lesson scene. (March 7, 1826) But the similarity between the two operas ends there. *L'amante astuto* lacked a chorus and monologues and dialogues set to music. The long passages of spoken Italian, which compounded the existing language barrier, was the *coup de grâce* for the audience.

Despite these drawbacks, at least one musical connoisseur amidst the Park Theatre audience found much to praise in García's effort. Weeks after *L'amante astuto* had been withdrawn following its second performance on December 20, 1825, this writer submitted a fair and reasoned unsigned critique of the work to the *New York Review and Athenaeum*. Indeed, the encomiums advanced by this reviewer, who found much of the music not merely attractive but innovative and exceedingly ambitious, may have encouraged García to revive the opera in late February 1826 for two additional performances.

¹² The autographs of *L'amante astuto* are in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, as follows: MS 6365 (Act I orchestral score); MS 8373 (Act II orchestral score); and MS 8383 (piano-vocal score).

Act	Scene	Characters	No.	Incipit	
I	<u>1</u>	Raimondo	1	Su partite, o mio Signore [sic]	
		Chiara			
		Carletto			
	3	Rosalia		2	Placida chiedo l'onda
				3	Invano si mostra . . . nemica la sorte
	4	Rosalia		4	A chi donai il Cuore
			Chiara		
	5	Rosalia		5	Deh tù ci assisti pietoso amore
			Chiara		
			Carletto		
	6	Anacleto		6	Se dice una Bella che vaghi non ama
	9	Rosalia		7	Ah! per pietà credete
	11	Raimondo		8	A voi qui mi presento o miei Signori
				9	Ahi—Giovinetta sventurata
			Rosalia	10	Grazie al Cielo se n'andato
Raimondo					
Chiara					
	Carletto				
II	2	Chiara	11	Ah per Bacco Signor mio	
	3	Carletto	12	L'oro Carletto ha un attrazione	
		Anacleto			
	4	Raimondo	13	Son Maestro di Cappella	
	6	Raimondo	14	Bel piacere in sul Mattino	
		Rosalia			
		Chiara			
		Rosalia	15	Senti, senti l'Usignuolo	
	7	Carletto	16	Che m'importa che faccia la fiera	
	9	Raimondo	17	Va rena vecchia per la strada	
	11	Rosalia	18	E fia ver Padre mio	
		Raimondo	19	Placati alfin gli Dei	
		Rosalia			
		Chiara			
		Carletto			
	Anacleto				

Table 1. *L'amante astuto* [The cunning lover] by Manuel García (music) and Paolo Rosich (words), December 17, 1826, Park Theatre, New York. Source: author.

Clearly aware that García had written *L'amante astuto* as a showpiece for his daughter's precocious talents and superb *bel canto* technique, the reviewer seizes upon the most obvious drawback to the enjoyment of the opera: the spoken dialogue. *L'amante astuto*, the writer declared,

would be amusing enough if pains had been taken to contrive such scenes as might have explained themselves at once without sending the spectator to his book. A comic opera, in a country where the language is not understood, should partake, as much as possible, of the pantomime. If this is done, the objection (which is a trifling one at best) against a musical entertainment sung in a foreign language, is completely done away with, as the sentiment, which is all that the words can give, becomes, in this case, equally intelligible to all. (Anon., 1826b, p. 233)

The critic goes on to declare that García's music did him "the highest credit":

That it was able to please, and, some part of it, to give the greatest delight, after the audience had just heard the exquisite melodies of Rossini, is a convincing proof that the piece has merits of a very superior order. (Anon., 1826b, p. 233)

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With that, the reviewer proceeded to give a detailed analysis of many of the arias and concerted pieces of the opera. (For reference, refer to Table 1.) He felt that the opening terzetto [No. 1] of Raimondo, Chiara, and Carletto "had no effect"; that Rosalia's aria "Placida chiedo l'onda" [No. 2], which was omitted at the second performance (December 20, 1825), "contains many beautiful passages"; and that Rosalia, Chiara, and Carletto's terzetto "Deh t'ci assisti pietoso amore" [No. 5] "sung, as is usual in prayers and invocations, without accompaniment, is finely harmonized, and is remarkable for its well constructed fugue" (Anon., 1826b, p. 233-4).

The reviewer waxed especially poetic over Rosalia's tuneful, appealing arietta in the ninth scene of Act I, "Ah! Per pietà cedete" [No. 7].¹³

¹³ The world premier performance of "Ah! per pietà credete" with Anna Tonna (mezzo soprano) and Christopher Cooley (piano) was aired on October 13, 2022 (see the Observatorio's YouTube channel, 45:20 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c4HsvgDCb7A&list=PLZjayZNUfun9w0dFlolU_N-FsNGPSdgU3&index=4).

For ourselves (shall we frankly confess it?) we were incomparably more affected by [it] than by any thing of the same kind we recollect ever to have heard. The melody itself seems to be the very language of the tenderest entreaty, and nothing can be imagined more irresistibly touching than the powerful pathos with which it was sung. The humble attitude, low at her father's feet, the earnest and desperate clinging to her father's cloak, the upward look of innocent supplication as long as there is hope, and then, when there is none, the bowing of the head to the very ground in misery and despair; all this together formed the most beautiful dramatic picture we have ever looked upon; while the tears of the rejected suppliant, (for in this scene we believe she actually sheds tears,) no less than the plaintive tones of an exquisite *contralto*, successfully exerting all the wonderful power which voices of that quality have above all others of moving the affections made upon the minds of the whole audience a deep and indelible impression, such as the drama, we seriously believe, without the aid of music, could never have produced.

Part of the effect of this air is owing to the introduction of a beautiful chromatic passage, which, difficult as it is, was sung to perfection by Miss Garcia, apparently without the smallest effort. This produced, as it always does, when skillfully thrown in, an effect absolutely electrical, felt, perhaps, most sensibly by those whose little knowledge of the rules of music made them ignorant of the artifice by which it was brought about. (Anon., 1826b, p. 235)

The reviewer called the hero Raimondo's gypsy song, "Ahi Giovinetta sventurata" [No. 9], "an instance of the charming taste which García shows in all his lighter compositions [such as "Bajelito nuevo"]," and he described the Act I finale, "Grazie al Cielo se n'andato," as "full of life, variety and character" (Anon., 1826b, p. 234).

This upbeat assessment of the first finale gives us pause. Perhaps by February 1826, the extraordinary length of the finale the reviewer had heard on December 20, 1825, had faded from memory. In fact, that night's audience endured a finale lasting approximately twenty-seven minutes (813 measures), several minutes longer than the finale of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony (J. Radomski, personal communication, September 10, 2023).

In Act II, the canzona "Ah per Bacco Signor mio" [No. 11], reportedly "well sung by Signora Garcia," was described as "a sprightly little air. In this air, which is in 6/8 time, there is introduced an anomalous bar of three crotchets, which is several times repeated. It has a curious, but we do not think a pleasing effect" (Anon., 1826b, p.

234). What the critic calls “curious” was probably the characteristically Spanish hemiola effect that García inserted seven times in “Ah per Bacco Signor mio.” This tricky rhythm would have startled audiences accustomed to straightforward ballads such as America’s favorite song, “Home, sweet home.”

Anacleto and Carletto’s duet “L’oro Carletto ha un attrazione” [No. 12], sung by Rosich and García Jr., respectively, was “composed in excellent comic style, and was very well received by the audience.” (Anon., 1826b, p. 234) Apparently, the composer of *L’amante astuto*, did not deprive himself of the opportunity for vocal display:

Son Maestro da Capella [No. 13] gave the elder Garcia, whose personation of Raimondo in this opera admits of no improvement, a fair opportunity of showing the versatile powers of his voice, an opportunity of which he availed himself with the greatest effect. (Anon., 1826b, p. 234)

All reviews of *L’amante astuto* agreed that the terzetto “Bel piacere in sul Mattino” [No. 14] was the audience’s favorite piece. The trio was “encored with the most tumultuous applause. Rosich acts in this as well as the Signorina sings, which is as high praise as he can receive” (Anon., 1826b, p. 234). Some idea of the degree of virtuosity required of María García in her father’s opera may be obtained from the *New-York Evening Post*’s review of the second performance.

[I]n the terzetto she had the best opportunity that has yet been afforded her to evince the extraordinary qualities, flexibility and extension of her voice, and the surprising facility and rapidity of her execution in the most difficult passages, under the guidance of the most accurate ear—insomuch that we feel compelled to pronounce that we never yet witnessed any musical effort that came near her wonderful performance. (December 25, 1825)

There was a price to pay for all this vocal brilliance. “In the second finale, Garcia seems to have laid out all his strength in the production of a rich and brilliant melody, for the purpose of showing off his daughter’s unrivalled powers” (Anon., 1826b, p. 234). After sustaining the long and difficult terzetto, María García was already exhausted to the point of collapse. *L’amante astuto* contains “perhaps the most difficult music” of any of García’s scores (J. Radomski, personal communication,

September 10, 2022). What made García’s music so brutally challenging to sing was its sheer length. Unlike Rossini, who slashed and pruned to perfection, García remained determinedly long winded, sacrificing no note to accommodate his audiences’ short attention spans.

The finale of Act II was not nearly as long as the finale of Act I. After singing her aria-like, sixty-nine-measure introduction to the finale (“E fia ver Padre mio” [No. 18]), María García had to go on and sing another 156 measures of the finale proper, the quintetto “Placati alfin gli Dei” [No. 19]. Her exhaustion after doing so did not go unnoticed by the audience.

We regret to say, that on both nights of this opera (either in consequence of indisposition, or of the length and difficulty of the preceding part, or for some other cause with which we are not acquainted), this young lady was so completely exhausted before she had even begun the finale that, in spite of her admirable performance of many striking passages of extra-ordinary elegance and difficulty, we witnessed the exhibition of her astonishing execution, with infinitely less of pleasure, than of painful sympathy with what appeared to us to be a very dangerous determination to go resolutely through with an oppressive and unnecessary task. (Anon., 1826b, p. 234)

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Surely the encores demanded of the Signorina did nothing to assuage her torment, as recalled by the critic of the *New-York Evening Post*. He demanded her ‘aria’ be dropped from subsequent performances.

In the finishing [*sic*] song [“E fia ver Padre mio”], and bravely attempting to comply with an encore, for the second time, nature evidently became exhausted, and though she continued her air with undiminished resolution to the end, yet, when the curtain fell, she sunk into a chair, that was brought to receive her lifeless limbs. [...] Both times the piece was attended with the same distressing and alarming catastrophe; let not a third be risked. (December 25, 1825)

García’s biographer, James Radomski, considers *L’amante astuto* to be one of his subject’s better works, “containing many moments of striking originality” (2000, p. 202). García himself must have held an equally elevated opinion of his first ‘New York’ opera. He was in the throes of turning *L’amante astuto* into a salon opera—complete with sung Italian recitatives—for the enlightenment of his voice students, when he died.

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Interestingly enough, Manuel García's future Mexican audience would think highly of his opera at its premier, as *El amante astuto* (*L'amante astuto* translated into Spanish, with the characters' dialogues sung, not spoken, as in New York) on May 15, 1828. Both Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (in the original Italian) and García's *El amante astuto* were chosen by the Mexican government to be performed the afternoon and evening, respectively, of October 5, 1828, in celebration of the fourth anniversary of the Constitution of the United States of Mexico.

To assuage the public's disappointment over *L'amante astuto*, García followed with two more acclaimed Rossini operas: *Tancredi e Amenaïde* and *Otello*. *Tancredi e Amenaïde*—with Rossini's happy conclusion and the Signorina fetchingly attired as the young Syracusan king, provoked an instant uptick in opera attendance. *Tancredi* became the second most popular opera after *Il Barbiere*, ultimately performed sixteen times. On January 22, 1826, one day after *Tancredi*'s fourth singing, Peppino Pasta reported enthusiastically to his wife back in Paris that “the Italian Theatre of New York is going great guns” and that “the Americans are extremely interested in sustaining this venture” (Stern, 2011, p. 221).

Giuditta Pasta never answered her husband's letter, but she did send an affectionate reply to Lynch's letter to her of November 30, 1825:

Stimatissimo Amico,

The news that you have had the goodness to give me regarding the brilliant success of the *Barbiere* has given me the greatest pleasure: I am always interested in everything that concerns the Incomparable Garzia Family, and it is for me a real satisfaction to hear that your fortunate compatriots have also done true justice to so much merit; that proves to me even more that they have good taste.

How pleased you must be to find yourself the creator, so to speak, of such a beautiful work of art; I had no doubt that it required no less than your love for the fine arts, and for your country, to execute such a great and beautiful project with such zeal. Allow me to add my congratulations to those you must be receiving all the time from your compatriots; I assure you that mine are no less heartfelt.

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Giuditta goes on to thank Lynch for the care he had lavished on her husband, and she closes with greetings to Lynch’s “most amiable family”—in Paris Lynch must have waxed eloquent regarding his five children back in New York—and says she will always remember Lynch’s “most precious friendship.”¹⁴

In February 1826, the troupe introduced its first tragedy, Rossini’s *Otello*, with Maria as the doomed heroine Desdemona, one of Pasta’s signature roles. In this opera Maria came into her own as a superb actress. Deadly earnest in counteracting the Park Theatre’s low standards of verisimilitude, after the first performance of *Otello*, she refused to sing the “Willow song” holding a fake, *papier-mâché* harp while Denis-Germain Étienne accompanied her at the piano. She pronounced the prop ridiculous and threw herself into learning to play a real harp by March 2, when her Desdemona created a *furor*.¹⁵

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As for her father playing the Moor,

he was a superb actor; his Don Giovanni has never been surpassed, and his *Otello* was dreadful to behold—in the last act positively appalling. The diabolical vigor of his acting, his swarthy, indictive countenance, his clutched Moorish fingers and his overpowering voice were enough to drive one distracted from the theatre. (J.D.O., 1880, n.p.)

Small wonder Maria confided to her idol, Giuditta Pasta, in Paris, “To tell the truth, Papa scares me when he kills me.”¹⁶

The popularity of *Otello* notwithstanding, in March 1826 two events nearly brought the Italian opera enterprise to a standstill. At this point the very survival of the Italian opera in New York rested on Maria García’s star quality. Yet, for reasons known only to Manuel García, he inexplicably cast Rossini’s *Il Turco in Italia* without the Signorina. On March 14, 1826, it premiered to an empty house, and was soon

¹⁴ Giuditta Pasta to Dominick Lynch, Paris, 30 January 1826. Autograph in Italian, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Dreer Autograph Collection.

¹⁵ François-Eugène Malibran to John Beylard Jr., New York, March 2, 1826. Tamvaco (1997), p. 127.

¹⁶ María García to Giuditta Pasta, New York, 14 February 1826. Autograph, in Italian, Museo Teatrale alla Scala, Milan, CA 4354.

withdrawn. Days after that failure came the heart-stopping news that the Signorina was to marry “Mr. Malibran” and retire from the stage in six months, provoking universal consternation.

One week after witnessing Maria’s church nuptials at his own church, St. Peter’s, Dominick Lynch chaired a meeting at New York’s City Hotel for the express purpose of raising money to build an opera house and to retain Manuel García Sr. to run it. To be incorporated was a legal entity called “The New-York Opera Company.” The committee resolved to capitalize the venture at \$100,000, the stock to be sold in shares of \$250 each. In 1833 Solidor Milon supplied more details concerning Manuel García’s terms under which he would remain in New York and continue to oversee the Italian opera:

When a Committee was appointed by the amateurs of the Italian opera for the purpose of inducing Signor G.’s company to reside in New York, and continue their performances, he demanded a subscription of \$100,000 for one year, with which he would provide for all the expenses, and even increase his company with several other singers of merit, depending only on his present exertions to ensure him a recompense in the future. (J.T., 1833, p. 53)

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But in 1826, too few sufficiently wealthy and socially ambitious people were willing to assume that kind of risk. Hours after his City Hotel meeting, Dominick Lynch wrote to Giuditta Pasta, almost transparently reviving the possibility of her coming to New York in the autumn of 1826, to replace the Signorina:

Ma chère Mad^e Pasta,

I cannot express the pleasure I had in receiving your very kind letter [of 30 January 1826]. [...].

As to our opera, about which you had the goodness to express an interest, I don’t have much to tell you which you would like – we lost our prima donna – Maria married Monsieur Malibran, a rich man and very respectable – But where to find a singer to fill her place? What shall we do? It’s hard to find a person who can play Rosina, and Desdemona, and I assure you, she played these two roles as well as Tancredi with great success – She is full of talent, and she proposes to withdraw from the stage in November –

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The García Family: A Musical Journey between Spain and the U.S.

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I have always regarded her as the only person who would be able to take your place in Europe, when you retire with all your laurels – But, if she persists in her intentions, that is to say to withdraw, the amateurs will have lost a treasure – for her age she has amazing gifts, and if she had worked hard, we had hopes that she would have been able to fill your place in the world – and let me tell you, only a person who is inspired can do it – what a triumph you had! And with what pleasure I saw it! [...] ¹⁷

In the last line before his closing, Lynch assured Giuditta, “García is happy about the marriage of his daughter.” Lynch’s declaration may give pause to anyone familiar with the Malibran literature, which unanimously asserts that Maria’s father violently opposed her marriage to François-Eugène Malibran. That near-universal presumption, in turn, has led most accounts of the Garcías in America to assume that this family conflict somehow permanently undermined the activities of the Italian opera troupe in New York. The opposite was true. Eugène Malibran, whom the Garcías met early in their New York sojourn, proved an invaluable resource. His native languages were Spanish and French, and he easily conversed in English—unlike Manuel García. Eugène Malibran’s complex backstory does involve dishonorable activities, criminal convictions, and deceptive business dealings, the particulars of which are beyond the scope of this essay. But the García family remained unaware of Eugène’s shady past until long after their departure from New York. The farewell letter Joaquina left her son-in-law on September 16, 1826, should suffice to show the affectionate bonds Eugène had formed with Maria’s parents and with her brother, Manolito. After detailing a long list of favors Joaquina asks Eugène to carry out for her while her family is in Mexico, she writes, in Spanish, “Farewell, dear Don Eugenio, my son who possesses half of my heart” (“Adiós, querido Don Eugenio, hijo mío que posee la mitad de mi corazón”) and closes, in slightly misspelled French, with, “Be certain of all the affection of your devoted friend and Maman” (“Soyez sur de toute l’affection de Vostre dévouée amie et Maman”). ¹⁸

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¹⁷ Dominick Lynch to Giuditta Pasta, New York, 31 March 1826 [postmarked in France 25 April 1826, and forwarded to King’s Theatre, London]. Autograph, in French, New York Public Library at Lincoln Center, Pasta Collection.

¹⁸ Joaquina García to François-Eugène Malibran, New York, [16 September 1826]. Autograph in a mixture of Spanish and French, Bibliothèque-Musée de l’Opéra, Paris, L.A.S. Garcia J.

On the last day of April 1826 Peppino boarded a ship heading back to Europe, along with this letter from Manuel García to Giuditta, which read in part:

Dearest Giuditta,

How happy you must be to receive this! The bearer [Peppino], who has not been able to sigh for his dearest Giuditta in all his absence, will be very happy!

And how sorry I am not to be able to leave this country for another six months and go to Italy as your husband will inform you! As he is aware of the daily happenings, and can tell you about them in detail, I will not bore you with a long narrative, but end by telling you that I have been deceived in everything and by everyone, and that this country cannot be compared to the most wretched of Italy.

I have heard about all your triumphs, and you know what a heartfelt interest I take in all that concerns you.

You already know that Maria is married and will retire from the theatre because her husband does not want her to follow this career, and to tell you the truth it is a pity, because she would have made an excellent *prima donnina*. On the other hand, being rich, he is good to remove her from such a labyrinth.¹⁹

By saying he had been “deceived in everything and by everyone” Manuel was hinting at the dark times the troupe had endured of late. In truth, the anger and resentment the tenor vented about to Giuditta resulted from his own self-delusion. With the general public’s growing indifference to the Italian opera, the troupe needed a sure-fire hit. One of Mozart’s operas, such as *Don Giovanni*, or another Rossini gem such as *La Cenerentola* would have rekindled enthusiasm among supporters of the Italian opera.

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Having learned little from the public’s well-voiced objections to the drawbacks of his *L’amante astuto*, García brought forth another opera of his creation, *La figlia dell’aria* (The daughter of the *air*), billing it as a work composed expressly for the city of New York. An exasperated public pronounced this so-called ‘grand spectacle,’ with its nonsensical plot,²⁰ cacophonous instrumentation, and male duets bellowed on

¹⁹ Manuel García to Giuditta Pasta, Paris, 30 April 1826. Autograph, in Italian, Museo Teatrale alla Scala, Milan, CA 4345.

²⁰ The libretto was by Gaetano Rossi, but the public mistakenly believed Paolo Rosich was its author, possibly because he sang the role of Timoteus, “an aged poet at the court of Ninus,” in the New York production. In the spring of 1816, at the Teatro Ducale di Parma, Rosich sang the same role in performances of Ferdinando Paini’s opera of the same name based on Rossi’s libretto. It was probably Rosich who suggested to García that he write an opera based on Rossi’s *Figlia dell’aria*.

horseback, an utter *fiasco*. When it fell flat at its *primo* on Tuesday, April 25, 1826, critics basically warned the public, ‘Do not even think of coming to this opera.’ Tone-deaf to public taste, García mounted his *Figlia dell’aria* again on Saturday, April 29, on Tuesday, May 2, and again the following Tuesday, May 9.

As if eager to live up to its name, the short-lived Catholic weekly *The Truth Teller*, though lauding “our excellent Italian Company” (Anón., 1826c), bluntly condemned García for having obstinately staged *both* of his operas, *L’amante Astuto* and *La figlia dell’aria*, four times each before admitting defeat—bruised ego notwithstanding—before caving to vehement public pressures to produce *Don Giovanni*:

Garcia's music and Rossich's [*sic*] poetry were in a fair way to banish every refined person from the theatre. An incoherent jumble of Spanish ballads, choice passage from German composers, and pilfered Italian voluptuousness, would have soon consigned the Italian Company to the tomb of the Capulets. Even the lovely Mademoiselle Garcia, the splendid Angrisani, or the powerful Barbieri, could not have prevented such a destiny. If we could not relish patchwork music,²¹ how could we admire the insipidity, tastelessness, and absolute ignorance of Rossich's [*sic*] poetry?—He ought to stick to his profession, and not make himself ridiculous by climbing Parnassus; there are a great many rugged thorns by the way. Happily, however, for the permanent establishment of the Italian opera in this country, Garcia's good sense was a match for his vanity, and he had the discretion to abandon the character of a *maestro* for the reputation of a good manager and an exquisite singer. (Anon., 1826e)

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In fairness to García, the possibility exists that he may have written *La figlia dell’aria* with a much larger theatre than the Park in mind. Recent research by Giuseppe Gerbino (2023, pp. 122–155) suggests that, as of January 1826, García had been looking for a new home for his troupe—the Lafayette Amphitheatre (later Lafayette Theatre), owned by Major General Charles W. Sandford. The newly enlarged stage of the Lafayette, formerly a circus arena, would have provided ample room for the elaborate sets, janissary-like orchestra, and equestrian scenes of *La figlia dell’aria*. The contractual negotiations, however, came to naught.

²¹ For an analysis of the two-act structure and musical numbers of *La figlia dell’aria*, see Casares Rodicio (2018, pp. 454–7).

A relatively recent modern reconstruction and public performance of the overture and one solo number from *La figlia dell'aria* may also reaffirm Manuel García's stature as a composer of uncommon gifts who deserved to be taken more seriously in his lifetime. Up to now, music critics' lame comparisons to boldface names—Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti—have plagued assessments of García's musical endeavors. At Carnegie Hall the evening of March 3, 2009, the mezzo-soprano Cecilia Bartoli, joined by the Orchestra La Scintilla of Zurich Opera, presented a program dedicated to uncovering “neglected repertory” connected to Maria Malibran, briefly enshrined as New York's Signorina. Bartoli's program opened with the overture from García's *La figlia dell'aria* and was immediately followed by Bartoli's rendition of “E non lo vedo ... Son regina,” the character Semirade's aria from the tumultuous penultimate scene of that opera. Long before producing in her 2007 multimedia *Maria*—cross-continental bus tour, DVD, CD, and commemorative book—Bartoli had cast herself as a reincarnation of Malibran, in spirit, if not in vocal attributes. For the purpose of bringing to life the experience of New Yorkers hearing this aria from her father's *La figlia dell'aria*, as sung by the Signorina, the assessment of *Times* critic Anthony Tommasini will have to suffice. “Though not quite Rossini,” he wrote, “this appealing, ably fashioned and dramatically savvy aria demonstrated the generally high level of workaday opera composers during that era.” Following “long, expressive phrases of recitative” preceding “the defiant aria,” the character of Semiramide “breaks into impassioned coloratura passage work” (Tommasini, 2009).

The Italian opera company's New York premier of Mozart's *dramma giocoso*²² on May 23, 1826, held special poignancy for the city, for fans of the García troupe, and for one citizen in particular. Lorenzo Da Ponte, librettist of three of Mozart's operas—*Le nozze de Figaro* (1786), *Il dissoluto punito, ossia il Don Giovanni* (1788), and *Così fan tutte* (1790)—had since 1807 made New York his family's permanent home. After failing to launch commercial ventures totally unsuited to his intellectual nature, Da

²² A *dramma giocoso per musica* (literally, a comic drama, or a drama with jokes, written to be set to music) is an Italian 18th-century term for a comic opera containing serious or tragic elements.

Ponte soon established himself as an Italian teacher, bookseller, memoirist, and lecturer. He brought to life Dante, Petrarch, Alfieri, Ariosto, and the Greek classics to hundreds of students. In 1825, at age seventy-six, he had famously been appointed Columbia University's first professor of Italian. But as attendance at his classes was voluntary, and as he had failed to attract a single student, Da Ponte was about to resign from that prestigious position.

In the lore surrounding the troupe's production of Mozart's long-awaited *chef-d'oeuvre* in its unbowdlerized original, we often read that artistic-director Manuel García lacked an extra singer to cover the tenor role of Don Ottavio, and that this explained Manuel García's reluctance to produce *Don Giovanni*. A call for this tenor turned up Solidor Milon, the orchestra's cellist, who volunteered to attempt the role. But Edmund Simpson flatly refused to pay Milon's salary, despite being obliged to do so. According to the tenor's own account, García and Simpson finally reached a compromise: each would pay half the tenor's salary of \$600 (Nelson-Haber, 2023, p. 98) (Gerbino. 2023, pp. 122-125).

García's casting dispute, however, was not the only reason for his reluctance to stage Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. Besides demanding greater depth of interpretation, singing Mozart's music would require stricter fidelity to the score, whereas Rossini's florid writing afforded ample room for embellishment and display. Judging from the review of *Don Giovanni's* opening night published in a British weekly—less biased than those in the New York dailies—García had good reason to feel intimidated. “The only person whose performance can be praised without any exception, is Mademoiselle Garcia” (Anon., 1826d), was the opinion of the *Albion's* critic.

By the third performance of *Don Giovanni*, on May 30, 1826, which happened also to be the first performance with Lorenzo Da Ponte himself in attendance, Mme Barbieri, Angrisani, and Milon had clearly conquered their difficulties. As for the spectators, which included Bostonians and Philadelphians, their “astonishment,

pleasure and enthusiasm were wound up to the highest pitch. The venerable author of the opera, who sat in a centre box like a second Homer, could not resist the contagion of approbation with which the whole audience simultaneously filled the theatre” (Anon., 1826e).

Although brought out late in the year, *Don Giovanni* soon became the highlight of the troupe’s ten-month sojourn. Mozart and Da Ponte’s opera would be enjoyed ten times, tying Rossini’s *Otello* for third place in popularity. The enormous success of *Don Giovanni* may be gauged by a now more upbeat García, writing to Giuditta Pasta for the last time from New York on June 10, 1826.

My most highly esteemed and beloved Sra. Giuditta,

By this time you will have had, I hope, the pleasure of seeing your beloved Peppino in good health, if he did not suffer as much as on the other trip. This will serve first of all to give you news of our health—which would be perfect if it weren't for these continuous, damned changes of weather, in which after two or three days of excessive heat there comes all of a sudden a chill that closes your pores and makes you catch a cold. [...]

As regards the theatre, I have nothing new to tell you. We gave *Don Giovanni*, and it was very well liked. And this is clear from the fact that the third performance was better attended than the second, and the fourth even more so. We are rehearsing *La Cenerentola* and we will see: afterwards *Romeo*, and perhaps that will be the last.²³

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1.4. The Long Goodbye

Since February 1826 the New York press had been vaguely aware that Manuel García was poised to accept an offer by Colonel Luis Castrejón to visit Mexico City at the conclusion of the troupe’s New York visit. But it would later become apparent that Manuel García did not actually have a pressing professional need to quit New York: he would not inaugurate his yearlong opera season in Mexico until 29 June 1827 (Radomski, 2000, p. 215).

²³ Manuel Garcia to Giuditta Pasta, London, June 10, 1826. Autograph, in Italian, New York Public Library at Lincoln Center, Pasta Collection. The translation quoted here is from Radomski (2000, pp. 206-207).

The troupe's premiere of Rossini's *La cenerentola* on June 27 was barely noticed in the press; however, it would soon find favor with the public, which never tired of old tales in new guises. As it happened, New Yorkers were gearing up to mark the fifty-year anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, and the spotlight fell on a number of special celebrations.

Saturday, July 8, 1826, marked the first day of the summer break enjoyed by the regular Park Theatre performers ending on Monday, August 28. That meant that, with a city full of tourists and the Park all to themselves, the troupe held a virtual theatrical monopoly, staging operas on Mondays, Wednesday, and Fridays and rotating their repertory of popular operas. As *The New-York American* noted on July 11, 1826, "The opera is now the chief theatrical attraction; and as very many strangers are passing through the city, the efforts of the artists will be well remunerated."

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But while the troupe hit its stride, offering to packed houses of regulars and out-of-towners a different opera every night, friends of the Italian opera were left to wonder for how long the troupe would remain among them. In *The New-York American* of July 15, 1826, for instance, New Yorkers read with alarm that "Signor Garcia's Engagement will terminate on 31st July." On July 22, the same newspaper announced that the "Italian operatic company, which has, during the past season, performed with so much applause, are about to leave this city for Mexico, whence they will return to Europe." But four days later, on July 26, the troupe premiered to rave reviews Zingarelli's *Romeo e Giulietta*, with the Signorina singing Romeo to Elisabeth Barbieri's Giulietta. Almost every aspect of the production, with the exception of the orchestra, earned high praise.

The opera of Romeo and Juliet, taken with many alterations, from the tragedy of Shakespeare,²⁴ was performed last evening for the first time, to a fashionable and well-filled house. The weather was cool, the audience was full of anxious expectations, and for a first effort, the orchestra was well-drilled, while the performers seemed at once in good voice and good looks, to be excited by the brilliant assemblage before them.

The Signorina makes a most gallant cavalier, and many a Juliet would find it in her heart to love such a Romeo; let us too add that he would be a most insensible Romeo, that could not return the love of such a Juliet as Madame Barbieri [*sic*].²⁵

After expressing the hope that Zingarelli's opera would be repeated, this critic went on to make an impassioned plea that the Italian opera troupe be permitted to continue its tenure in New York.

We speak very seriously, when we say, that if the Italian troupe be suffered to depart from this city we shall thereby lose not only a rational and refined pleasure, but a certain and unfailing source of profit.

It is susceptible of demonstration that the money spent in various ways, by the numberless strangers whom the charms of the opera have attracted to our city, would more than pay the interest of the largest capital, which the permanent establishment among us of an opera house and corps, would require.

Nor, without such an attraction would this money flow into this channel. Hundreds and hundreds of both sexes have visited the city with the sole object of attending the performance of the Italian troupe, who would not otherwise have come.

We say then both to those who are lovers of music, and to those who look more closely at the main chance—combine, cooperate, preserve the opera, and you will do an acceptable and profitable act to New-York.²⁶

The question before the public, then, was whether the troupe could be kept in New York long enough for an Italian opera house to be built. The answer never came: for two months, patrons of the Italian opera would never know for sure if the Garcías would stay or leave. On Saturday, July 29, two days before the previously announced “last appearance” of the troupe, the Park announced its annual two-week closure thirteen days hence:

This Theatre will close on 11th August, for the purpose of being painted, embellished, and decorated. Last night but five of Signor GARCIA's Engagement.²⁷

²⁴ The libretto of Zingarelli's *Romeo e Giulietta* was based on the 1530 novella by Luigi da Porto, which William Shakespeare later reprised for his tragedy, first performed in 1597.

²⁵ *New-York American*, July 27, 1826.

²⁶ *New-York American*, July 27, 1826.

²⁷ *New-York American*, July 29, 1826.

This two-week advance notice would have put the date of the last performance of the troupe on August 11, after which the theatre would be closed for seventeen days, for refurbishing prior to its reopening on Monday, August 28.

In the meantime, the troupe continued to perform “with their usual perfection”²⁸ to crowded houses. Their relentless schedule took a toll on at least one of the troupe’s leading singers. On the night of August 7, the audience enjoying a performance of *La cenerentola* was horrified when

the Signorina, who was much indisposed when she commenced the part, but whose desire to fulfil her duties induced her notwithstanding to go on with it, fainted away on the stage, and was unable to proceed. Garcia, Jr. was so much affected by the malady of his sister, as also to be incapable of going on, and the performance was of necessity abruptly terminated. Great interest was manifested by the audience for this charming actress, who is, we regret to state, still suffering this morning from her indisposition.²⁹

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Not quite recovered from her collapse during *La cenerentola*, the Signorina nevertheless went on stage two nights later as Zerlina, with all of the sympathies of the audience at her feet.

The interesting *Zerlina* was received with acclamation on her first appearance; and she evinced by her manner how deeply she was sensible of the kindness of the audience. She was evidently labouring under the effects of indisposition, though the tones of her voice were never more touching.—Nothing but a desire to spare one who had enfeebled herself by her efforts to please, prevented the spectators from encoring more than one of her songs.³⁰

Fortuitously for a foursome visiting New York at this time, the Signorina had not been forced to cancel this performance. Visitors from Virginia, passing through New York City on their way to Upstate New York, decided to visit the Park that Wednesday evening, August 9. One of the women confided her impressions to her diary. Coming from a person who had never heard an Italian opera, her charming and naïve

²⁸ *New-York American*, August 1, 1826.

²⁹ *New-York American*, August 8, 1826.

³⁰ *New-York American*, August 10, 1826.

comments on *Don Giovanni* help to recreate what must have been an experience common to many visitors to New York during the summer of 1826.

Returning home to dinner, we held a consultation about going to the opera. The ladies were unanimous in declaring for the measure, and consequently carried the point. We therefore put on our best looks and took our seats in a box delightfully situated. Never were my feelings more pleasantly excited than on hearing the singing. No human being can form an idea of the power and pathos of the Italian vocal music, or of the perfection to which the human voice is capable of being brought. Although I did not understand one word of the language yet so expressive were the tones and gestures that I could with readiness understand the whole plot of the play. It was *Il Don Giovanni*, poetry by Da Ponte—music by Mozart. I assure you it was an exquisite treat to my musical taste. I was more gratified than with any recreation I have met with since my arrival in New York. Madame Malabrand [sic] is a lovely, interesting little creature. (Anon., 1917, pp. 66-67)

Judging from her astute observations on the city's architecture, on its museum's art masterworks and preserved fauna, and on its gardens, this was a cultured, well-educated woman, one who also delighted in music and singing.

By way of contrast, a recent New England transplant to New York City appears to have waited over a year to attend the Italian opera at the Park. This was the poet, lawyer, and future literary luminary William Cullen Bryant. As it happened, he witnessed the Garcías' seventh performance of *Don Giovanni* only twelve days before the visitors from Virginia enjoyed the same opera. According to his biographer and son-in-law, Bryant "cared nothing for music, though a great deal for the Italian language and literature" (Godwin, 1883, vol. 1, p. 227), despite both the literary review he co-founded, *The New-York Review and Athenaeum*, and his current employer, *The New-York Evening Post*, being two of the most enthusiastic supporters of the Italian opera. The day after the performance of July 29, 1826, Bryant conveyed his impressions in a letter to his wife, Frances:

As to the Opera I was pleased—more so than I expected to be. The piece was *Don Giovanni*, a well known plot borrowed from the Spanish³¹ I think by Molière, and since reproduced in a great many dramatic forms. The hero, *Don Giovanni* *Don Juan* or *Don John*, marries all the wives he can persuade to have him, commits murders and all sorts of iniquities, and fears neither God

³¹ Bryant is well-versed in Spanish literature. Like Molière in *Le Festin de Pierre* (1665), Da Ponte had drawn for his plot in *Don Giovanni* from an early Spanish play, *El Burlador de Sevilla y convidado de piedra*, 1630, by Tirso de Molina.

nor man. He invites the statue of a man whom he has murdered to supper with him—the statue accepts his invitation, comes at the hour appointed—takes Don Giovanni by the hand—who expires in the most cruel torments—whereupon hell opens and the devils drag him in among the fireworks.—Don Garcia is a good actor as well as a celebrated singer, but his lower notes are a little husky—his voice is somewhat worn.—His daughter the Signorigna [*sic*] as she is affectedly called, is little and pretty, with a liquid voice and skinny arms which she does not [know] how to use—a good actress however. Angrisani with a fine deep bass voice is also an excellent performer. The three other performers were poor, Madame Barbieri [*sic*], a French woman, just tolerable—with a great deal of mannerism. Signora Garcia, not so good, and Mons. Milon intolerable. There was another, however, young Garcia who enacted the servant of Don Juan who was passable.—So much for the Italian Opera. (Bryant, 1975, vol. 1, pp. 206-207)

The “young Garcia” Bryant thought so little of was twenty-one-year-old Manuel Patricio García Jr. Although, like all the Garcías, an excellent musician, his lack of prior stage experience and a bass voice as yet unformed marked him as the weakest performer of the troupe. Yet Bryant’s own journal literally bent over backwards to provide excuses and to offer the young singer encouragement. The poor acoustics of “our badly constructed theatre” explained why, at present, “young Garcia” lacked fullness, power, modulation, and depth; the critic allowed the bass five—perhaps even nine—more years for his voice to fully develop (Anon, 1826b, p. 230).

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On August 11, the troupe gave the most popular opera in its repertory, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, to a crowded theatre.

Notwithstanding the hot, wet weather, the house was brilliantly filled; and the performance went off in the most spirited manner. All were in fine voice, and intent upon pleasing. Some remaining debility was manifested by the Signorina in her play; but her voice was never clearer, nor more full and sweet. Her songs at the piano, and to the guitar, English, French, and Spanish, Home [Sweet Home], Colin et Colette, and Los Risos, were given with delightful effect.³²

Before the performance it had been understood that this was to be the final night of the troupe’s engagement. No sooner did the curtain fall at the close of the opera than the entire audience came to their feet to applaud thunderously for Manuel García:

³² *New-York American*, August 12, 1826.

A general cry of manager—new engagement—then was heard. García, not comprehending this, though if the manager [Edmund Simpson] was present, he could not have mistaken it, came forward a second time, and said in French, 'that he was to the last degree sensible of the kindness of the house, but from inability to speak the language, he was unable to express himself as he wished.' The audience then retired.³³

Thus, via *The New-York American*, was Simpson pressured to share his theatre again in the fall, upon its reopening. His credibility in the community at stake, Simpson decided to offer the troupe the use of the theatre two nights a week for five weeks upon the reopening on August 28, 1826.

From Tuesday, August 29, through Saturday, September 30, the troupe performed seven of the nine operas it had introduced to New York. (*L'amante astuto* and *Il turco in Italia* had been abandoned months before, but *La figlia dell'aria* was given one last hearing on August 29.) On September 16, 19, 23, and 26, Manuel García Jr., Joaquina, Manuel García, Sr., and the Signorina, respectively, took benefits for themselves. Of Maria's benefit of September 26, 1826, *The New-York Enquirer* wrote:

An Audience, the most brilliant ever collected in New York, crowded the Park Theatre on Tuesday evening, to grace with their presence and reward with their smiles, the varied and attractive talent of Signorina Garcia. The dress boxes had two or three rows of ladies, and the upper tier four or five. The pit was crowded, and even the gallery, "albeit unused to the melting mood," was full. The receipts are said to be near \$2,000.—The introductory songs from Don Giovanni, were given with great spirit and effect, and the whole of the tender and difficult music of Romeo and Juliet, was executed with unrivalled taste and skill. On Saturday, the last night, we expect an overflowing house, and shall take occasion before that day, to glance at what has and what may be done, towards the establishment of a permanent opera. (Anon., 1826f)

After his daughter's benefit, García published in *The New-York American*

A CARD.

SIGNOR GARCIA respectfully announces to the Public that his Engagement is limited to one representation of the Italian Opera, and will positively be concluded on this EVENING, 30th inst.³⁴

³³ *New-York American*, August 12, 1826.

³⁴ *New-York American*, September 30, 1826.

But the patrons of Italian opera in New York still refused to believe García and Simpson could not come to some agreement so that the troupe could give more performances.

Can we not, if only for a few nights—if only for five or six, or even two or three, (if more cannot be had) additional representations, be indulged with a re-engagement? Will not the manager and Garcia consent; and will not the audience require it? We hope so.³⁵

On September 30, the García troupe gave its last performance in New York in an atmosphere charged with emotion. The opera itself, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, was virtually ignored as the audience turned itself inside out trying at once to show its admiration and appreciation of its favorite performers, to capture the last sounds of the voices that had enthralled them for ten months, and to plead for the last time with Simpson to allow the troupe to continue singing on the stage of the Park Theatre.

The singer who would be missed most of all was, of course, New York's beloved Signorina. This was ironic, because Maria was the only member of the García family who did not plan to leave New York. From the account of the farewell evening, however, it was abundantly apparent that the audience had assembled primarily

to hear the parting strains of the enchanting Signorina.—They were indeed her sweetest strains. As it was understood that in the lesson scene several songs, some of them new, would be sung, the encores were less frequent than on former occasions. 'The Light Guitar,' 'Home, Sweet Home,' the charming Spanish song introduced to our acquaintance by the Signorina, on her first appearance, and the pretty French air commencing, "La, lara, la," & c. were all sung in a style peculiarly the Signorina's; and they received the most rapturous applause of as brilliant an assemblage as has ever been collected at the Park Theatre.³⁶

As each of the other singers came on stage in their respective roles, they were applauded in turn.³⁷ The real drama of the evening, however, came at the end of *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, when the audience rose *en masse* to demand that the troupe should consider and be allowed a re-engagement.

³⁵ *New-York American*, September 30, 1826.

³⁶ *New-York American*, October 2, 1826.

³⁷ *New-York American*, October 2, 1826.

As the curtain descended, a simultaneous call for Garcia was heard from every part of the house. The call was promptly answered; he came in front of the curtain, bowed most respectfully to the audience, and then retired. ‘The manager! The manager!’ was then vociferated, and Mr. Simpson came forward and begged to be informed what was the wish of the house; which was expressed to him very distinctly, from the pit, boxes, and gallery, in a desire for a new engagement of the Italians; to which [sic] Mr. Simpson replied, ‘I shall be very happy to make a re-engagement, if Signor Garcia will consent.’ The cry was now ‘Garcia! Garcia!’ When Mr. Ritchings advanced and stated that it was Signor Garcia’s intention to obey the call—he was now changing his dress, and asked the indulgence of the house for a few minutes. Garcia soon after appeared, and made a short address in French, which may be thus translated. ‘I have the honor to present myself, in obedience to the call which you have had the goodness to make, and am willing to give three representations of the opera next week, provided Mr. Simpson will assign Monday, Wednesday, and Friday for that purpose.’ He retired amidst the most deafening cheers. Another call was in consequence for the manager, who had not appeared to answer it when the writer left the house.³⁸

But in truth, García had known that Simpson had already booked the British Shakespearean actor William Charles Macready for those three nights. Thus Manuel García’s American adventure ended on a high note, with plaudits ringing in his ears long after the curtain fell on his troupe’s transcendent final performance.

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During the unpredictable ups and downs of their sojourn in New York, the Garcías’ transatlantic stature had gone from the sneering British press’s “motley party, chiefly Spaniards, that left Europe at the beginning of October [1825], on an operatic speculation” (Anon., 1826a) to New York’s irreplaceable Italian opera troupe that “must not be suffered to depart from this city.”³⁹ But depart they would—without the Signorina, of course. The four Garcías had already booked passage from New York aboard the brig *Brown* (Captain Skinner), bound for Vera Cruz, Mexico, on October 16, 1826.

³⁸ *New-York American*, October 2, 1826.

³⁹ *New-York American*, July 27, 1826.

1.5. *The Signorina's Farewell to New York*

Contrary to the literature, the Signorina—the future meteoric superstar Madame Malibran-García— was not eager to leave New York. Before she did so, her husband's looming, previously undivulged insolvency had forced her to return to the stage and concert room. Thousands of dollars earned singing English ballad operas during two sold-out engagements at New York's new Bowery Theatre, and public concerts in New York and Philadelphia had failed to satisfy Eugène Malibran's enormous debts. In Europe, at least, her earnings could not be garnished by his creditors.

When Maria did leave, however, she did not break completely with her large and devoted entourage. Later, in her letters (currently unpublished) back to New York, she would name fifty New Yorkers to whom she wished to be remembered. In addition to the Wainwrights, at whose Episcopal church she sang on Sundays, Maria had been particularly close to the Brugières, Antoinette and Charles, and their children. The wealthy, cultured Brugières presided over a close-knit community of French and Spanish émigrés, including the Chasourne, Harmony, and Teisseire families, at whose homes Maria Felicia was a frequent guest, both before and after her marriage to François-Eugène Malibran. She often sang at their soirées and dinner parties. She dedicated the first song she published in New York, "Tourment d'amour," to Antoinette Brugière.

Maria's final "farewell benefit and last appearance" at New York's new Bowery Theatre on October 29, 1827, three days before her ship to Le Havre would set sail, was particularly poignant. In a tremulous voice, she sang in English the role of the Princess in Boieldieu's *John of Paris* (an American premier). Struggling to gain control of her emotions, she also sang at least seven songs and arias in Italian ("Una voce poco fa"), in German (Weber's "Und ob die Wolke sich verhülle" from *Der Freischütz*), French, and Spanish. From the beginning, it was clear to the audience that the Signorina was not at her best, and in fact may have been suffering physically. The

audience was entirely sympathetic. At the program's end, the Signorina came onstage alone and sat down at her harp to play a song she had composed to the words of her friend and colleague, the tenor Arthur F. Keane: "Away o'er the blue waves of ocean, I go to my own native shores / Yet this bosom will glow with devotion / To the clime and the scenes it adores." When she could not continue, Denis-Germain Étienne reprised the accompaniment on the piano until Maria could compose herself and sing both verses. Maria's adoring public seemed to be of one mind: they were about to lose a treasure. No performer who had ever visited New York had ever made so deep an impression on the public. As one eyewitness wrote, albeit somewhat morbidly, "Signorina García's absence will leave a chasm in vocal harmony that cannot easily be filled up: it will seal the tomb and inscribe the epitaph of the Italian opera in this country" (Anon. 1827). Three decades later, people were still talking and writing about their memories of this bittersweet occasion.

2. The García Family in America and Their Long-lasting Impact on Vocal Pedagogy

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Abstract: This article analyzes one of the most fruitful legacies of the García family's visit to America in 1825: the arrival and gradual rooting of their vocal technique. The virtuosity and charisma of María Malibran were spearheads of the prestige that this vocal technique would acquire in the following decades. Her success was not an isolated event, but the consequence of a solid vocal technique based on the principles of Italian *bel canto*. As more and more American singers who emerged from this vocal training achieved successful careers, the more prestige their teachers acquired. At first, those who wanted to train in this technique had to travel to Europe, but gradually it was possible in America, either due to the arrival and settlement of European singing teachers or due to the development of new generations of American vocal pedagogues that taught this vocal technique.

The article emphasizes how the acquisition of a vocal technique is not a linear process nor linked to a single teacher. Most professional singers draw on many insights and advice, as well as their own research, and adapt the technical corpus to their own musculature, psychology, and repertoire. For this reason, self-identification with a vocal technique is largely subjective, and in many of the cases mentioned in this article, was linked to the prestige of the García system. This vocal technique was a powerful tool in the professionalization of female singers and vocal pedagogues, some of whom gained entry to prestigious institutions or senior management positions in professional opera companies.

Keywords: Manuel del Pópulo García; Manuel García; María Malibran; Pauline Viardot; vocal pedagogy; vocal technique; opera; singing teachers; García method; *bel canto*; women professionalization

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2.1. Introduction

One of the legacies of the García⁴⁰ family in America is undoubtedly the arrival and gradual implantation of the García vocal technique, a seed that bears perennial fruit. Malibran's virtuosity and expressive singing greatly impacted the audiences during her visit to New York in 1825, and this spearheaded the prestige that García's singing school acquired in America throughout the nineteenth century. This prestige gained momentum as more and more singers trained in this vocal technique had successful careers in Europe and hit the front pages of the American press. The García vocal technique became synonymous with *bel canto*, and the Spanish family achieved a key prominence in the Italian singing technique panorama.

2.2. A word on terminology

Much has been written, in different languages and from diverse perspectives, about the García Family and their vocal technique, and the terminology defers. Manuel P. García had used *School, Treatise and Vocal Science* (imbued with the Positivism of the late nineteenth century); Anna Schoen-René (a pupil of Viardot's and Manuel P. García's) preferred *Vocal principles of García; García 'school' of Teaching and Garcia technique of singing and teaching*. Recent dissertations and articles on Historical Vocal Techniques and Vocal Acoustics have chosen *García school* (Tagil, 2020; Gregory, 2019). Prof. Radomski used also this term in his fundamental book on Manuel del Pópulo García (2002), as well as Moreno Mengíbar on his García family biography (2018, p. 92). The entry for Manuel Patricio García within the Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, signed by Fitzlyon and Radomski states "His school of singing, a perfection of his father's methods, produced remarkable results" (2001, p.522). Berton Coffin, a vocal pedagogue, and Vocal Pedagogy Historian, alternately

⁴⁰ The original spelling in Spanish of the last name was "García" (with accented 'i'). As the family worked and became known outside of its country of origin, this accent started to disappear, except in papers in Spanish and in Spanish-speaking countries, and in particular, in "Manuel García (1805-1906): A Bicentenary Reflection" by Teresa Radomski. The present paper uses the accent except when it cites a paper originally written without it.

wrote *Garcia lines of teachers; Garcia technique, Garcia school and Garcia pedagogical principles* (1989, pp.37; 170; 206). Singer Margaret Harshaw referred to as “the historic Garcia-Viardot method” (Duffie,1994). A common theme underlies this diversity of terms: the suggestion of a systematized set of teachings, codified in writing, published, and adopted, transmitted and, at times, enhanced by an expanding group of professionals, in some cases even exerting influence on educators who have not studied with any of its direct representatives firsthand (Schoen-René, 1941, p.173). The symbolic dimension of this set of teachings, with its implications of loyalty, as suggested by Bechtel (2023, pp.9-14), as well as its connotations of prestige and its relationship to a musical past that acquires mythical characteristics over time, are also an intrinsic part of the evolution of this theoretical-practical method, which goes beyond the terminology used in different studies on the topic.

Because the debate about precise terminology (school, sub-school of *bel canto*, teachings, tradition, principles, historical method) is beyond the scope of this article, we have chosen to use the term ‘school of singing.’ Fitzlyon and Radomski (2001) adopted this term in their study of Manuel Patricio García to refer to the researcher and singing teacher’s theoretical and methodological *corpus*, and to its subsequent development and enhancement.

2.3. *The García vocal technique development and connotations: from ‘methods’ to ‘school of singing’*

Let us review some distinctive elements of the García vocal principles, always keeping in mind that each singing pedagogue will emphasize different aspects to their pupils. For example, they might focus more on what was most difficult for them to attain or on those features that solve specific problems related to the mainstream repertoire of each epoch. Some of Manuel del Pópulo García’s contributions to this *corpus* relevant to the present dossier were: the centrality of the psychology of the singer and the emphasis on self-confidence; group singing as a key feature in the aspiring singer

development; musicality, creativity, and improvisation as resources that should be inherent to vocal technique such that the singer can modify the musical text in the performative context; the use of *rubato*⁴¹ as a main expressive element; the recommendation that a voice should achieve both agility and strength and not sacrifice one for the other; the Italian *bel canto*⁴² tradition of *mesa di voce*⁴³ and *legato*⁴⁴ training as major components of the daily work, along with *coloratura*⁴⁵ exercises; the emphasis on deliberate practice against mechanical training; the incorporation of *pathos* into the performance, and a very wide vocal range (Radomski, 2002, pp. 265-282). These last two features astounded audiences and music critics alike. However, as Prof. Radomski points out, due to Manuel del Pópulo García's impulsive and somewhat disorganized disposition, at times, elements of his teachings are conveyed through omission—by what he does not teach—and in the collected notes of his students (2002, p. 265).

Manuel Patricio García (Madrid, 1805-London, 1906), Manuel del Pópulo García's son, brought science to vocal technique. For Prof. James Radomski, his contribution should not be considered a mere continuation of the father's technique (2002, p.265). Indeed, the approach favored by Manuel P. García was based both on a methodical analysis and on the systematization of the method. He strongly appreciated the value of an empirical understanding of the functioning of the human voice. He may not have been the sole inventor of the laryngoscope, as accordingly to Broadwater (2019, pp.467-475) and Clerf (1956, pp.603-611) other scientists were working on it by that time, but he was indeed the first one to use it from 'inside' the

⁴¹ *Tempo rubato*: "The expressive alteration of rhythm or tempo. In an earlier type the melody is altered while the accompaniment maintains strict time. A later type involves rhythmic flexibility of the entire musical substance. Both originated as a part of unnotated performing practice (...)" (Hudson, 2001).

⁴² *Bel canto*: in Italian, "beautiful singing". To summarize, a style of singing characterized by beauty of quality in any given dynamic; purity of tone, perfect breath management to achieve a flawless *legato* line of singing, blending of registers. (Reid, 1983. pp. 18-31).

⁴³ *Messa di voce*: "In singing, a vocal ornament consisting of the gradual swelling and diminishing of a single tone (...) with little or no change in vowel quality". It was widely used also as a pedagogical exercise throughout the Bel Canto era". (Ibid., pp. 206-7).

⁴⁴ *Legato*: "Italian, 'connected'. Connection between two or more tones of a musical phrase. A true *legato* reflects a constant, precise resonance adjustment for all tones and is inseparable of good singing" (Ibid., p.188).

⁴⁵ *Coloratura*: Vocal ornamentation such as turns, trills, rapid scales and similar embellishments (Ibid., p.64).

singing profession. The development of the laryngoscope by Manuel P. García was probably the most significant application to the singing pedagogy of a scientific device. It allowed voice professionals to see the behavior of the vocal folds while speaking and singing, and to begin to identify vocal folds' vibration patterns and modes of phonation (Castellengo, 2005, pp.163-170). The interrelation of science with pedagogy made it possible to relate the singer's sensations with specific, identifiable physiological processes (T. Radomski, 2005, pp.25-41).

Beyond the technical details or different pedagogical approaches between father and son, a crucial characteristic of García family's technique was that it was an emblem of quality, and a trademark that granted prestige because adherence to the García school of singing established a professional's connection with an ancestral and revered musical past, that of the great composers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁴⁶ It also symbolically connoted a connection with such great singers of this Romantic past as García himself, the Malibran, and later Jenny Lind, Julius Stockhausen, Pauline Viardot-García, and many other extremely successful singers. Their performances were never recorded, not even in their old age, so we will never know how their singing sounded, but it is clear that their performances aroused such interest and passion that audiences traveled great distances to attend.⁴⁷

In the second half of the nineteenth century, García's school of singing proved able to adapt and evolve to accompany the new vocal demands of the changing operatic and other vocal styles. It did so without losing the core of its origin: the Italian *bel canto*. Many of the new generations of singers trained in the García teachings were

⁴⁶ Let us not forget that Manuel del Pópulo García himself had premiered the role of the Conte Almaviva in Rossini's *Barbiere di Siviglia*.

⁴⁷ A romantic myth circulated both in Europe and in America about certain members of the García Family (especially Manuel del Pópulo García and María Malibran) that drew analogies with the lives of Liszt and Paganini not only because their performances seemed to be able to challenge and transcend the limits of the human body but also because they incorporated *pathos* as an intrinsic element of performance practice. These characteristics were drawn into relief by Manuel García's personal behavior that defied social norms and Malibran's unconventional public persona as a woman.

successful Wagnerian⁴⁸ and Verdi opera performers, or art song singers of the Brahms circle (e.g., Julius Stockhausen). These singers were therefore associated with composers who became part of the canon of Western classical music. This mythical conglomerate brought together admired composers of the past and singing teachers whose vocal technique built a symbolic bridge toward the present in which the aspiring singers studied and worked. The García trademark also identified professionals with successful contemporary singers who adhered to the same vocal technique. This served as great advertising and enhanced the prestige of a vocal system that proved capable of providing European and American theaters with many singers with solid technique and professionalism.

The 'lineage' of the García school of singing, however, was not based on a supposed purity and rigid faithfulness to the whole of the technical principles. There were undeniable differences between the vocal technique and pedagogical approaches of Manuel del Pópulo García, Manuel P. García and his sister Viardot-García, Marchesi, and Stockhausen, to name but a few. Affiliation with the García school of singing was also therefore a subjective, personal adscription by an artist and/or a singing teacher who recognized him or herself as a descendant of a vocal dynasty that had helped in his or her artistic development and professional achievement. In other words, this school of singing was a multi-layered and polysemic container that accepted a variety of content. Sometimes, a singer studied for several years with teachers from the García school of singing. Others, it was a brief but fruitful relationship. Manuel del Pópulo García had not favored long-term apprenticeships with him. (Radomski, 2002, p.280). How these singers emphasized that they had studied with 'García' teachers flags the prestige that the 'García' name carried in an artistic or pedagogical career.

⁴⁸ Wagner himself had great respect for the Garcia school of singing and sent his niece Johanna Wagner to study with Manuel P. García.

The codification of the García family's vocal teachings began in 1824 with the publication of Manuel del Pópulo García's treatise, *Exercises and Method for Singing*, which underwent several revised editions and translations.

Manuel Patricio García, for his part, was more prolific. The title of his first book on singing, *École de Garcia: Traité complet de l'art du chant* (1840), is significant because it expresses a familial conception of a *corpus* in progress, as well as a recognition of vocal lineage, and because it uses the term *École* (school) while incorporating exercises developed by his father into his own pedagogical developments. In 1841, Manuel P. García published his famous *Memoire sur la voix humaine*, a theoretical work, and presented it before the Academy of Sciences. The work was eventually translated into English and German, and a revised French edition would be published in 1861.

New and revised editions of Garcia's *École: Traité complet de l'art du chant* were developed over subsequent decades, and published in French by Troupenas (1847) and Heugel (1878; 1901). In the last years of his life, García would complete *Hints on Singing*. His *École de Garcia* was published in a German translation by Schott Söhne in 1881 (with reprints by various publishers, including, most recently, a 2013 digital edition), in an Italian translation by Ricordi as Scuola di Garcia in 1880 (reprints until 1953), and in an English translation under the titles, *Garcia's School of Singing* (London, Boston and Toronto. E. Ashdown), and *Garcia's Complete Treatise of the Art of Singing* (London, Leonard & Co, 1924, edited by Albert García, the author's grandson and a student of Pauline Viardot-García), with numerous American reprints throughout the 20th century (Da Capo Press), and as recently as 1984. The treatise was used for instruction at the Guildhall School of Music, the Royal Academy of Music, and the Royal College of Music. In 2012, *École de Garcia: Traité complet de l'art du chant* was published in a critical edition (García, Díaz et al., 2012).

Pauline Viardot-García's contribution, *Une heure d'étude: Exercices pour voix de femme* (1880), was published by Heugel et fils, and later translated into German (Bote & Bock), English (Schirmer), and Russian (A. Gutkheył'). As Patrick Waddington notes (2013, pp. 77-78), Viardot-García's published work became an official text of the National Conservatory of Music in Paris and was subject to numerous reissues, by the French publisher Heugel (1882, 1896), the German publisher Bock (1905), the American publishers Schirmer (1897, 1939, 1975) and Kalmus (1999), and the Russian publisher A. Gutkheył' (1891, 1918, 1926, 1967), demonstrating the high demand for the work, and the scale of its pedagogical and commercial success.

The García technique's theoretical and practical *corpus* expanded with the publication of contributions authored by Julius Stockhausen (*Gesangsmethode*, 1884), Mathilde Marchesi (*Methode de chant théorique et pratique*, 1886, published in English in 1900 by Schirmer, and featuring the descriptor, "Successor to Garcia," under the author's name), Louise Héritte-Viardot (*Études d'artistes faisant suite a Une heure d'étude de Pauline Viardot*, 1923), and Gustave García, the son and pupil of Manuel P. García (*The Singing Teacher's Notebook*, 1910, and *A Guide to Solo Singing*, 1914) (Fitzlyon & Radomski, 2001).

The internationalization of successive manuals of vocal technique published by Manuel del Pópulo García, Manuel P. García, Pauline Viardot-García and their disciples demonstrates both the progressive enrichment of this theoretical and practical *corpus*, which accompanied new demands placed on singers in relation to new repertoires (both operatic and chamber music), as well as the success of the García school of singing in various countries across Europe, America and Oceania (Australia and New Zealand, Williams, 2000).

2.4. The process of sprouting: A vocal 'lineage' of exponents of the García school of singing in America

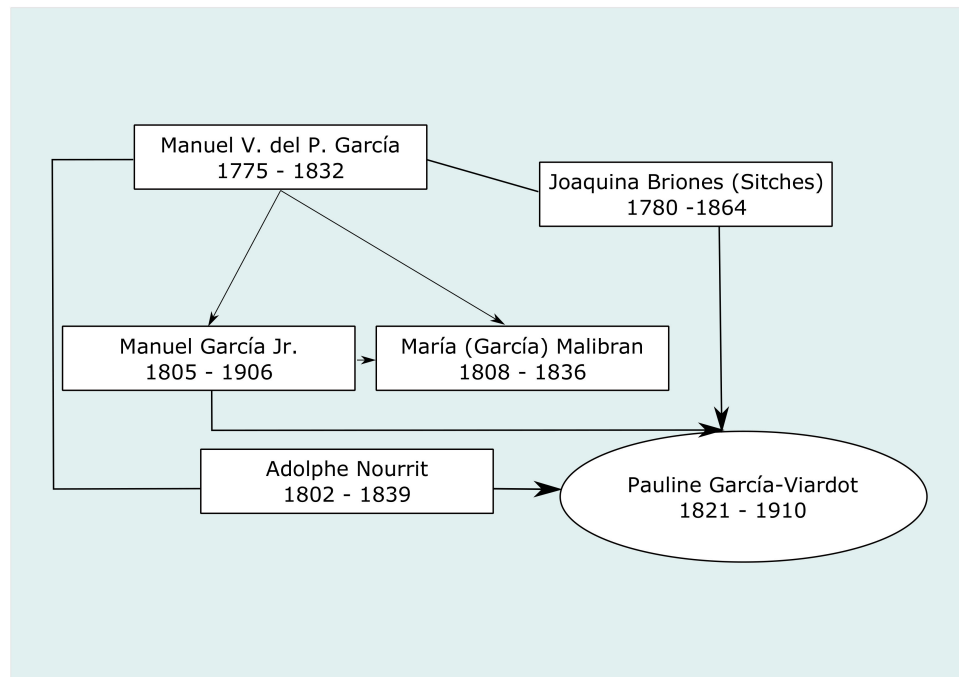


Image 1. A vocal 'lineage' of the García family.

Manuel del Pópulo García taught many students, among whom were his son, Manuel Patricio García, and his daughters, María García, later Malibran (Paris, 1808-Manchester, 1836), and Pauline García, later Viardot (Paris, 1821-1910). Pauline García was only 11 years old when her father died, so even though she was the pianist during his lessons and must have absorbed much of his teaching, her actual singing training was the joint work of Manuel Patricio García, Joaquina Briones (her mother), and Adolphe Nourrit, a former pupil of Manuel del Pópulo García's.

The third generation of the García school of singing (i.e., singers and pedagogues trained by either Manuel Patricio García, Pauline Viardot-García, or both) are many. Those who had an impact on American singers and singing teachers have been prioritized:

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— Mathilde Marchesi (1821-1913), (née Graumann) a German mezzo-soprano and singing teacher who was born in Frankfurt and studied under Manuel Patricio García (1845-1849). She taught at the Vienna Conservatory and from a private studio in that city as well as in Paris. She was a much sought-after vocal pedagogue, and singers traveled from all over Europe and the USA to study with her. In 1886 she published her own singing method, based on García's principles (Forbes, 1980). Marchesi always considered herself a pupil of Manuel P. García's and wrote openly about it: "I need scarcely mention how the maestro's clear, intelligent, and thorough method furthered my artistic efforts. His ideas on the female voice and its development were a revelation to me, and they were the foundation of my future career" (Marchesi, 1897, p.51). The professional relationship both with Manuel P. García and Pauline Viardot-García continued throughout her singing and teaching career (Ibid, p. 260). During the homages for García's centenarian, Mathilde's daughter Blanche Marchesi, also a singer and singing teacher traveled to London to present a large flower bouquet with the inscription "To the Columbus of the larynx" (Morning Post, London, March 18, 1905, as cited in T. Radomski, 2005). In her memoirs, Blanche Marchesi wrote: "it would be utterly impossible to write anything serious about singing if one did not start with the consecrated name of García. The García family were the founders of the singing school in which knowledge of the physiology of the voice goes hand in hand with all the great traditions of style" (1923, p.19).

—Julius Stockhausen (1826-1906), a German baritone, conductor, and singing teacher who studied with Manuel P. García in Paris in 1848 and followed him to London, where he continued his vocal training with García until 1851 (Pascall, 1980; Mackinlay, 1908). His singing career centered mostly around *oratorio* and *Lieder*. He had a fruitful musical association with Brahms: he premiered some of his *Lieder* cycles, as well as the baritone solo for the German Requiem, and toured with him. Stockhausen founded his own singing academy in 1880 and published his *Gesangsmethode* in 1884, which was translated to English and published first in serial format within the American magazine *The Voice* in 1888 (Austin, 2009, p.359) and as a book ca. 1907. Stockhausen successfully established a 'lineage' of students who felt

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themselves his vocal descendants, including the late German bariton Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau⁴⁹. Vocally, Stockhausen always emphasized his debt to Manuel P. García. He expressed as much in a letter in 1872: “Bussine (...) made me take private classes with Manuel García (...). I followed him to London in 1849. I owe him, Madame Viardot, and Jenny Lind everything I know about the art of singing.” He also writes: “It doesn’t matter if Manuel García is Spanish or French: to him I owe great progress.”⁵⁰ (Honegger, 2010, p. 379-381). According to Teresa Radomski, his *Gesangsmethode* is based on García’s Treatise, and his respect for Manuel P. García was such that he “even named his oldest son Emanuel, in honor of him” (T. Radomski, 2005, p. 30-35). He also contributed with reminiscences of his vocal lessons with Manuel P. García for the book *Manuel Garcia the centenarian* by Sterling Mackinlay (1908).

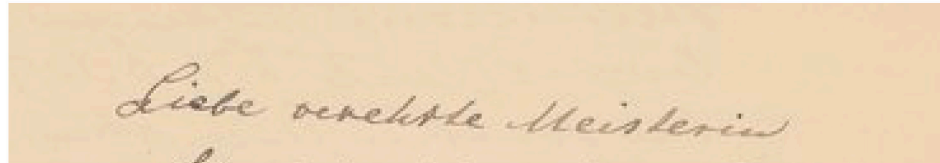
—Anna Schoen-René (1864-1942), a German singer and vocal pedagogue who studied with Pauline Viardot-García. After she emigrated to America, she maintained her association with Viardot and brought her most advanced students to her in Paris. Her book *America’s Musical Inheritance* was published by G. P. Putnam’s sons in 1941. Her vocal and pedagogical proficiency in conveying the García technique disclosed itself not only in the number of outstanding professional singers trained by her but also in the gratitude toward her pedagogical work by former alumni, as shown in Bechtel’s recent research (2023, pp. 13-14).

—Marianne Brandt (1842-1921), an Austrian contralto and pupil of Pauline Viardot-García. She had an international operatic career and sang leading roles at the MET between 1884 and 1888 (Forbes, 2001, Vol. 4, p. 239). The reviews point out the Italian *bel canto* touch in her singing, a distinctive sign of the García vocal technique: “Her voice is brilliant and powerful (...) and no little of the fluency and taste of the Italian” (Henderson, 1884). Letters from Brandt to Viardot-García show respect in the treatment (*Meisterin*) as well as heartfelt gratitude for her teaching and

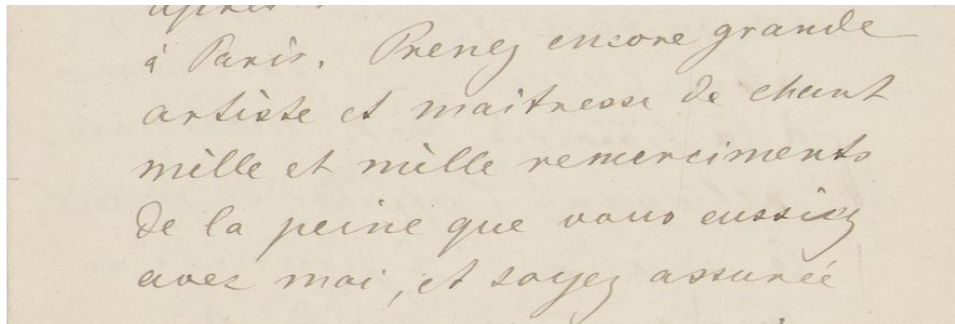
⁴⁹ “When Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau was asked the source of his technique and interpretation, he replied that both of his teachers were students of Julius Stockhausen’s, a student of Manuel García II, and that most of the answers could be found in the writings of Stockhausen and Garcia.” (Sugg, 1973, as cited in Coffin, 1989, p. 37)

⁵⁰ “Bussine (...) m’engage à prendre des leçons particulières de Manuel García (...). Je le suivis même en 1849 à Londres et je lui dois, à lui, à Mme. Viardot et à Jenny Lind ce que je sais de l’art du chant”. “Que M. García soit français ou espagnol, c’est à lui que je dois de grands progrès”. Jenny Lind was also a pupil of Manuel P. García.

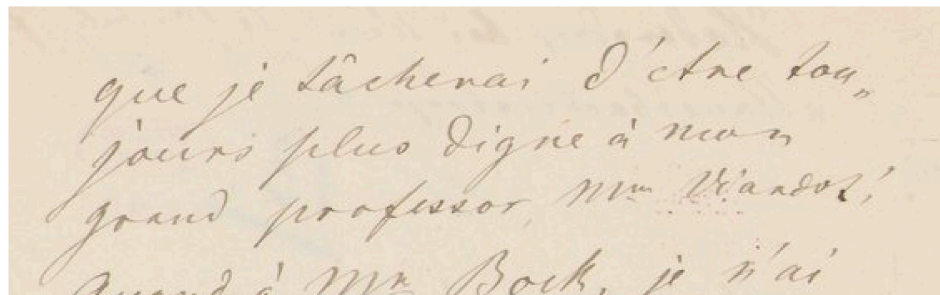
professional advice: “Please receive again, great artist and singing teacher, a thousand and a thousand thanks for the effort that you invested in me, and rest assured that I’ll try to be always more worthy of my great teacher Madame Viardot!”⁵¹



Liebe verehrte Meisterin



Prenez encore grande artiste et maîtresse de chant mille et mille remerciements de la peine que vous eussiez avec moi, et soyez assurée



que je tâcherai d'être toujours plus digne à mon grand professeur, Mme Viardot, quand à Mr. Boek, je n'ai

Image 2. Fragments of two autographed letters from Marianne Brandt to Pauline Viardot García. Top: Letter from 1874 in which she calls Viardot-García *Meisterin* (Maestra). Bottom: letter from 1894. «Source gallica.bnf.fr / BnF».

— Aglaja Orgéni (1841-1926), a Hungarian coloratura soprano who studied with Pauline Viardot-García and had an outstanding European career. She sang *Lucia* and *Traviata* in Covent Garden (Forbes, 2001, Vol. 13, p. 819-20) and was a permanent cast of the Münchner Hofoper between 1873 and 1878. Between 1886 and 1914 she

⁵¹ “Prenez encore grande artiste et maîtresse de chant mille et mille remerciements de la peine que vous eussiez avec moi, et soyez assurée que je tâcherai d'être toujours plus digne à mon grand professeur Mme Viardot!” (Brandt, 1894)

taught at the Dresden Conservatoire and afterward in Vienna. (Fastl, 2004). The surviving correspondence from Viardot shows pedagogic engagement and professional advice toward her pupil. Both Brandt and Orgéni helped Viardot in her quest to publish some of her compositions.

Bravo, bravo, ma chère
Aglaja, j'ai toute honte
de ton succès - quoique il
ne m'étonne en aucune
façon - J'attends avec

Où, il est évident que tes petites amies
la Lucia et C^{ie} ont bien travaillé
contre toi à Berlin - C'est égal, va
toujours, tâche de chanter la note au
-tant de calme que partout ailleurs, et le
public te rejoindra bien vite. Et me

Tiens moi bien au courant de tes faits
et gestes - travaille ta vocalisation, elle
est loin encore d'être comme elle devrait
comme force surtout, en descendant.

Image 3. Autographed letters from Pauline Viardot-García to her pupil Aglaja Orgéni with congratulations on her success, 1865 (a), professional advice over her engagements, October 16th, 1868 (b), and vocal technical advice, October, 16th, 1868 (c). Viardot-García, Pauline, 1821-1910. Autograph manuscript letters (signed) to Aglaja Orgéni; various places, various dates, 1865, 1868. Pauline Viardot-García additional papers, MS Mus 264, (71), Box: 4. Houghton Library.

We must bear in mind, however, that in most cases an inevitable hybridization of teachings, personal research and adaptations informed the vocal baggage of a professional singer. For this reason, it is crucial to appreciate the importance of self-assignment in any school of singing. Objective data can nevertheless help to identify the García school of singing qualities in a given singer: their recordings, for example, always display an even singing line and a pure tone production that always retains the *chiaro* part of the voice. From Marianne Brandt on, all singers referenced in this article can be listened to.

Performance reviews are another external source. The reception of the opera critics most often highlights certain features of their vocalism that are, precisely, trademarks of the García school of singing. This is even more notable at a time when other schools of singing in trend did not focus on vocal flexibility, pure tone production, and *legato* singing, prioritizing instead heavy singing, extreme volume, and declamatory, intensively articulated singing (Parr, 2020).

During most of the nineteenth century, American singers who wanted to train in the García school of singing had to travel to Europe to study either with Manuel Patricio García, Pauline Viardot-García, or the third generation of García vocal pedagogues mentioned above. There is a long list of performers who benefited from the García training, either as pupils of a member of this family or of one of those disciples mentioned above.

Contralto Antoinette Sterling (1841-1904) studied with Manuel Patricio García and Pauline Viardot-García and had a successful career in Britain from 1873, singing in Covent Garden and touring also in Australia and New Zealand. The *Woman of the Century Dictionary* points out her purity of tone and exceptional strength (Willard & Livermore, 1893). Eventually, she specialized in oratorio and *Lieder* but achieved greater success singing ballads (Mackinlay, 1906). Her gratitude to the García school

of singing is shown by the fact that she later asked Manuel P. García to teach her son Malcolm Sterling Mackinlay, who in turn became García's biographer and author of *Garcia the Centenarian* (1908). Soprano Ada Adini (born Adele Chapman, 1855-1924) studied with Viardot-García and was an active singer in Europe, where she sang at Verona, Barcelona, and Paris (opposite Jean de Reszke) and at La Scala in 1893. Along with Verdian and French Opera roles that asked for vocal flexibility, her Garcia singing technique allowed her to be versatile enough to become a sought-after Wagnerian singer (Ganzl, 2017). Soprano Maude Fay (1878-1964) studied with Aglaja Orgéni and made her debut in 1906 in Munich. Her success led to a professional five-year engagement, which included the title role in Richard Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos* during the Munich premiere under conductor Bruno Walter in 1913 (Ryding, 2001). She was awarded the title *Königliche Bayerischen Kammersängerin*. She also sang in Covent Garden, Bayreuth Festival, and most European opera houses, as well as the Metropolitan Opera (1916). After her marriage in 1922, her professional engagements were restricted to the concert hall (Cummings, 1992).

Clarence Whitehill (1871-1932) and Putnam Griswold (1875–1914) studied with Julius Stockhausen and were acclaimed Wagnerian singers at the Metropolitan Opera. Whitehill was a bass-baritone who had studied and performed the Wagnerian repertoire at Bayreuth. His Metropolitan Opera career began in 1909 and lasted until his death in 1932. His pure line, clear tone production, and nobility of style were much admired (Shawe-Taylor, 2001). Griswold, a bass, had a successful European career before making his Metropolitan Opera debut in 1911. His association with this institution, where he focused mainly on Wagnerian roles, lasted until his death in 1914 (Slonimsky, n/d). Reviews highlighted his “resonant voice and skillful, carefully considered singing”.⁵²

⁵² See also the review (unsigned) in the *Evening Post* dated November, 11th, 1912 on his “Speaker” role in *The Magic Flute*: “Mr. Griswold sang his small part so admirably that it made one wonder why it was necessary to go to Boston for a Sarastro”. <http://archives.metoperafamily.org/archives/frame.htm> last accessed June 8th, 2023.

Marchesi trained sopranos May de Sousa (1884-1948) and Suzanne Adams (1872-1953) (Mackinlay, 1908). May de Sousa had an extraordinary international career as a singer (mostly in musical comedies) and actress. Adams, who was praised for her flexible tone and reliable vocal technique, sang at the Metropolitan Opera between 1899 and 1903 (Klein & Rosenthal, 2001). Marchesi was also the singing teacher of soprano Emma Nevada (1859-1940), who specialized in *bel canto coloratura* roles, most notably by Bellini and Donizetti (De Becker, 1908). She sang at La Scala in 1881, and at the Opéra Comique in 1883, and did several *tournées* to the US between 1885 and 1901 before retiring from the stage and establishing herself as a vocal pedagogue in London (Britannica, 2023). The pedagogical relationship with Marchesi must have remained strong and transcendent for Marchesi was later godmother to Nevada's daughter Mignon (Rosenthal, 1979, pp. 347-348). Other American singers who benefited from Marchesi vocal training were sopranos Ellen Beach Yaw (1869-1947) (Britannica, 2022), and Mai Kalna (1875-1934) (Fischer, 1917).

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Tenor Alan Lindquest (1891-1984) studied in Stockholm with Ingebjart Isene, a collaborator of Dr. Gillis Bratt, who had been a pupil of Manuel Patricio García. Lindquest sang both opera and vaudeville and was an indefatigable researcher. An active and sought-after vocal pedagogue, he opened his own studio in Pasadena, California, in 1935 and became the teacher of many singers who are still active and strong advocates of the García vocal technique (Forrest, 1984).

Teachers of European origin also emigrated to America to sing and/or teach the García vocal technique. German-born singer Anna Schoen-René had studied for eighteen years with Viardot-García, but her singing career was cut short because of bad health. She emigrated to America and established herself as a vocal pedagogue in Minnesota and later in New York, where she joined the faculty at the Juilliard School of Music. She also studied male voice pedagogy with Manuel P. García later in life (as Viardot-García specialized in female voices) and was a certified García singing teacher

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(See Image 4). The emblem of quality held by the García school of singing was so powerful by the beginning of the twentieth century that she sued a fake said-representative of the García school of singing, and was in turn sued for slander. Marianne Brandt testified in her favor. The case was finally dropped (Schoen-René, 1941).⁵³ Schoen-René taught such American singers as:

—(Mezzo)-soprano Margaret Harshaw (1909-1997), who studied seven years under Schoen-René at the Juilliard School and made her Metropolitan debut in 1942. She later switched from mezzo to soprano roles, focusing on Wagner heroines. She stood out for her wide range and solid breathing management that produced an even tone (Schauensee, 2001), trademarks of the García school of singing. After retiring, she taught in Bloomington, Indiana. In her opinion, her pedagogical lineage was fundamental in her career success. In her own words: “That is my tradition -the historic Garcia-Viardot method -and it is what I still teach,” (...) I worked my entire life on what I learned from Schoen-Rene. I probably would not be able to teach today if I had not gone to her” (Ames, 1998). During an interview with Bruce Duffie, she explained: “The real roots of singing, (...) that’s what (*sic*) I come from. I was with Schoen-René for seven years. After that I certainly needed no teacher. I had to continue working with everything that she gave me” (Duffie, 1994).

—Mezzo-soprano Risë Stevens (1913-2013), who was not only intensively trained by Schoen-René in a vocal technique sense, but was also guided in the building of her operatic career (as Viardot-García herself had done with her own students). Schoen-René advised her in 1936 to turn down a contract with the MET to build up slowly her career in small European Opera houses, which she did (Schoen-René, 1941)⁵⁴. Afterward, she was part of the Metropolitan Opera between 1938 and 1961 and also sang with San Francisco Opera. She played a wide range of roles from Mozart to Richard Strauss (Schauensee, 1995, Vol. 18, p. 136).

⁵³ “I feel it necessary to recount this story, because today too there are some people who make use of famous names without verification for their own advertising purposes!”

⁵⁴ “I am particularly proud of this dear pupil who has always remained humble in her approach to art and who has always been a loyal and true friend to me and to the immortal art of the Garcias.”

—Soprano Lillian Blauvelt (1873-1937), who first had a brief European operatic career due to ill health. Back in America, she began her vocal training with Schoen-René and sang concerts throughout the USA and Canada (Schoen-René, 1941). She sang both opera (at Covent Garden) and musical comedy leads with great success (Shields, n/d). She was one of the first singers to record for Victor Red Seal discs in 1903 (Arakelyan, 2015).

—Tenor George Meader (1888-1963), who studied intensively under Schoen-René before making his debut in 1908 in London. He sang Wagner in Leipzig in 1910 and was the creator of the role of Scaramuccio in Strauss' *Ariadne auf Naxos* in Stuttgart. He also sang Mahler *Das Lied von der Erde* in Amsterdam under Mengelberg in 1913. In 1919 he returned to the US, joining the Metropolitan Opera Company in 1921. He sang during eleven seasons, mostly in comic and character roles. He recorded for Gramophon and Columbia. After, he turned to musical comedy and acting in Hollywood (according to Efimenko, as cited in Schlesinger, 2017). His vocal technique proved versatile enough to adapt to the new stylistic requirements of this genre.

Schoen-René took Blauvelt and Meader to Paris with her so that Viardot-García could supervise the teaching process. Blauvelt was also brought to Manuel Patricio García in London (Schoen-René, 1941).

Certificate signed by Pauline Viardot for Anna Schoen-René in 1898

“The Garcia method has the most efficient representative in her”

Source: Anna Schoen-René, *America's Musical Inheritance: Memories and Reminiscences* (New York, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1941), p 108.

Facsimile of Certificate Signed by Pauline Viardot

Image 4. Facsimile of the handwritten certificate given by Pauline Viardot to Anna Schoen-René in 1898. “I have great pleasure in certifying that my pupil, miss Schön René is an excellent teacher. The Garcia method has the most efficient representative in her. Having heard some of her pupils, I am enabled to recommend her with full confidence” Pauline Viardot 19 July 1898. (Schoen-René, 1941)

Hermine Rudersdorf (or Rudersdorff) (1822-1882) was a German dramatic soprano and composer who studied with Manuel Patricio García. Schoen-René points her out as “the first representative of the García system to come to America” (1941). She had sung in Germany and at Drury Lane Theatre in London for a decade before settling in Boston in 1871. She was a much sought-after vocal pedagogue (Baker, 1900). One of her most accomplished pupils was soprano Emma Thursby, who had a successful international singing career and was acclaimed for her flawless *coloratura* and her pure and even tone production throughout her very wide range (Graziano, 2000), all of these distinctive features emphasized by the García school of singing. She was also an accomplished singing pedagogue.

Ernestine Schumann-Heink (1861-1936) is an interesting example of the García technique’s influence in that Schoen-René asserts that Schumann-Heink’s vocal teachers were, in turn, disciples of Viardot-García’s: “Schumann-Heink ‘s teachers were all García disciples (...) All the best teaching in Germany, at that time, was influenced by the Garcia-Viardot technique.” (Schoen-René, 1941). This can be evidenced by the fact that critics praised her wide range, her rich but flexible voice, and her strong musicality and stage presence, again distinctive features of García school of singing. A contralto born in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Schumann-Heink performed with Gustav Mahler before being engaged in Bayreuth for eighteen years. She continued her singing career with the Metropolitan Company in America, focusing again on Wagnerian roles, and became an American citizen (Shawe-Taylor, 2000).

2.4.1. American singers and teachers of the García school of singing

Once both singing teachers and students were Americans, the self-sustainability of the García vocal technique was guaranteed. The seeds cast by the visit of Manuel del Pópulo García and his family in 1825 were resilient and prolific. The American professional singers trained in the García school of singing by American vocal pedagogues were so many that it would be impossible to include everyone in this article. The examples mentioned below showcase the role of female singers and singing teachers in the professionalization of women in America.

Mezzo-soprano Blanche Thebom (1915-2010) studied with Edyth Walker, a student of Marianne Brandt. Thebom made her debut in the Metropolitan Opera in 1944 and remained there until 1966-7, singing Wagnerian and other leading roles. She appeared also in British venues Glyndebourgh and Covent Garden (Schauensee, 1995, Vol. 18, p. 730). Her acknowledgment and pride of her ‘vocal lineage’ is shown in this 1982 interview by Bruce Duffie:

(...) To the extent that we can be immortal, it is those certain pieces of knowledge and culture and experience that we are able to pass from one to the other. That is the only thing that's really important that continues to live. My teacher, Edyth Walker, was a student of a teacher who had been a prize student of Pauline Viardot-Garcia.

BD: So there is a direct line!

BT: The heritage goes right back and one is terribly conscious of that. So that's part of the obligation, to pass it along to the next.

She also advocates, following the advice of her teacher and in line with the tradition of the García's, to sing whatever role is suitable for the voice, as opposed to the *Fach* system (Schauensee, 2001).

Irene Dalis (1925-2014), also a mezzo-soprano and a pupil of Edyth Walker's, sang in Berlin Städtische Oper before making it to the Metropolitan Opera in 1957 where she sang for twenty years (Bing, 1981). Her repertoire focused on Verdi and Wagnerian roles and she appeared as Kundry in Parsifal in Bayreuth Festival (1961-

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1963). She was praised for “The luscious timbre, with its seductive shimmer (...). Her flexible phrasing (...) achieving a fusion of musical and dramatic elements” (Jackson, 2006). All García school of singing key features.

2.5. *The role of vocal performance and pedagogy in American women's professionalization*

Both the professions of singer and singing teacher were a means of economic independence for many women in the nineteenth century, and most of those who kept the legacy of the García family alive in America were women. It was, of course, easier to enter the operatic profession if you came from a family that was already in the business, as was the case with the daughters of Manuel and Joaquina García. It was different in the case of Anna Schoen-René, who remembered her parents saying, “What will people say?” when she told them she wanted to be a singer (1941).

Even in the García family, for whom a musical profession was almost a given, we can remark on the difference between the low profile of Joaquina Briones Sitchès during the early nineteenth century and the high profiles shown by both María Malibran and Pauline Viardot. Both sisters established themselves as benchmarks of successful professional and independent women, who were also capable of managing the monetary aspect of their profession. In the case of Viardot, this included carrying out career changes in midlife.

Teaching the know-how of the singing profession and networking was also part of the training in the García family. Manuel del Populo García had been an *entrepreneur*, and this ability he passed on to his children. Business acumen is not something innate to singers or singing teachers, of course, but especially in women, it was very frowned upon due to the taboo against their handling money or discussion of a cachet. According to Manuel Patricio García and Viardot’s letters to their students, and from Viardot to *impresarios* of the time, it is clear that in addition to vocal

technique, knowing how to defend oneself in the professional world, and being able to manage the ups and downs was an intrinsic part of the learning relationship.⁵⁵ It could even be said that entrepreneurial spirit was part of the trademark of the García family.

Many American female singers trained by the García school of singing achieved a great professional success, singing leading roles and earning their living with their voices. Most of the female singers mentioned above could be again acknowledged here, apart from Maude Fay, whose marriage had a negative impact on her professional career. An exhaustive list would exceed the purposes of this article, but some choice examples of this professionalization deserve specific mention:

—Contralto Adelaide Phillipps (1833-1882), an Anglo-American singer and student of Manuel Patricia García who had an international singing career in opera, oratorio, and Gilbert and Sullivan comic operas that spanned between Europe and America (Gerolstein. 2021).

—Soprano Sophie Traubman (1867-1951), who studied with Viardot-García and later with Mathilde Marchesi and sang at the Metropolitan between 1887 and 1890. Her light voice made the Forest Bird in Siegfried a favorite role. Traubman also appeared in Covent Garden and many leading German opera houses (Hughes, 1897).

—Edyth Walker (1867-1950), a mezzo-soprano who studied with Aglaja Orgéni and Marianne Brandt and performed mostly Verdi and Wagnerian roles at the Vienna *Hofoper*, Covent Garden, Bayreuth, and at the Metropolitan Opera, where she sang with Caruso. Walker also appeared in composer Ethel Smyth's opera *The Wreckers* (Blom et al., 2001).

For many American women of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the García school of singing provided an important and more socially acceptable means of earning a living as vocal pedagogues. Women who established their private studios

⁵⁵ See for example Image 3.

achieved economic independence and often made it into prestigious musical institutions. For some, their pedagogical career was longer than their singing. This was the case with Anna Schoen-René, who taught at Juilliard; Julia Etta Crane (1855-1923), who studied with Manuel Patricio García and afterward set up *Crane Normal Institute of Music* to train public school music teachers and published an innovative *Music Teacher's Manual* in 1923 (Claudson, 1969); and Estelle Liebling (1880-1970), a soprano who studied with Mathilde Marchesi, and began her teaching during her operatic career (which included leading roles in German Opera Houses, the *Opéra-Comique* in Paris, and the Metropolitan Opera). She was a much sought-after voice teacher and vocal coach, and the author of such books on vocal technique and performance practice as *The Estelle Liebling Book of Coloratura Cadenzas* and *The Estelle Liebling Vocal Course*. She taught at Curtis Institute between 1936-38 and afterward established her own studio in New York (Monson, 1992). Her most famous disciple was Beverly Sills, but she also coached such actors and actresses as Meryl Streep and Joan Crawford.

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For others, teaching work and pedagogical positions became a means of financial support during or after their last years of active singing. Ada Soder-Hueck (1874-1936), a Dutch contralto and naturalized American who was a former student of Pauline Viardot-García's opened a voice studio at the Old Met, alleging the García name as a quality warranty: "Mme. Ada Soder-Hueck instructs according to the Garcia Method, which is acknowledged as the most successful and scientific system which has ever been introduced to the world. In fact, the rapidity of progress is remarkable and successful results can be almost guaranteed" (Nones, 2022).

Margaret Harshaw taught at Curtis Institute and Indiana University after her outstanding performing career. Upon retiring from stage, Edyth Walker taught singing at the American Conservatory in Fontainebleau (France) and set up her own singing studio in New York. Sophie Traubman was a voice teacher in the Old Met. A successful singing or teaching career also enabled some of these singers to take on senior

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management positions in professional American opera companies. Risë Stevens was co-director of the Metropolitan National Company (1963-68), Advisor on the Young Artist Development Program and Executive Director of its National Council Auditions (1980-88), and president of the Mannes School of Music (1975-78) (National Endowment for the Arts, 2023). Beverly Sills (1929-2007) was appointed General Director of the New York City Opera from 1979 to 1989 and served as Chairman of the Board of Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in 1993 (Davies, 2001). Such others as Irene Dalis started their own professional opera companies (Hertelendy, 1992). Through these vocal pedagogues and performing arts industry managers and leaders, the García school of singing was legitimized by prestigious musical institutions.

2.6. Conclusion

Manuel del Pópulo García taught his vocal technique to his children, who, in turn, enriched it with their own research and professional experiences and transmitted it to successive generations of singers. Their collaborative legacy generated a school of singing that carried the García family trademark that still survives today. Despite the passage of centuries, states, repertoires, and musical genres, the name *García* is still prominent in American and international vocal music.

The García school of singing facilitated the professionalization of many women in the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth because it provided a solid and prestigious training that allowed economic independence, access to official institutions, and, in certain cases, to managerial positions. The 1825 visit of the García family to America planted seeds that continue to bear fruit almost two hundred years later.

Appendix: Playlists

These playlists contain selected audio recordings that will allow readers to listen to some of the singers mentioned in the article. The tracks have been made available on two different platforms, both for ease of access and because the material available on each platform is different.

The YouTube list includes links to videos showing the performers in action (though in some cases, such as recordings of television broadcasts, the sound is not direct and unfiltered, and performers were encouraged to minimize facial and respiratory movements). When possible, live recordings were chosen, as these more effectively conveyed the real artistic experience and vocal technique. The singer's age at the time of the recording is also included in parentheses, because—and this is especially true in the case of early generations—some singers were to at an advanced age from a vocal perspective. This is particularly relevant to the videos featuring Marianne Brandt and the Schumann-Heink.

A warning about the sound quality of the first recordings. As Timothy Day notes in “A Century of Recorded Music” (2000, pp. 2-10), singing voices and musical instruments suffered significant distortion in the recording process due to the technological limitations of the era, so that the resulting sound is not an exact representation of what one would have heard at a live performance. The original timbre and harmonics of voices and instruments have been modified and degraded. As a result, sopranos' voices sound weaker and more ethereal than they really were; basses sound hollow and cavernous; and mezzo-sopranos sound mushy, and less bright. The tenor's voice appears to have suffered less distortion. Additionally, the need for singers to move closer or farther away from a recording cone would certainly have impacted the singer's body alignment, as well as the communication between the singer and accompanying pianist.

YouTube playlist

Marianne Brandt (1842-1921)

Frühlingsnacht (R. Schumann). Artistikal/Pathé, Recorded 1905 (66 yr. old)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XS8TXEbYYjc>

Ada Adini (1855-1924)

Celui dont la parole...il est bon, il est doux, from *Herodiade* (J. Massenet).

Recorded 1905 (50 yr. old).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GsuYIV3e-dA>

Ernestine Schumann-Heink (1861-1936)

Wiegenlied (J. Brahms). Recorded 1909 (48 yr. old).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZNqDz9j-4Rs>

Der Erlkönig (F. Schubert). Recorded live in 1927 (65 yr. old).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GrV0tJgxsW8&list=RDEMLMpdHISQY67m8ODLdMT_FQ&start_radio=1

Blanche Marchesi (1863-1940)

L'été (Cécile Chaminade). Recorded 1906 (43 yr. old).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cyhel1PhOFO>

Edyth Walker (1867-1950)

Prison Scene from *Le Prophet* (G. Meyerbeer). Recorded 1902 (35 yr. old).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K4zek2XLnU8>

Ellen Beach Yaw (1869-1947)

Air du Rossignol from *Les noces de Jeannette* (V. Massé) Recorded 1907 (38 yr. old).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xvu9Q0J3z4>

Air des clochettes, from *Lakmé* (L. Delibes). Recorded 1907.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7n8L4oN1yV8>

Clarence Whitehill (1871-1932)

Amfortas' Gebet "Mein Vater", from *Parsifal* (R. Wagner). Recorded 1914 (43 yr. old).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l-t2Cypr_BA

Votre toast (Toreador song), from *Carmen* (G. Bizet). Recorded 1912 (41 yr. old).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XAeH1a1RrSM>

Suzanne Adams (1872-1953)

Je veux vivre from *Roméo et Juliette* (Ch. Gounod). Recorded 1902 (30 yr. old).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BQMhAIKIIP0>

Lillian Blauvelt (1873-1947)

When Celia sings (Frank L. Moir). Recorded 1909 (36 yr. old).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IC7AIZNnFQQ>

Maude Fay (1878-1964)

Duet from *Lohengrin* (R. Wagner) with H. Knot. Recorded 1907 (29 yr. old).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t1qzDDf11HY>

George Meader (1888-1963)

Sunshine Rose (W. Polla). Columbia. Recorded 1920 (32 yr. old).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TyR1OosKT4k>

Ages and Ages (Brockmann and Kendis). Columbia. Recorded 1920.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LPjGqa3lkZM>

Margaret Harshaw (1909-1997)

Dich Teure Halle from *Tannhäuser* (R. Wagner). Recorded 1955 (46 yr. old).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zlliU23okV8>

Rise Stevens (1913-2013)

Seguidilles from *Carmen* (G. Bizet). Live, 1947 (34 yr. old).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A5aaZoo6AGg>

Blanche Thebom (1915-2010)

Là ci darem la mano from *Don Giovanni* (W. A. Mozart) with bariton Ezio Pinza.

Recorded rehearsal for television, 1947 (32 yr. old).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pXL8VGWNPqw>

Irene Dalis (1925-2014)

Bel raggio lusinghier from *Semiramide* (G. Rossini). Recorded 1960 (35 yr. old).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P5coAK6aJmw>

Condotta ell'era in ceppi from *Il Trovatore* (G. Verdi). Recorded 1970 (45 yr. old).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPggH2HWmZU>

Beverly Sills (1929-2007)

Una voce poco fa from *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (G. Rossini). Recorded live 1976 (47 yr. old).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SmEFfeYRWel>

Ah, ritorna qual ti spero from *Roberto Devereux*. (G. Donizetti). UMPG Publishing. Recorded 1969 (40 yr. old).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F4ExPiusDkY>

Spotify playlist

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/7K4FNM3GZugi0JvUzdtCih?si=bb7862736435437>

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3. María Malibran, a Legend of Opera and Beyond: The Renowned Soprano’s Impact on Music Publishing in the United States

Isabel Pérez Dobarro
New York University

Abstract:* This chapter analyzes the influence of María Malibran (1808-36) on sheet music publishing during the first half of the nineteenth century in the United States. At the time, many of the singer’s works for voice and piano were published with the subtitle “as sung by Signorina García,” or “sung by Signorina García,” and later, following her marriage, “as sung by Madame Malibran.” In addition to the publication of scores for voice and piano, we also encounter arrangements for soloists, likewise inspired by the renowned singer. In short, the influence of the Spanish performer was not confined to the concert halls of North America, but also entered the homes of the U.S. public, in the form of printed music.

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Keywords: María Malibran, song, piano, salon music, opera, music publishing

*Editor’s note: This text is an English translation, offered by the Observatorio, of the Spanish original submitted by the author (see 086-06/2023SP).

3.1. Introduction

The García Family’s impact in the realm of opera is undeniable, as the first chapter of this volume makes clear. In particular, Manuel del Pópulo Vicente Rodríguez García (1775-1832) and his children, María Malibran, Pauline Viardot (1821-1910) and Manuel Patricio García (1805-1906), had a major impact on vocal performance, composition and pedagogy. These singers enjoyed an outstanding degree of popularity on both sides of the Atlantic, inspiring a succession of dedications, publications and musical compositions.

This was particularly true in the case of María Malibran, who rose to the status of diva and was idolized by both audiences and other artists alike. Frédéric Chopin (1810-49), for example, described her as follows: “Malibran impresses you merely by her marvellous voice, but no one sings like her. Miraculous! Marvellous! [...] Malibran [García] who is the leading European prima donna—she is fabulous” (Eigeldinger, 1986, p. 111). Chopin’s student Emilie von Gretsck once commented, referring to her mentor: “His playing is entirely based on the vocal style of Rubini, Malibran, and Grisi, etc; he says so himself” (Eigeldinger, 1986, 45).

María Malibran’s fame had a major influence not only on musical interpretation and composition, but on music publishing as well, as the sector’s leading companies soon realized that her name was attracting consumers who sought to collect and recreate her songs — pieces they had heard the famous Spanish soprano perform — in the comfort of their own homes.

3.2. Music publishing in the United States in the early decades of the 19th century

The music publishing industry emerged in the United States in the late 18th century, following British models, with important centers of operation in Philadelphia, Boston and New York (Holibaugh & Krummel, 1981, p. 94). Between 1801 and 1825, an estimated 11,000 musical scores were published in the U.S., a figure that, by mid-century, would reach 36,500 (ibid).

Most of these publications were arrangements for song and piano, with symphonic or large-scale instrumental scores being more limited (ibid). Beginning in 1825 and coinciding with the arrival of the García family to New York City, Italian opera grew rapidly in popularity in the United States (Bailey, 2019, p. 30). We should not be surprised, then, that many of the scores printed in the country from that year on were opera arias, published in Spanish, or accompanied by their English translations.

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Many of these arias featured the subtitle “sung by Signorina Garcia”—and later, after her marriage, “sung by Madame Malibran”—because it was Malibran who had popularized the works through her performances in the United States. This fact alone illustrates how significant the singer’s influence was at the time, with publishing houses using her name to entice customers to purchase sheet music. In the study that follows, we provide an introductory survey of some of these published works.

3.2.1. Publishers in New York

—Dubois & Stodart:

The reader will perhaps be familiar with the name Francis Bacon Piano Company, one of the most important U.S. piano manufacturers in the first third of the 20th century. The company was founded much earlier, however, in 1822, through a collaboration

between William Dubois and Adam Stodart in New York City, under the auspices of influential businessman John Jacob Astor. The company would later adopt the name Dubois & Stodart, establishing its headquarters at 126 Broadway.

Beginning with María Malibran's first performance in the city, Dubois & Stodart published numerous scores based on performances by the renowned singer, and subtitled the sheet music "as sung by Signorina Garcia." In 1826, for example, the company published the arietta⁵⁶ "Assisa a' piè dun salica," from the opera *Otello* by Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868). In the opera, Malibran sings the part of Desdemona, a role that would become one of the most important of her career. The published score includes both the Italian and English lyrics, but the text that accompanies the musical notation is written in the work's original language. The text does not include any ornamentation, as was typical not only of María Malibran's interpretations, but also of the *bel canto* tradition more broadly (Toft, 2013, p. 106). We therefore know that this particular publication did not seek to imitate Malibran's specific approach to performing the work, but rather to publish it in its original version, while marketing the piece as a song from Malibran's repertoire. Dubois & Stodart published another title from the same opera, "Deh calma oh! Ciel," which was likewise accompanied by bilingual text, and a note indicating that the piece had been performed by *Signorina* García. Notably, the singer's name is listed before Rossini's, a testament to Malibran's importance.

⁵⁶ Although the terms 'aria' and 'arietta' were used interchangeably in the early days of opera, as the genre developed, the terms became differentiated, with 'arietta' referring to a short aria.



Image 1. "Arietta Sung by Signorina García in *Otello* by G. Rossini." Published by Dubois & Stodart

The New York publisher printed other works by Rossini as performed by María Malibran. Thus, in 1826, we see the publication of "Una voce poco fa," a song from *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, which Malibran had performed at her New York debut. In this case, the score includes only the Italian text, with no English translation.

The role of Orpheus in the opera *Orpheus and Eurydice* by Christoph Willibald von Gluck (1714-1787) was another of Malibran's most popular performances. Her sister, Pauline Viardot, would later star in the same role, elevating both singers to the status of canonical models for the work. Dubois & Stodart included the opera's popular aria "Che farò senza Eurydice" in its catalog, accompanied by the subtitle, "Scena & Rondo by Gluck sung by Signorina García at the Philharmonic Concerts." This publication thus provides us with a record, not only on Malibran's performance of the work, but also of the venue where she performed it.

In 1827, Dubois & Stodart published “Batti, batti o bel masetto,” an aria from the opera *Don Giovanni* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791), in which Malibran had excelled in the role of Zerlina, and “Ombra adorata aspetta,” from the opera *Romeo e Giulietta* by Niccolò Antonio Zingarelli (1752-1837).



Image 2. “Ombra adorata aspetta. Scena e Rondo di Romeo e Giulietta. Sung by Signorina Garcia. Music by Zingarelli.” Published by Dubois & Stodart.

Dubois & Stodart did not limit its publications to Italian repertoire, however. The company published a compendium that featured the works of composer Daniel-François Auber (1782-1871). Included among the collection is the opera “Emma, chanté par Signorina Garcia,” published with its original French lyrics.

Dubois & Stodart marketed a number of English titles as well, such as “The Light Guitar, Sung by Signorina García” by British composer John Barnett (1802-1890), a song often featured in Malibran’s U.S. performances, and in 1827, the “The Time has Been” by Peter von Winter (1754-1825), arranged by J. F. Hance. The publication of these titles evinces Malibran’s success, not only performing songs in Italian, but also in English, the main language of her fans in the United States.

Dubois & Stodart’s catalog also includes works composed by Malibran herself, such as “Le rans de vaches: tyrolienne (for one or two voices) and piano forte,” published between 1828 and 1834. The song is an example of Tyrolean music,⁵⁷ a very popular genre in the early 19th century. Thus, in numerous works from the period we see references to both the yodel and the Ranz des Vaches, and to compositions ranging from Beethoven’s sixth symphony to Rossini’s opera *William Tell* (Wise, 2012, p. 464). Malibran incorporated these disparate elements into her performances of songs such as “J’étais sur la Rivefleurie,” “Je fushereux,” and “L’indifférence.”

In discussing this genre, and in light of the panel that inspired this volume, it is worth highlighting the work “Tourment d’Amour.” The García family composed the piece in New York during their U.S. tour, and Dubois & Stodart published it in 1826, at first with just two stanzas, then later as a four-stanza edition under the title “Le Retour de la Tyrolienne,” which became enormously popular during the era. This second version was subsequently published in London, Berlin and Sweden under the title *Tyrolerskans Hemkomst* (Verdi, 2010, p. 90). The original version of the piece was recently re-released in a recording by Anna Tonna and myself, and presented at a panel organized by the Observatory of the Spanish Language and Hispanic Cultures in the United States, a center of the Instituto Cervantes at Harvard University, on October 13, 2022.

⁵⁷ Tyrolean songs, or *Tyroliennes*, are work composed in ternary meter and with a lively tempo, deriving from the Ländler. In the 19th century, the term was used primarily to describe vocal works that attempted to imitate the traditional music of the Alps. See: New Grove (2001). Tyrolienne. In *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (2nd Edition, volume 26, p.19).

Other works by Malibran featured in the Dubois & Stodart catalog include: “I Saw Thee Weep,” with lyrics by Lord Byron, and, published under the company’s later name, Dubois & Bacon, “My Cot by the Mountain: Ballad.” The New York publisher’s repertoire includes other works in the Tyrol genre as well, such as “Green Hills of Tyrol: The Celebrated Tyrolien from William Tell sung by Madame Malibran and also by Mrs. Knight.”

Dubois & Stodart also published duets as performed by Malibran and her mother, Joaquina Sitches (1780-1864), on their New York tour. These included the works “Vorrei che il tuo pensiero” from Rossini’s *Otello* and “Ah! Se de' mali miei” from the opera *Tancredi* by the same composer. The score for this last piece was also published in Boston by G.P. Reed & Co.

—Other New York publishers:

As previously discussed, numerous songs performed by Malibran, in addition to several original compositions composed by the singer and her family, would be selected for print by the emerging New York music publishing sector.

Among Malibran’s most successful original compositions was the song “There is No Home Like My Own,” a piece sometimes advertised as a Tyrolienne and other times as a ballad. The score was published by William Hall & Son (located at 239 Broadway), Atwill (201 Broadway) and Firth & Hall (1 Franklin Square). For its part, the publishing house Mesier, located at 28 Wall Street, added the work *Bajelito* to its catalog in 1827. This piece was composed by Malibran’s father, Manuel García, and advertised as “The Favourite Spanish Air sung by Signorina Garcia.”



Image 3. “Bajelito. The Favourite Spanish Air. Sung by Signorina Garcia. Composed by Garcia.”
Published by Mesier.

Among the scores surveyed in this chapter, some feature several interpretations of the same aria, as performed by different notable singers of the time. This is the case with the version of “Vedrai carino,” from Mozart’s opera *Don Giovanni*, published by Bourne: Depository of the Arts (located at 359 Broadway) in a bilingual edition (Italian and English), and as sung by “Signorina Garcia and Mrs. Austin.” Unlike the other publications analyzed thus far, in this version, both languages are included between the score’s musical staves.



Image 4. “List and I’ll find Love. Sung by Mrs. Austin and Vedrai Carino. Aria. Sung by Signorina Garcia in Don Giovanni.” Published by Bourne: Depository of the Arts.

Despite the growing popularity of the Italian-language repertoire following the García family’s arrival to New York, we also see a large number of English-language works, as performed by Malibran herself on tour. These include: “The Light Guitar,” published by Mesier and Firth & Hall; “Oh Shall We Go a Sailing! Sung with the Most Rapturous Applause by Madame Malibran,” published by Firth Hall & Pond; “Away O’er the Blue Waves of Ocean,” published by E. Riley; and “Cushlamachree, an Irish ballad sung by Signorina Garcia,” published by Bourne: Depository of Arts and by S. Ackerman & Co.

Standing out among these numerous English-language songs is the title “My fondest! My fairest! Hummel’s Celebrated Air a la Tyrolienne Sung by Madame Malibran Garcia and Madame Brichta. Written and Arranged by George Linley Esqre,” printed by the publisher E. Riley, located at 29 Chatham Street. In 1830, Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778-1837) had collaborated with Malibran on a series of concerts in London, performing this same Tyrolean air and dedicating it to the Spanish singer. The score reached U.S. consumers as an arrangement by the English writer and composer George Linley (1797-1865). Hummel himself would later perform the piece as both a solo piano and a four-hands arrangement.

Lastly, we should mention the title “Farewell, Farewell to Thee Bright Child of Song. Written on the Occasion of Signorina Garcia’s Departure from the United States,” published in 1827 by E. Riley in honor of María Malibran’s departure from New York. The piece was composed by Arthur F. Keene (d. 1837), a prominent Irish singer at the Park Theatre in New York, where the García Family had enjoyed numerous successful performances.

Malibran’s influence was not limited to the opera hall. In the mid-nineteenth century, Wm Hall & Son would publish the *Malibran Grand Waltz*, one of the main pieces in the collection of dance tunes for piano titled *Drawing Room Companion: A Set of Quadrilles, Polka, Spanish Dance, Scotch Reel & Waltz designed to aid in the social soirees without the aid of a master* (1850). As the name of the compendium suggests, these works were designed to be played at social gatherings, with a technical accessibility that would allow them to be performed not just by professional musicians, but by amateurs as well. The last title in the collection, *Malibran Grand Waltz*, is a work of technical, harmonic and melodic simplicity, composed in ABA form. Amazingly, fourteen years after her death, the memory of María Malibran had survived not only in U.S. opera houses, but in the performance of popular instrumental music as well.

In addition to publishing houses, periodicals and music reviews also printed sheet music. To cite one example, on December 6, 1828, the *New-York Mirror*, a newspaper that ran from 1823 to 1842, published a score titled “Angels Ever Bright and Fair as Sung by Signorina Garcia.”

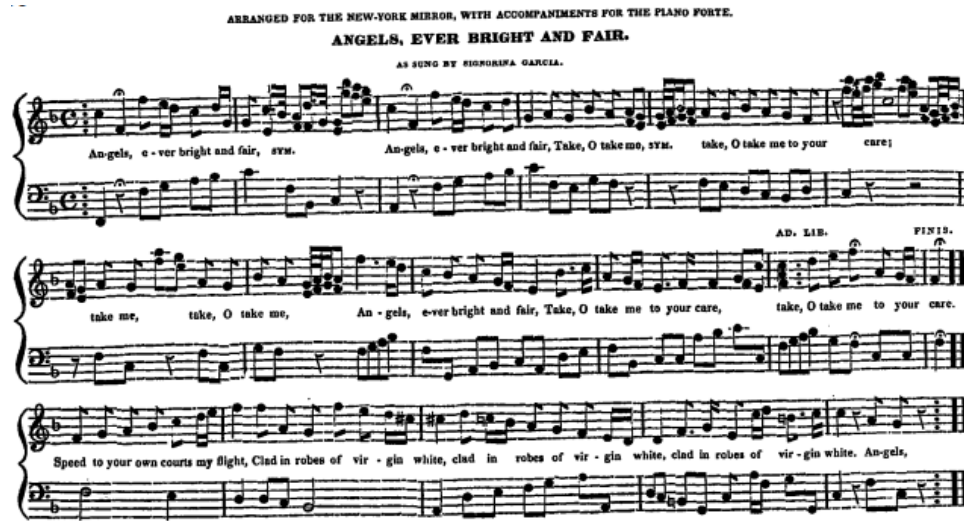


Image 5. “Angels Ever Bright and Fair as Sung by Signorina Garcia.” Published by the New-York Mirror.

In discussing the publication of musical scores we should also mention the printing of librettos to help U.S. audiences understand the lyrics of a given work, somewhat like today’s subtitles. In the course of our research, we discovered librettos published by E. M. Murden for Manuel García’s operas *L’Amante astuto* and *La figlia dell’aria*, and for Rossini’s opera *Tancredi*, all of which were part of the García Family’s repertoire during their U.S. tour.

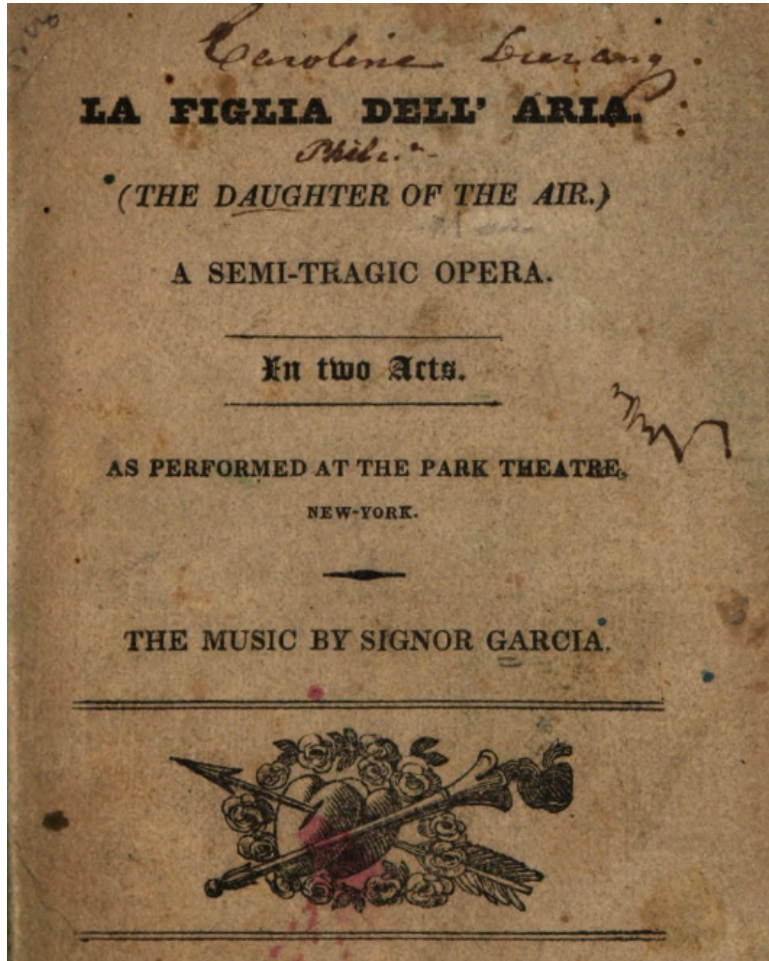


Image 6. “La Figlia dell’ Aria (the Daughter of the Air). A Semi-Tragic Opera in Two Acts. As Performed at the Park Theatre. New York. The Music by Signor Garcia” published by E. M. Murden.

3.2.2. Publishers in Philadelphia

George Willig’s publishing house, located at 171 Chestnut Street, was one of the most important in Philadelphia during the era. In 1794, Willig acquired the Moller & Capron Company, the first music publisher in the United States. In 1822, he would also acquire Thomas Carr’s publishing company in Baltimore, and thus, some of the scores analyzed herein were published under his name in either Philadelphia or Baltimore (Willig, n/d).

As with the case of New York publishers, the Philadelphia catalogs featuring María Malibran include a combination of Italian arias, songs in English, songs inspired by Tyrolean music, and the singer's own compositions.

Standing out in this first category, in George Willig's catalog, is the aria "Oh Love for Me Thy Power and While this Heart its Joy Revealing Sung by Madame Malibran & Mrs Wood in the opera of *La Sonnambula*" by Vincenzo Bellini (1801-1835). As in the case of the other scores analyzed thus far, the musical notation is accompanied by both the Italian and English text, corresponding to both of the singers' respective versions of the piece. Though quite short, there are also several *ossia* passages, or alternative musical versions, included in the publication. This is not something one encounters in other editions (for example, in the Peters edition of 1870), suggesting that these may have been interpretative choices. As an interesting side note, in the copy of the publication preserved by Columbia University Library's Thomas A. Edison Collection of American Sheet Music in New York, there are several ornamental and interpretive annotations marked on the score in pencil.



Image 7. "Oh Love for Me Thy Power and While this Heart its Joy Revealing Sung by Madame Malibran & Mrs Wood in the opera of *La Sonnambula*. Composed by Bellini." Published by George Willig.

In the repertoire of the Baltimore branch of Willig's publishing house, we also find a bilingual edition of "Vedrai Carino" from Mozart's opera *Don Giovanni* included in the publisher's "beauties of Italian opera" collection. For its part, G. E. Blake Publishers included Rossini's "Una voce poco fa" in its catalog.

In Baltimore, as in New York, most published works were issued in English. In Georg Willig's catalog we find: "Oh Must We Part to Night Sung by Madame Malibran," by David Lee; "Tis the Rose of Summer"; and "O! Young Maiden Hearts Beware: Sung by *Signorina* Garcia," which was also published in Baltimore by J.G. Klemm.

With respect to works inspired by Tyrolean music, George Willig also followed the fashion of the day, publishing "Green Hills of Tyrol, the Celebrated Air in Rossini's Grand Opera of *Guillaume Tell* sung by Miss Rock, Madame Malibran and Madame Vestis arranged by T. Rovedino." Other publishers, such as G. E. Blake, issued their own versions of the song as well.

Another work inspired by Tyrolean music was composed by Malibran herself: "There is No Home Like my Own," a work marketed by several major Philadelphia publishers including Georg Willig and A. Fiot (located at 196 Chestnut Street). The piece enjoyed enormous popularity in Philadelphia, just as it had in New York.

Lastly, publishers A. Fiot, Meignen & Co, and J. E. Gould issued excerpts from the opera *Oberon* by Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826). Of particular note is the score for "I'd Weep with Thee," as sung by María Malibran.

3.2.3. Publishers in Boston



Image 8. "Malibran Waltz." Published by Henry Prentiss.

In Boston, Massachusetts, Henry Prentiss (1801-1860) would establish himself as a respected publisher and instrument fabricator, headquartered at 33 Court Street. In his catalog, we encounter Malibran's popular title "There is No Home Like my Own." Even more notable, however, is the inclusion of a piano score titled "Malibran Waltz," inspired by the famous singer and composed by Mrs. Parker in 1841. On the title page

of the work, next to a portrait of Malibran by the American painter and engraver Samuel Worcester Rowse (1822-1901), we find the following text: “By Strangers Honored and by Strangers Mourned. Composed as a Tribute of Respect & Admiration to the Memory of the Illustrious Malibran.” This document reflects two issues of extraordinary interest: first, the admiration Malibran enjoyed in the United States well after she had performed in the country and even after her death; and second, Malibran’s influence, not only in the world of opera, but in realm of instrumental music, particularly in the piano repertoire.

In addition to individual works—for example, Bellini’s “Do Not Mingle, One Human Feeling: Air, as Sung by Madame Malibran and Mrs. Wood in the Opera *La Sonnambula*,” published by Oliver Ditson, and “The Rapture Dwelling, Finale to the Maid of Artois as Sung by Madame Malibran, Ms. Shirreff and Miss Morgan,” with music by M. W. Balfe and published by Parker & Ditson—in Boston, we see the publication of musical compendiums featuring titles inspired by Malibran’s performances, or composed by Malibran herself. One such collection is “The Social Circle: Designed for a Class Book or the Domestic Circle,” edited by George Kingsley and published by Crocker & Brewster, and featuring the popular title “There is No Home Like my Own.”

In addition, we see the publication of “The Tyrolien Lyre. A Glee Book consisting of Easy Pieces Arranged Mostly for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Base Voices with and without Piano-forte Accompaniment.” This collection was designed for use by clubs, societies, schools, choirs, and at social gatherings, and was edited by Edward L. White and John E. Gould. Among the works in the compendium we find Malibran’s “Breathe not that Mountain Cry.” In addition to its publication in Boston by Benjamin B. Mussey and Company, the collection was also published in 1847 by Mark H. Newman and Firth and Hall in New York, by Grigg, Elliot & Co in Philadelphia, by Cushing in Baltimore, by W.B. Smith and Co. in Cincinnati, and by J. Halsell in St. Louis. The compendium’s

prolific publication, along with Malibran's performance and composition of numerous *tyroliennes*, illustrates the tremendous popularity of Tyrol music on both sides of the Atlantic during the first half of the 19th century.

3.2.4. Publishers in Baltimore

In Baltimore, F. D. Benteen and John Cole & Son published Malibran's own composition "There is no Home Like my Own," further demonstrating the work's tremendous popularity in the United States. Frederik D. Benteen published a new edition of Bellini's "Oh Love for me Thy Power and While This Heart its Joy Revealing Sung by Madame Malibran & Mrs Wood in the opera of *La Sonnambula*," a work also be marketed by Ch. Nicks in New Orleans. For its part, John Cole & Son published the title "My Father Land, a Much Admired Tyrolienne sung by Madame Malibran," composed by J. Barnett.

3.2.5. Publishers in Cincinnati

In 1836, U.P. James published the *United States Songster* in Cincinnati. It is noteworthy that this compendium of American songs would include the titles "Cushlamachree" and "Away o'er the Blue Waves of Ocean," as sung by *Signorina* García: A decade after the Spanish singer had left the United States, her name was still associated with the lyrical tradition and remained a hallmark of the national music scene.

3.3. Conclusions

Through the course of our research we have confirmed Malibran's notable influence on the sheet music publishing industry in the United States. Publishers used the singer's name, associated with technical excellence and virtuosity, as an advertising hook to attract customers to purchase the titles that were in vogue at the time. These published works do not bring us closer to an understanding of Malibran's interpretative

technique, nor, given that they lack ornamentation or *cadenzas*, were they designed to; rather, they were intended for both professionals and amateurs who simply wanted to enjoy the latest lyrical hits of the era.

If, at the time of the singer's U.S. tour, Malibran's name was regularly featured on sheet music as the primary marketing device—even, at times, displayed more prominently than the name of the composer—as time went on, the singer's name began to appear alongside other successful figures of the era, with different performances of the same piece at times included in a single publication. Many of these editions were bilingual, and included both the Italian original and its English translation.

Malibran's prolific presence as a composer, in addition to her fame as a performer, is noteworthy as well. The numerous published editions of her song "There is No Home Like My Own" attest to her success as a songwriter.

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Due to constraints of the present publication, we have limited our contribution to a survey of selected works published in the United States between 1826 and 1850. It is our hope, however, that this study will serve as a foundation for future research on the García Family's influence in the United States, and on the influence of María Malibran in particular.

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