

“Improvisation in Simon Mayr’s *Adelasia ed Aleramo*”

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Poster Abstract

In my poster, I will present my digital project about a manuscript copy of the cavatina “Figli, miei cari figli” from Simon Mayr’s opera *Adelasia ed Aleramo*. This manuscript is the last piece in a collection of six excerpts from different operas during the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century. As a “father” figure of nineteenth-century Italian music, Mayr (1763–1845) spent most of his life in Italy, active as a composer and teacher. His operas have long been regarded as the fusion of German, Italian, and French theatrical music. Although Rossini’s music turned audience’s attention from Mayr in the later 1810s, he became the teacher of Donizetti, and influenced Bellini and Verdi. At its premiere on December 26, 1806, in Milan, the opera achieved a great success and was performed in Vienna, Munich, and London. However, a modern revival of this opera did not take place until the twenty-first century. The manuscript is held by Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin. It is an unsigned handwritten score for voice and orchestra. Compared with a facsimile edition of the printed piano-vocal score and other manuscripts, the most intriguing aspect of this HRC version is that it has many added embellishments. According to the current state of knowledge, it is difficult to identify the date and the singers for whom it was prepared. In my project, I transcribed the cavatina following the opera scholar Phillip Gossett’s principles of “critical edition” and other historical studies about music notation. The poster will display both the original version and the embellishments, and I will demonstrate the digital project through my laptop and play a short video of the modern production of the opera.