

**Giovanni Puzzi: His Life and Work. A View of
Horn Playing and Musical Life in England
from 1817 into the Victorian Era (c. 1855)**

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ABSTRACT

Giovanni Puzzi: His Life and Work. A View of Horn Playing and Musical Life in England from 1817 into the Victorian Era (c. 1855)

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The focus of this dissertation is a comprehensive study of the life and work of Giovanni Puzzi, nineteenth-century Britain's most celebrated virtuoso of the horn. In his hands, the horn -- hitherto largely known to England's aristocracy as an obstreperous member of the orchestra or popular form of pleasure garden entertainment -- became a sought-after attraction at London's most fashionable and exclusive concerts. An examination of Puzzi's activities as an orchestral player and as a soloist in a wide variety of public and private concerts chronicles his rise to celebrity and establishes his position in London's concert life. Equally impressive was Puzzi's sustained prosperity in a notoriously difficult business. Key to this triumph was his multifaceted exploitation of the Italian opera. Through his activities as an agent, impresario and arranger he allied himself as a fixer and performer with his era's most lucrative musical commodity: the singers of the Italian opera.

In the large body of music that he arranged and composed to capitalise on audience fascination with virtuosity and opera, Puzzi has provided the only substantial record of horn playing in Britain during the nineteenth century. The majority of the manuscripts considered in this dissertation are drawn from a private collection and have not been previously studied or published. This material, in conjunction with Puzzi's surviving instruments and critical accounts of his playing, has been utilised to reconstruct and assess the main attributes of his virtuosity.

This dissertation shows that Puzzi was responsible for establishing the preference for French style instruments and performance technique in England and that he was the first exponent of the British school of horn playing that reached its culmination in Dennis Brain.

While virtuoso string players, pianists and singers have attracted much attention from scholars and biographers, this dissertation is the first full length historical study of a nineteenth-century horn virtuoso to be written.

CONTENTS

VOLUME I

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
EXPLANATORY NOTES	iv
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE - Rank and file: Puzzi's orchestral activities	10
The Italian Opera orchestra at the King's Theatre	13
The Philharmonic Society	19
The Concert of Antient Music	31
Other orchestral activities	36
CHAPTER TWO - Setting the stage: Puzzi and the Italian Opera in London	46
Puzzi's work as an agent and impresario	47
Giacinta Puzzi (née Toso)	68
Patronage	76
CHAPTER THREE - 'Corno solo': Puzzi's activities as a soloist and his place in London's concert life	91
Public music-making	96
Private music-making	108
CHAPTER FOUR - 'Il maestro on the horn': The playing of Giovanni Puzzi	116
Distinguishing elements of the horn playing environment during Puzzi's career	117
Attributes of Puzzi's playing	132
Puzzi's influence on horn playing in England	169
CHAPTER FIVE - Puzzi's music: The repertoire of a 'primo corno'	188
Works in Puzzi's repertoire not composed or arranged by Puzzi	192
Puzzi's music	197
The sources of Puzzi's repertoire	208
Puzzi the composer	240
CONCLUSION	243
BIBLIOGRAPHY	247

VOLUME II

APPENDIX 1.1 - Repertoire	264
APPENDIX 1.2 - Orchestral horn sections	271
APPENDIX 2 - Provincial Tours	274
APPENDIX 3 - Horns owned by Giovanni Puzzi	276
APPENDIX 4 - Operas performed in London’s major Italian opera venues 1820 - 1855	284
MUSICAL EXAMPLES	298
WORKS CATALOGUE	352



This dissertation is dedicated to

JOHN COVERT

and to the memory of

REGINALD MORLEY-PEGGE



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Although the sound of Puzzi's horn is lost forever, a wide body of materials that can be used to reconstruct the key elements of his playing and chronicle his remarkable career has survived. In the course of following this trail and producing this dissertation, I have become indebted to many people. It is my pleasure to thank them here.

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Materials held in museums and archives have been indispensable to my research. The Bate Collection of Musical Instruments was the 'home base' for much of my work and provided an ideal environment in which to learn about working with historic instruments and source material. It has also been a perpetual source of inspiration and energy, not least because of its curator, Hélène La Rue, who has given most generously of her time, expertise and understanding. Joanna Archibald provided access to an inexhaustible supply of horns and tea. Oliver Davies, Keeper of the Department of Portraits and Performance History, Royal College of Music, has not only allowed me to work with this extraordinary collection but has also been an invaluable and generous source of knowledge about nineteenth century musicians and personalities. His assistant Paul Collen has been a great help during my visits to the collection. Frances Palmer, Keeper of Musical Instruments at the Horniman Museum allowed me to examine a number of instruments in great detail and provided much insight into their use. James York, curator of furniture at the Victoria and

Albert Museum, permitted me to examine Puzzi's spectacular M.-A. Raoux horn. Access to the Royal Academy of Music's fascinating archive was provided by librarian Katharine Hogg. The efficiency and expertise of the staff of the Theatre Museum, London, enabled me to work effectively with the large volume of material in this collection. Oxford Faculty of Music librarian John Wagstaff has expertly and enthusiastically answered my many queries and has helped me obtain materials that often seemed impossibly far away. London music dealer Christel Wallbaum was most helpful to me during the early phase of my research and has shared much invaluable material with me in the form of rare ephemera and manuscripts.

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I have received much help and support from the community of players and collectors bound together by their knowledge of and keen enthusiasm for the horn. John Humphries has been most generous in sharing his exceptional and wide ranging knowledge of players, instruments and music throughout my research and has thoroughly and amiably answered my queries and served as a link to the British horn playing world. He has been extremely kind in allowing me to read unpublished material from his forthcoming book, *The Early Horn*. Martin

Prowse has taken an active interest in my work and has pointed me towards several valuable sources of information about Puzzi's early life and career. Arnold Myers has expertly answered my queries about horn measurements and mouthpiece terminology. Michael Thompson arranged access to one of Puzzi's horns now kept at the Royal Academy of Music. Farquahrson Cousins, Anthony Halstead and many others have taken the time to reply to my inquiries and have offered valuable suggestions for my research.

Tina Breckwoldt kindly lent her expertise in translating the unique variety of French with which Puzzi corresponded with the directors of the Philharmonic Society and offered valuable advice in helping to prepare the first chapter of this dissertation for a journal submission. I owe special thanks to Erich Scherer, who was the source of many unexpected and happy discoveries during the course of writing this dissertation, including illustration 2.4. Kathryn Whitney has provided much expert advice^f and extensive proofreading. Wolfson College and Somerville College have both provided financial support for my studies in the form of a graduate award and a Janet Watson Bursary. A Louise Dyer Award from the Musica Britannica Trust also aided my research. Nigel Ramsay's house has been an ideal and inspiring place to work, and I am grateful to him for having been able to finish my dissertation there.

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EXPLANATORY NOTES:

I. Abbreviations used in text and bibliography

BCMI	Bate Collection of Musical Instruments, Oxford
BL	British Library
Cat. no.	Catalogue number, catalogue of Puzzi's printed works in volume II of this dissertation.
CPM	<i>Catalogue of Printed Music of the British Library</i>
JJC	John Johnson Collection of Ephemera, Bodleian Library, Oxford
R.M.-P.	Morley-Pegge Archive, Bate Collection of Musical Instruments
MT	<i>Musical Times</i>
MW	<i>Musical World</i> (in issues of this periodical that bear both an 'old series' and 'new series' number, the 'old series' number has been cited in footnotes)
n.d.	no date
n.p.	no page
n.pub.	no publisher
pl., pls.	photographic plate, plates
PRO	Public Records Office (located at Somerset House, London at the time of research).
QMMR	<i>Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review</i>
RAM	Royal Academy of Music
RCM	Royal College of Music
RCM PP	Archives of the Royal College of Music Department of Portraits and Performance History
TM	Theatre Museum, London
V&A	Victoria and Albert Museum
w.m.	water mark

II. Currency

British currency in use during Puzzi's career was as follows:

One pound, the gold coin of this value was called a sovereign (£1) = 20 shillings (20s.) = 240 pence (240d.)

One guinea (1gn.) = £1.1s.

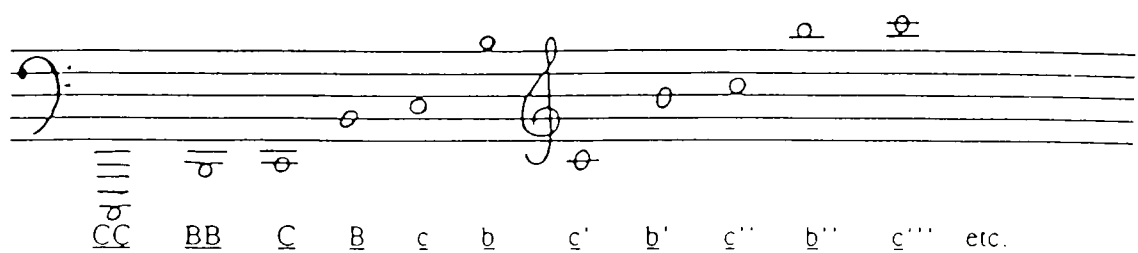
One half guinea = 10s.6d. (also written as 10/6)

III. Spelling

A wide variety of spellings that would be considered incorrect in modern British English occur in nineteenth-century English source material (e.g. clarionet, favorite, quartett, duett). The notation [*sic*] has not been employed in these instances and has been reserved to indicate obvious errors. Spelling and capitalisation of the names of operas, unless otherwise indicated, complies to the standards of the *New Grove Dictionary of Opera*.

IV. Pitch notation

When individual pitches are referred to in the text, Helmholtz’s system of reference has been used:



INTRODUCTION

The 'foggy, but profitable, shores of England' were an irresistible magnet to all manner of people optimistically seeking a fortune in music during the first half of the nineteenth century.¹ London's flourishing concert life and its comparatively unrestricted musical marketplace made it a favoured and essential destination for many of Europe's most celebrated composers and performers, continuing a tradition begun in the eighteenth century by such luminaries as Handel and J.C. Bach. The prosperity of the 1820s spawned an increasing number of opera, ballet and orchestral performances, subscription series and benefit and private concerts.² One of the musical immigrants striving to profit from this diverse array of activities was nineteenth-century Britain's most celebrated horn virtuoso, the Italian-born Giovanni Puzzi (1792 - 1876).

Puzzi's talents as a horn player were manifest at an early age and he embarked upon European tours, performing before the aristocracy of the principal cities while still a young teenager. A more enduring noble attachment was formed when Puzzi was commended to Napoleon Bonaparte by Ferdinando Paer and was given a place in the Emperor's Chapelle Musique sometime prior to 1809.³ While in Paris, he attracted

1. Willert Beale [Walter Maynard], *The Light of Other Days Seen Through the Wrong End of an Opera Glass* (London, 1890), p. 75.

2. For an overview of concert life in London in the first half of the nineteenth century, see Joel Sachs, 'London: The Professionalization of Music', *Music and Society: The Early Romantic Era*, ed. Alexander Ringer (London, 1990), pp. 201-235.

3. Tina Whitaker, *Sicily and England: Political and Social Reminiscences 1848 - 1870* (London, 1907), p. 217.

the notice of the *prima donna assoluta* Angelica Catalani, who invited him to play in her concert series at the Théâtre Italien, which subsequently led to his appointment as solo horn in the theatre's orchestra during the 1815 - 1816 season. At the end of the Paris opera season, Puzzi was brought to England under the patronage of the Duke of Wellington, who appears to have claimed him as part of the spoils of the victory at Waterloo.⁴ With this auspicious beginning, it is easy to assume that Puzzi's success as a soloist in London would have been automatic and immediate. Although he is remembered principally as a soloist, closer investigation reveals that this accomplishment was the result of a shrewd and multifaceted approach to the music business, of which virtuosity and past successes were only constituents. It was primarily through his high degree of industry that Puzzi shared the platform with celebrity performers that included Franz Liszt, Domenico Dragonetti, Paolo Spagnoletti and singers such as Luigi Lablache, Giovanni Rubini and Giuditta Pasta.

Like most of his successful London contemporaries, Puzzi engaged in a diverse range of enterprises, of which solo playing was merely the most visible. In the manner typical of the nineteenth-century virtuoso composer, Puzzi arranged or composed nearly all of his concert repertoire. He also wrote and published a number of songs and simple piano pieces. During his early years in England, he embarked upon an active orchestral career, the highlights of which included posts as principal horn in London's three leading orchestras. 'Professional patronage' and the exposure to an influential audience that resulted from his participation in these orchestras helped to provide an entrée into London's circuit of subscription and private concerts. It also resulted in Puzzi's appointment

4. Wellington also brought other musicians, such as the singing DeLihu sisters, from Napoleon's court to England at this time (Whitaker, p. 218).

as the first professor of horn at the nascent Royal Academy of Music.

Puzzi's early attempts to establish himself in London included other teaching activities, such as working as a singing master. Any investigation of his career quickly reveals that the Italian Opera was at the centre of nearly all of Puzzi's endeavours. On the most fundamental level, it provided the source material for the majority of his repertoire.

Involvement with the Italian Opera at the King's Theatre, where he initially worked as an orchestral player, led to Puzzi's enterprises as a theatrical agent, concert fixer and impresario. This secured his place within the influential world of the opera and also provided him with access to fashionable London's most popular musical commodity: the season's leading singers. Through these inter-arching enterprises, Puzzi was poised to capitalise on the two forces that defined popular music among London's aristocracy -- the Italian opera and virtuosity -- throughout his career.

This position served Puzzi well. Census records indicate that he led a prosperous life in London that extended into his retirement. In 1871, Puzzi, his wife and their three daughters lived at 30 Welbeck Street in the fashionable municipal ward of Portland Place. They employed three resident servants: a valet, a cook and a housemaid.⁵ This high level of prosperity was quite remarkable. Although London was unrivalled in the opportunities it presented to the professional musician, the prospects for financial security were tenuous at best. More than a quarter of early nineteenth-century London musicians who experienced success at some point in their career ultimately became impoverished. Fifty to seventy-five per cent of these performers experienced no appreciable gain in capital,

5. Census returns, Parish of St Marylebone, 2 April 1871, RG10/156, f. 8 p. 9, Public Records Office.

finishing their careers with no more money than when they started.⁶

The lot of the brass player was particularly difficult, in part owing to the social implications attached to playing these instruments. While the piano was a requisite fixture in the fashionable nineteenth-century home and flute playing and singing were highly esteemed -- even mandatory -- recreational pursuits for gentlemen and ladies of society, brass instruments did not enjoy such prestige or widespread popularity. The playing of horns and trumpets was traditionally the domain of the servant or the professional player, who were often one in the same. The horn was a symbol of social status in that it represented the wealth of a gentleman able to indulge in the extravagances of a mounted hunt replete with horn-playing servants. Gentlemen owned horns and horn players but generally would not have played the instrument themselves.⁷ In the most practical terms, this meant that there was not a large amateur market for or interest in brass instruments, and players would have been deprived of the teaching opportunities offered by the more popular instruments and voice, which were the main source of income for the majority of London's musicians. Thus, brass players seldom escaped lower-class living conditions and 'had few pupils and frequently passed their old age in poverty'.⁸

The horn, however, was a particularly advantageous instrument for a brass player seeking a high profile solo career at the beginning of the

6. Deborah Rohr, 'A Profession of Artisans: The Careers and Social Status of British Musicians, 1750 - 1850', Ph.D. diss. (University of Pennsylvania, 1983), p. 32.

7. Horn players were even given among the aristocracy as gentlemanly gifts. In the summer of 1738, Lord Chesterfield presented his horn-playing servant Cato, at that time 'recon'd to blow the best French horn and trumpet in England', as a gift to the Prince and Princess of Wales (Reginald Morley-Pegge, *The French Horn: Some Notes on the Evolution of the Instrument and Its Technique*, 2nd edn. [London, 1973], p.76).

8. Sachs, p. 214.

nineteenth century. On a technical level, the hand horn had reached its zenith and was a full-fledged solo and ensemble instrument with a sophisticated and refined playing technique. Not only did its highly evolved technique of hand stopping give the instrument almost complete chromatic capability, but it also gave the player ultimate control over the instrument's tone so that the horn could play in the most refined and confined settings. Thus, the horn would have been completely at home as a solo instrument in the intimate setting of the private concerts that Puzzi favoured. Its timbre also made it an ideal accompaniment to the voice, an asset that Puzzi utilised to its full potential. Classical and early-Romantic composers were also drawn to the horn because of these attributes, therefore it was the only brass instrument to enjoy a position in wind and string chamber music. This medium provided an entrée into extensive performing opportunities with London's most celebrated instrumentalists. Finally, previous generations of virtuoso horn players had cultivated an appreciation for the instrument. Giovanni Punto, the duet teams of Johann Palsa and Carl Thürschmidt, the Leander brothers and Puzzi's most immediate predecessors, the brothers Joseph and Peter Petrides, had all whetted the appetite of English audiences. Both the environment and the horn itself offered potential to an enterprising and able performer. The unique combination of Puzzi's shrewd approach to repertoire, his innate understanding of the musical climate and his virtuoso talents enabled him to turn the horn into a vehicle for unparalleled success.

There is much to be discovered about both the music business and horn playing by examining such a remarkable career. While virtuoso string players, pianists and singers have attracted much attention from scholars and biographers, this dissertation is the first full-length historical study of a brass player. Wind players have not enjoyed the contemporary

or modern interest of their other musical colleagues. The scant information that does exist generally takes the form of brief anecdotes in contemporary memoirs, passing references in musical periodicals and short biographical sketches in books on the horn and about orchestras. The most extensive examination Puzzi receives in any of these works is a two-page summary of his career in Reginald Morley-Pegge's book *The French Horn*.⁹ In portraying Puzzi as the 'the fashionable horn player . . . who was in the happy position of being able to reserve himself for solo work', scholars like Carse have dismissed Puzzi's career from a serious study of the music profession, viewing his success as a fluke enabled solely by preternatural talent and not as the outcome of multiple factors including adroit negotiation of London's professional network, an innate understanding of his musical and social environment, a high degree of business acumen and sheer 'dintism'.¹⁰ Although the three main areas touched upon in this study -- concert life in London during Puzzi's life, the early-Romantic Italian operas that were the pillars of Puzzi's virtuoso repertoire and the history and performance practice of the nineteenth-century horn -- have all been the subjects of in-depth research, this dissertation will focus on the manner in which these elements coalesced

9. Morley-Pegge, pp. 160-162.

10 Adam Carse, *The Orchestra from Beethoven to Berlioz* (Cambridge, 1948), p. 178.

in Puzzi's career.¹¹ In several instances, this research has also yielded new information and perspectives in the above areas.

The first part of this dissertation will address Puzzi's career from his arrival in London in 1816 to his retirement from public playing in 1855. The period prior to Puzzi's immigration offers a ripe area for research, but will only be considered in this dissertation as it relates to or influences his activities in England. A wide variety of primary source material will be used to reconstruct the multiple facets of Puzzi's career. These include concert programmes, manuscript and printed music, materials found in theatre and orchestra archives, newspapers and contemporary memoirs. The resultant data from this study is not meant to account for all of Puzzi's engagements, but instead to provide a representative sampling of his undertakings in each of the main activities in which he was involved. This information will then be examined to determine how Puzzi reacted to and was shaped by his environment and will serve as a tool for revealing the intricacies of achieving such a remarkable degree of success

11. Concert life in London during Puzzi's career is addressed in Cyril Ehrlich, *The Music Profession in Britain Since the Eighteenth Century: A Social History* (Oxford, 1985) and Joel Sachs, 'London: The Professionalization of Music', *Music and Society: The Early Romantic Era*, ed. Alexander Ringer (London: Prentice Hall, 1990), pp. 201-235. While it predates the period under consideration in this dissertation, Simon McVeigh's book, *Concert Life in London from Mozart to Haydn* (Cambridge, 1993), also examines many aspects of London's musical life that are relevant to this study of Puzzi. Recent works that cover compositional aspects of Italian opera include William Ashbrook, *Donizetti and His Operas* (Cambridge, 1982); Charles Patrick Cronin, 'The Comic Operas of Gaetano Donizetti and the end of the Opera Buffa Tradition' (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1993) and David Kimball, *Italian Opera* (Cambridge, 1991). Issues of opera reception and the interaction of opera and society are examined in Jennifer Lee Hall, 'The Re-fashioning of Fashionable Society: Opera-going and Sociability in Britain, 1821 - 1861' (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1996). Reginald Morley-Pegge, *The French Horn: Some Notes on the Evolution of the Instrument and Its Technique*, 2nd edn. (London, 1973) remains the definitive source of information on the history and performance technique of the hand horn. The French school of horn playing is thoroughly explored in Birchard Coar, *A Critical Study of the Nineteenth Century Horn Virtuosi in France* (DeKalb, 1952). *The Historic Brass Society Journal* and *The Horn Call* contain many articles by authors such as Jeffrey Snedecker, William Rogan and Herbert Heyde that have augmented this research.

in a profession where uncertainty and destitution were the most predictable factors.

The second part of this dissertation will focus on Puzzi's music and his attributes as a horn player. Equipped with the context provided by an examination of his career and musical environment as set out above, one is now prepared to consider Puzzi's music without viewing it through the lens of the modern *a priori* value judgments to which nineteenth-century virtuoso instrumental music is often subjected. In this light, Puzzi's music becomes a carefully designed tool for capitalising on his environment and offers another means by which to gain further understanding of the subtleties of his *modus operandi*.

The music that Puzzi arranged and wrote to showcase his unique abilities as a performer is the only substantial body of nineteenth-century horn repertoire written in England. As such, the large number of surviving manuscripts constitute a unique record of virtuoso hand horn playing, particularly when they are studied in tandem with instruments that Puzzi is known to have played. These sources will be used to reveal the main traits of his style and to ascertain if his appeal and popularity were based on a virtuosity as impressive and singular as his ability to thrive in the musical climate of Georgian London through his shrewd choice of repertoire. The technical and stylistic information that this research yields about Puzzi's playing will provide a body of practical material for scholars and performers who are interested in historically informed hand horn playing. A broader examination of horn playing in England immediately preceding, during and after his career will help to establish whether Puzzi, who was potentially in a position of great influence owing to his prominence and also because of the many changes in instrument design and playing technique that transpired during his

lifetime, had any lasting impact on horn playing in England. This comprehensive approach to Puzzi's career, music and playing will ultimately enable an understanding of the factors that inspired one critic to remark that 'PUZZI is a very extraordinary man.'¹²

12. *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review*, vol. 3 (1821): 279.

I

Rank and file: Puzzi's orchestral activities

There was Puzzi, with his burnished horn,
wondering how it came into the ranks.¹

A correspondent noting Puzzi's presence in
the orchestra at the 1842 Norfolk and
Norwich Musical Festival.

The Italian Opera at the King's Theatre -- The Philharmonic Society -- The
Concert of Antient Music -- Other orchestral activities (The City Amateur
Concerts, provincial concerts, benefit concerts).



The sight of Puzzi sitting amid the horn section of an orchestra in 1842 would have indeed elicited the special notice of the audience and musical press, and may well have inspired Puzzi to wonder about his presence there. At this point in his life, regular engagement as an orchestral player was far behind him. The public had long known Puzzi in his most visible role as a soloist and he would have been familiar to musical cognoscenti as a theatrical agent, impresario and concert fixer. However, at the foundation of his success in these endeavours, which developed into the main occupations of his life, there was an intensive period of orchestral playing from 1821 to 1826, when Puzzi served as principal horn in London's leading ensembles. During these initial years, orchestral playing was a primary source of income for Puzzi. More importantly, however, these posts enabled him to cultivate the 'professional' patronage with colleagues and the traditional patronage of various aristocratic supporters that was vital to the development of the above-mentioned aspects of his

1. *Musical World*, vol. 17 no. 38 (22 September 1842): 297.

career.

Puzzi's orchestral work embraced the most prominent features of the musical landscape of London in the 1820s and centred around the triumvirate of the Concert of Antient [*sic*] Music -- bastion of conservative aristocratic tastes -- the progressive Philharmonic Society, and the Italian Opera at the King's Theatre, the focal point of London's fashionable world. It also included participating in orchestras at various benefit and private concerts where a 'band' would have been required. Performances at provincial festivals held around the country outside of the London social season were also the domain of Puzzi and his colleagues, as London musicians were relied on as a core group to augment the efforts of local 'professors' in the mounting of large concerts.² The extent of Puzzi's commitment to orchestral playing is demonstrated by his participation in less-established London orchestras such as the City Amateur Concerts.

This level of involvement indicates that his orchestral posts were a fundamental and at the time indispensable component of Puzzi's career. However, his decision to become so extensively involved in this sphere was not immediate. The frequent appearance of his name in concert programmes, announcements and reviews found in newspapers provides evidence of his presence as a soloist in London during the five year period preceding his first orchestral appointments in 1821. It is possible that Puzzi was not residing in England on a permanent basis at this time or that perhaps he was under the extensive care of a patron. In the absence of documentary evidence, one can only speculate about the reasons for the postponement of Puzzi's entry into orchestral playing.

When Puzzi did decide to take up orchestral playing, his supremacy

2. 'Professor' was the general term used by contemporary writers to identify a professional musician and does not imply any academic affiliation or credentials.

as a player was immediately acknowledged: he was awarded the principal post in each orchestra he joined. Puzzi's occupation of multiple orchestral posts was not unusual. Personnel rosters reveal that the primary positions in London's orchestras -- and in the case of brass players, usually entire sections -- were filled by the same players. This placed Puzzi at the head of a group of players that generally included the brothers Joseph and Peter Petrides (active in London from 1802 to 1825) and Henry Platt (first horn in London's principal orchestras c. 1825-1849).³ The level of consistency is remarkable. In each orchestra, the horn players and their part assignments seldom vary, allowing them to be referred to as 'sections' in the modern sense of the word.

The prominence that orchestral playing assumed in Puzzi's activities during the 1820s reveals its indispensability as a central ingredient in the formation of a successful musical career and demonstrates that Puzzi's orchestral involvement extended far beyond the popular portrayal of the white-gloved virtuoso appearing on the platform only to execute solo passages.⁴

3. Confusion exists with regard to Platt's first name. Adam Carse and W.F.H. Blandford refer to him as Edward, although Platt himself used the name Henry when signing pay receipts for the Philharmonic Society and his name appears as Henry in contemporary materials held in the archives of the Royal Academy of Music.

4. Both W.F.H. Blandford ('Studies on the Horn', *Musical Times* [August 1922]: 546) and Farquharson Cousins (*On Playing the Horn* [Stockport, 1992], p. 71) include popular but apocryphal anecdotes about Puzzi appearing in a pair of white kid gloves to execute orchestral solos and then exiting from the platform as soon as he had played these passages, leaving the rest to 'humbler persons' (Blandford). While mention of such incidents has not been found in contemporary memoirs, a letter from Blandford to Reginald Morley-Pegge includes a passage about the appearance of a white-gloved horn player, supposedly Puzzi, at the opera at Covent Garden in the 1850s (21 October 1922, VII/150, Morley-Pegge Archive, Bate Collection, University of Oxford). Puzzi had largely withdrawn himself from public performances by this time. It is more likely that this might refer to Jullien's principal horn Henry Jarrett, who was noted for a number of colourful eccentricities, or Eugene Vivier, who occasionally appeared as a soloist at Jullien's *Concerts Monstres* and was also remembered for his lively exploits.

THE ITALIAN OPERA ORCHESTRA AT THE KING'S THEATRE

Puzzi's position as principal horn at the King's Theatre was his most important orchestral post, since it was a vital point of contact with all the elements of the Italian opera. This institution was the most dominant and powerful feature of musical life in aristocratic London. The centrality of the Italian Opera in all aspects of Puzzi's career was the primary reason for his success. Although his background equipped him well for his future role as an agent and impresario, these early years with the orchestra would have laid the groundwork for Puzzi's contact with the singers and the repertoire that was at the root of his popularity as a soloist. This post would have also provided Puzzi with numerous opportunities to present himself to the managers and patrons of the Theatre and acquaint them with the knowledge and skills that led to his later employment as an agent for the Theatre. As a regular assembly point for the most wealthy and fashionable members of London society, the King's/Her Majesty's Theatre provided ample exposure to desirable patrons.⁵ Finally, as his most substantial orchestral post, it was an important source of income while Puzzi established himself in London.

The King's/Her Majesty's Theatre was the centre of Italian opera production until the rival Royal Italian Opera opened at Covent Garden in 1847. Although financial and managerial instability at the King's Theatre were chronic, 'the home of the Italian opera remained an ever-present, and vitally important source of income and musical experience' to the orchestral player, particularly in light of the 'upheavals of failed and brief subscription concerts, unpaid benefits, and fluctuating engagements in the

5. The King's Theatre and Her Majesty's Theatre are the same institution. The theatre assumed its later name upon the the ascension of Queen Victoria in 1837. In this study, the name used to refer to the theatre will be determined by the period under consideration. 'The King's/Her Majesty's Theatre' is used when the issue being discussed spans both periods.

provinces'.⁶ It gave more frequent performances than any other orchestra in London and was the cornerstone of every principal orchestra player's career. During Puzzi's tenure, a typical full season ran from March to early August and consisted of approximately sixty performances given on Tuesday and Saturday evenings as well as rehearsals, although the length of the season fluctuated with the Theatre's finances and it is impossible to determine how much time Puzzi would have spent at rehearsals.⁷

Few records from the King's Theatre contemporary with Puzzi's period of employment survive, but it is possible to establish the date of his arrival as an orchestral player there through the papers of William Ayrton. In 1821, Ayrton includes Puzzi's name in a list of the Theatre's principal instrumentalists for the season.⁸ It is not until 1825 that full details of the section are given. The horns are listed as Puzzi, Rais [Rae], Petrides and Petrides.⁹ A concert programme from an April 1824 subscription concert announced that Puzzi appeared 'by permission of the Proprietors of the King's Opera House', confirming his employment

6. Fiona Palmer, *Domenico Dragonetti in England (1794 - 1846): The Career of a Double Bass Virtuoso* (Oxford, 1997), p. 97.

7. William Ayrton to Paolo Spagnoletti and the Petrides brothers, 21 Jan 1821, Add. MS 52335, f. 27r., British Library. In this letter/contract Ayrton stipulates that rehearsals were required, but he does not give any indication of their number or length. While musicians were contractually obliged to attend rehearsals, deputising appears to have been a common practice. It is impossible to give an exact estimate of a player's time commitment to the orchestra or to know of what other performance opportunities a post at the Theatre might have deprived him. By 1832, a £20 fine was levied against players for any King's Theatre engagements that they missed (Palmer, p. 107). The orchestra was also expected to perform 'gratuitously for the house' for various benefits; the particular number was a source of much contention among players (Add. MS 52335, f. 31v.).

8. Ayrton Collection, Add. MS 52335, f. 50v. Other principal wind players are named as follows: Schmidt, trumpet; Griesbach, oboe; Ireland, flute; Thomas Willman, clarinet; Charles Mackintosh, bassoon.

9. *Ibid.*, f. 51v.

during this season.¹⁰ Puzzi continued to play solo horn in the orchestra until he was dispatched to Paris by the King's Theatre manager John Ebers in the winter of 1826 to engage singers for the forthcoming season.

Performance of the latest Italian operas was the principal duty of Puzzi and his colleagues (see appendix 1.1, table A, for a full list of works performed during the 1820s). Occasional performances of German opera produced in English, and even less frequently in German (save for the notable exception of the 1832, 1833, and 1834 seasons at the King's Theatre) occurred, but Italian opera continued to dominate throughout the first half of the nineteenth century.¹¹ At the conclusion of the evening's opera, the orchestra was called upon to play a full-length ballet. Due largely to the success of Ebers in obtaining the leading dancers from Paris, the King's Theatre became London's principal venue for Romantic ballet. In 1821, the Petrides brothers wrote to Ayrton to petition him for help in dealing with the demands that the newly introduced ballet added to their duties, asking 'that Mr. Puzzi should be engaged, not only for the operas but now for the Balets too, which is certainly great relief for us'.¹² Existing orchestral rosters do not specify whether Puzzi played in the ballet, but this is a factor that must be considered in attempting to gain an understanding of the extent of the duties of the horn section on any given evening (see

10. 'Grand Miscellaneous Concert' (Liverpool: Bold Street Music Hall, 20 April 1824), unnumbered handbill, Covert Collection.

11. For details of German operas performed during this period, see Henry F. Chorley, *Thirty Years' Musical Recollections*, vol. 1 (London, 1862), pp. 50-71. Rossini's operas dominated the stage of the King's Theatre in the 1820s. During the 1824 season, he filled the post of theatre composer and often conducted his works from the keyboard. Despite the many failures of the season (owing largely to the declining abilities of his wife Isabella Colbran-Rossini, who was naturally appointed as *prima donna*) and his decision to break his contract with the King's Theatre, his music eclipsed that of all other composers and accounted for nearly 50 % of the operas performed during the decade. Mozart's operas were the only others that appeared with any frequency.

12. The Petrides brothers to William Ayrton, 25 May 1821, Add. MS 52336, f. 115v. Original spelling and syntax retained.

appendix 1.1, table B, for ballet repertoire).

The strain of such long hours would have been compounded by the poor working and performance conditions that Puzzi and his colleagues encountered during the 1820s. The tone for the decade was set in 1818 when it was remarked that

the salaries of the musicians had been greatly reduced; in consequence of which several of the most eminent performers had quitted the orchestra . . . any person who attended the Opera must remark how much it had been diminished in effect. . . the orchestra was very bad.¹³

While celebrity players such as Puzzi and the Petrides brothers may have enjoyed a limited degree of negotiating power and security because of their unique status, a constant supply of section players grateful for any employment gave the music director a sharp and merciless negotiating tool and the personnel and size of the orchestra were constantly in flux. The management's approach to the orchestra in the second half of the 1820s was characterised by further reductions in fees and the imposition of ruthlessly restrictive conditions of employment.

A letter written to the *Harmonicon* shortly after the infamous harpist Nicholas Bochsa took up the position of music director is one of many that addresses the grievances of players and reveals much about the poor conditions and musical standards within the orchestra:

Sir, Under the head of 'King's Theatre' . . . you pay a flattering compliment to the 'abused and comparatively ill-paid orchestra' of that establishment; but perhaps you were not aware of the actual amount of the 'impediments' which it has had to overcome this season. The introduction of a bevy of boys, to the exclusion of many excellent performers . . . was the beginning of our troubles: the want of anything like system in the general management of the theatre: the multitude of directors, not one of whom seemed to have the least knowledge of his duties; and the manner in which the

13. Unidentified newspaper clipping (1 June 1818), King's Theatre press cuttings book, Royal College of Music Department of Portraits and Performance History.

rehearsals have been conducted . . .

It has happened more than once, that, but for the promptness shewn by Mr. Coccia and Mr. Spagnoletti, the performance must have stopped suddenly; and people accustomed to the opera have frequently witnessed our confusion, imputing it no doubt, to our want of attention or of ability. To remove blame from the band, and to throw it on those who really deserve to bear it, is the object of this letter; the insertion of which will much oblige.
[signed] One of the Ill-paid Orchestra, Haymarket.¹⁴

Ebers himself confirmed the above comments about rehearsals:

The word rehearsal summons up, to all practically acquainted with its meaning, a scene beyond description In the midst of the Babel [in reference to arguments between singers] the gentlemen of the orchestra, who wish all the singers at the devil, endeavour to get over the business of the day by playing on without the vocal music. The leader of the orchestra, finding all ineffectual, puts on his hat, and walks away, followed by violins, basses, trombones, and kettle-drums, en masse. . .¹⁵

The horn section suffered during this period. The Petrides brothers departed for Prague at the end of the 1825 season.¹⁶ 'Puzzi played in the orchestra, until . . . he made himself indispensable to the management, and laid aside the French horn for more remunerative occupation' in 1826 when he entered into work as an agent for Ebers and was dispatched to the Continent to recruit and engage promising singers.¹⁷ Beale's observations leave no question that the financial rewards of this work far surpassed

14. *Harmonicon*, vol. 4 (1826): 162.

15. John Ebers, *Seven Years of the King's Theatre* (London, 1888), pp. 364-367.

16. Some confusion exists with regard to when the London career of the Petrides brothers ended. Reginald Morley-Pegge states that the brothers retired in 1824 (Reginald Morley-Pegge, *The French Horn: Some Notes on the Evolution of the Instrument and Its Technique*, 2nd edn. [London, 1973], p. 171). Orchestral rosters from the Philharmonic Society and correspondence indicate that they remained in London until the close of the 1825 season (Joseph and Peter Petrides to the directors of the Philharmonic Society, 11 June 1825, Loan 48.13 f. 43v., British Library).

17. Willert Beale, *The Light of Other Days Seen Through the Wrong End of an Opera Glass* (London, 1890), p. 75.

those paid even to an exceptional orchestral player like Puzzi. Despite their eminence, players such as the Petrides brothers and Puzzi seem to have had little direct control over their treatment by the Theatre's management and to have effected the greatest positive change in their situation by leaving the orchestra as soon as other developments in their careers made this feasible.

While salaries were at the core of disputes with the management of the Theatre and singers' exorbitant fees were a source of much interest (often appearing in the musical press with dubious accuracy) and were recorded by Ayrton in his records, figures for instrumentalists are rare with none known for any horn players in the 1820s.¹⁸ In 1821, rank and file violinists received £23.5s.5d. for the season.¹⁹ Dragonetti, unquestionably the Theatre's most celebrated instrumentalist and an exceptionally shrewd negotiator, was paid £150 each season from 1820 to 1822 to play in the opera performances and rehearsals but not for the ballet.²⁰ The highest orchestra fee in 1821 was £250, paid to Spagnoletti.²¹ The lowest and highest of these figures serve only to provide the outer limits of Puzzi's possible earnings for a season at the King's Theatre. The greatest profit of Puzzi's period as an orchestral player at the King's Theatre was the entrée that it provided into London's operatic world and the foundations it laid for the most lucrative elements of Puzzi's career.

18. For the 1821 season, Ayrton records that the orchestra (save for leader and maestro) was paid £2900; the singers received a total of £7332 (Add. MS 52335, f. 69).

19. Ebers, p. 218.

20. Palmer, pp. 112-113.

21. Add. MS 52335, f. 70.

THE PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY

The Philharmonic Society, founded in 1813, was the most notable and musically important orchestra in nineteenth-century London.²² Its focus on instrumental ensemble music and its organisation as a cooperative of professional musicians distinguished it from all other musical institutions of the time. The Philharmonic pooled the talents and resources of an exceptionally prominent and influential group of musical figures, including Sir George Smart, William Ayrton, and Vincent Novello in addition to the city's most illustrious instrumental performers. An appearance with the orchestra was considered essential for any foreign musician hoping to find success in London. The unsurpassed musical quality of the group and its unique organisation conferred a new level of stature and professionalism upon its members. Puzzi's election as an associate of the Philharmonic in 1824 was the greatest endorsement of his merits as a musician by his colleagues.²³ Many excellent performers who were long-time members of the orchestra were never honoured with this distinction. The extensive archives of the Philharmonic Society and Puzzi's correspondence with its directors provide the most detailed information about any of Puzzi's orchestral engagements and offer a number of insights into horn playing in an orchestra that was exceptional in its day.

Much has been written about the unique musical and professional environment of the Philharmonic Society during its formative years. The

22. A comprehensive history and socio-economic study of the Philharmonic Society is found in Cyril Ehrlich, *First Philharmonic: A History of the Royal Philharmonic Society* (Oxford, 1995).

23. Recommendations, Royal Philharmonic Society Manuscripts, Loan 48.7/1, f. 90r., British Library. The orchestra's players could be nominated to become 'associates' of the Philharmonic. Stringent regulations and reviewing procedures ensured that only those 'bona fide a Professor of Music' were considered for such a nomination (Foundation Book, Loan 48.1, p. 1).

following discussion highlights the features of the Society's views pertaining to repertoire and salary that had the greatest effect on Puzzi. In a musical landscape dominated by oratorio performances, Italian opera, and organisations such as the Concert of Antient Music, the Philharmonic's focus on 'modern' orchestral works was unique. Contemporary chamber music, which was largely absent from London's concert series during the 1820s, was also a regular feature of the Philharmonic Society concerts, which may have been Puzzi's vehicle of introduction to much of this music. The initial decision to prohibit the performance of vocal and solo instrumental works as outlined in the Society's Foundation book was a drastic and unprecedented decision that even the Philharmonic Society was unable to uphold for any length of time, although expectations for the performance of 'serious' solo music did endure even if performers were not always willing to oblige them.²⁴ Through this programming, the Society's directors hoped to create a new atmosphere by attracting a more musically and less socially oriented audience.

The Philharmonic's cooperative structure was equally novel. Management and players were one and the same, with directors drawn from the group of associate members. Professional solidarity was further increased by the original stipulation that members would receive no payment for their services to the Philharmonic as performers or managers, emphasising that they were a group of professionals dedicated to the ideal of music as an art.²⁵ By 1816, the majority of the Philharmonic's players were paid, although in keeping with the original ethos of the Society, rates of remuneration remained low and were a constant source of debate.

24. Vocal solos and duets began to appear on Philharmonic Society programmes in 1816, followed shortly by the frequent occurrence of solo concertos with orchestral accompaniment.

25. Foundation Book, Loan 48.1, p. 6.

Despite these alterations, the founding attitude prevailed and the Society continued to maintain itself as a dedicated musical enterprise relatively free from the aristocratic influence that dominated other musical institutions. In this respect, it remained a special fixture in the British musical landscape throughout the first half of the nineteenth century.

Puzzi's solo appearances at the Philharmonic Society

The solo and chamber music appearances of Puzzi bear consideration, since these were an important component of his post as principal horn of the orchestra from 1821 to 1824.²⁶ They were also a feature of Philharmonic Society concerts, and were notably not part of the duties of principal horn at the King's Theatre or Concert of Antient Music (see appendix 1.1, table C for a list of solos and chamber music that Puzzi played at Philharmonic concerts). These additional obligations featured prominently in Puzzi's negotiations with the directors of the orchestra and in part help to explain the disparity between fees received by Puzzi and the other horn players.²⁷

The solo appearances are significant, as the horn was the only brass instrument to be featured in this manner until 1853.²⁸ Much of this repertoire was identical to what Puzzi was playing at benefit and private

26. Despite the brevity of his engagement as principal horn, Puzzi's involvement with the Philharmonic Society spanned twenty years and included various solo appearances and many chamber music performances. During this time, Puzzi performed as a soloist and obbligato player eleven times.

27. After Puzzi's withdrawal from the horn section of the Philharmonic Society, Platt assumed the position of principal and performed regularly in chamber pieces, although he never appeared as a soloist.

28. On 18 April 1853, W. Winterbottom performed Ferdinand David's trombone concertino. This was the first appearance of a brass soloist other than a horn player with the Philharmonic. While it cannot strictly be considered as a solo performance, the appearance of the Distin Quintet on 9 June 1845 is another notable date in the history of brass playing at the Philharmonic's concerts. The quintet performed a fantasia for five saxhorns based on themes from Meyerbeer's opera *Robert le diable*. (Myles Birket Foster, *The History of the Philharmonic Society of London 1813-1912* [London, 1912], pp. 232, 192).

concerts, further illustrating the degree of flexibility that the Philharmonic's repertoire regulations had assumed. Many of the pieces were written or arranged by Puzzi and bore titles such as 'Concertante' and 'Fantasia'. These vehicles for virtuosity adhered to no formal structure (it is even possible that the term 'concertante' may have been applied to make the works adhere at least in name to the Philharmonic's early requirements for solo repertoire) and were often constructed upon a pastiche of the season's most popular offerings from the Italian opera. Vocal solos also assumed a regular place in the orchestra's repertoire and Puzzi often appeared as an obbligato accompanist.

The inclusion of a concerto by Belloli, although little different from the works written by Puzzi, may have been an ineffectual nod in the direction of the Society's wavering repertoire stipulations by Puzzi. Such deviations in the programme of an organisation that insisted its repertoire would be comprised of the 'best and most approved instrumental music, consisting of Full Pieces . . . excluding Concertos, Solos and Duets' were sharply noted by the musical press as in this review of Belloli's concerto, performed at the opening concert of the 1823 season:²⁹

The great dangers that such an institution [the Philharmonic] has to fear are . . . to revive, without judgment, things almost forgotten, or to accept works that possess no recommendation beyond the author's influence with the managers. The first concert did not shew that much effort had been made to give any thing that had not been performed most years since the first moment of the Society's existence: except, indeed, a concerto for the horn, played, it must be admitted, with extraordinary ability by Puzzi, but quite unfit for a concert which was established for the purpose of upholding the highest species of music . . .³⁰

29. Ehrlich, *First Philharmonic*, p. 4.

30. *Harmonicon*, vol. 1 (1823): 41.

Chamber music was a common feature of the Philharmonic Society's programmes, particularly during its early years when few other groups were regularly performing this repertoire.³¹ These works were also financially attractive to programme, since they allowed quality literature to be presented with fewer performers. Many of the players would have played these works together before, which allowed fees for rehearsals to be kept to a minimum as well. The two Beethoven quintets and the septet were some of the most frequently performed works that included wind instruments. Works by Spohr and Mozart were also popular. The group of players brought together by these performances was formidable. The sixth concert of the 1820 season featured Beethoven's septet with Mori and Spagnoletti (violins), Lindley ('cello), Dragonetti (bass), Willman (clarinet), Puzzi and Mackintosh (bassoon).³²

Contact with these colleagues in this intimate way undoubtedly played a valuable role in garnering the professional patronage that Puzzi would have been working to establish during this period. The names of these performers appear in the reviews of Puzzi's benefit concerts and players such Mori and Spagnoletti, who were also active as fixers, may have been a source of engagements for Puzzi. A group comprising many of these performers playing much of the same repertoire was assembled by Puzzi for his series of 'Classical Concerts for Wind Instruments', which he mounted in 1837 with the hope of profiting from this decade's rage for chamber music.³³

Puzzi was well paid for his performances as a soloist and chamber

31. The amount of chamber music performed at the Philharmonic decreased significantly in the 1830s, when musicians such as Blagrove and Mori started presenting chamber music series.

32. Foster, p. 46.

33. See chapter 3 for a full discussion of Puzzi's 'Classical Concerts for Wind Instruments'.

player, receiving the ten guineas for each appearance that he stipulated were his 'terms en publique à Londres', insisting 'je ne recevrai donc que cē qui m'est du et justement du'.³⁴ For his 1818 performance of a 'concerto' and appearance in a 'Beethoven quintet', he eventually received twenty guineas.³⁵ These figures reflect the Philharmonic's set fee of ten guineas for a solo performance. Because of this policy, the Philharmonic Society was the only place in London where a horn soloist received as much money as a pianist or singer.

Orchestral Playing at the Philharmonic Society

In the 1820s, a typical season at the Philharmonic Society consisted of eight concerts and an average of ten rehearsals. These Monday evening concerts in the West End's Argyll Rooms commenced in mid-February and were held fortnightly until the second or third week of June. The format of the concerts was quite consistent, each being divided into two 'acts' usually comprising five works. The selection and order of the works in the concert programme reproduced in illustration 1.1 is representative of what Puzzi and his colleagues would have encountered during a typical evening at the Philharmonic Society (see appendix 1.2, table A, for a full list of the horn section). The Philharmonic prided itself as a promoter of modern orchestral music. Beethoven's honoured place in the Philharmonic's repertoire was perhaps the most musically and historically notable feature of the orchestra's programming. The 1821 season was not unusual in featuring six of his symphonies. Even the Philharmonic could not escape the sway of Italian opera and also presented a selection of overtures from the season's most popular theatre productions. Cherubini's *Anacréon*

34. Puzzi to the Directors of the Philharmonic Society, 12 August 1819, Loan 48.13, f. 236r.

35. Account Book 1813-66, Loan 48.9/1 768d, f. 8v.

overture, with its demanding solo horn part, appeared frequently, often being programmed 'by desire'.³⁶ The fact that it was a fixture in the Philharmonic's repertoire reflects the horn section's high level of ability, if not the audience's exceptional musical taste (see appendix 1.1, table D, for full details of repertoire performed during Puzzi's tenure at the Philharmonic Society).

UNDER THE IMMEDIATE PATRONAGE OF

His Majesty.

PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.

THIRD CONCERT, MONDAY, 22nd of MARCH, 1824.

ACT I.

Sinfonia, No. 4	Haydn.
Duet, Madame CARADORI and Miss CAREW, "Ah guarda Sorella" (Cosi fan tutte)	Mozart.
Quintetto Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Horn and Bassoon, Messrs. NICHOLSON, CENTRONE, WILLMAN, PUZZI, and MACKINTOSH	Reicha.
Preghiera, "Dal' tuo stellato soglio," from <i>Mosè in Egitto</i> , Madame CARADORI, Miss STEPHENS, Miss CAREW, Mr. BEGREZ, Mr. HORNCastle, Mr. PHILLIPS, and Signor DE BEGNIS—(accompanied on the Harp by Mr. G. HOLST	Rossini.
Overture, MS. (never performed)	Clementi.

ACT II.

Sinfonia Pastorale	Beethoven.
Song, Miss STEPHENS, "Heart, the seat of soft delight" (Acis & Galatea)	Handel.
Quintetto, two Violins, two Violas, and Violoncello, Signor ESCUDERO, Messrs. WATTS, R. ASHLEY, DANIELS, and LINDLEY	Beethoven.
Sestetto, "Sola Sola," Miss STEPHENS, Madame CARADORI, Miss CAREW, Mr. BEGREZ, Mr. PHILLIPS, and Signor DE BEGNIS (Il Don Giovanni)	Mozart.
Overture, Le Nozze di Figaro	Mozart.

Leader, Mr. MONT.—Conductor, Mr. CLEMENTI.

To commence at Eight o'Clock precisely.

The subscribers are most earnestly entreated to observe, that the Tickets are not transferable, and that any violation of this rule will incur a total forfeiture of the subscription.

It is requested that the Coachmen may be directed to set down and take up with their horses' heads towards Piccadilly.

The next Concert will be on Monday the 5th of April.

The door in Little Argyll-street will be open after the Concert for the egress of the Company.

Illustration 1.1

Programme from an 1824 Philharmonic Society concert.
(Reproduced by kind permission of the Department of Portraits and Performance History, Royal College of Music)

36. The words 'by desire' often appeared on contemporary concert programmes, indicating that the work had been programmed in response to patrons' requests.

The careful compilation and preservation of the Philharmonic Society's archives and Puzzi's correspondence with its directors allows for a detailed view of work conditions at the orchestra. Early in 1821, Puzzi received a letter from the directors of the Philharmonic Society offering him an orchestral post for the 1821 season. Puzzi's reply is most illuminating, explicitly expressing his terms of employment to the Philharmonic and providing details about his engagement with another orchestra, the City Amateur Concerts. On 9 January 1821, Puzzi wrote that he would be 'flattered' to accept an engagement for the eight concerts and rehearsals under the same terms as his employment at the 'Concerts de la cité', receiving five guineas per 'soirée' and its rehearsal.³⁷ Puzzi stipulates an additional two guineas for any solo or obbligato playing, and also for any extra rehearsals required to demonstrate any new pieces that the directors of the Philharmonic might request ('pour faire preuve des nouvelles pieces que messieurs les Directors peuvent appeler').³⁸ Puzzi justifies this latter fee by explaining that such extra rehearsals would interfere with his 'other engagements in teaching'.³⁹ This letter reflects the general attitude towards rehearsals during this period. Puzzi's wording, particularly the use of 'faire preuve', focused on the idea of demonstrating new works and proving one's ability as opposed to the notion of ensemble rehearsal or learning. If the above terms were not acceptable, Puzzi also offered his services to the directors in the form of a package:

37. Puzzi to the Directors of the Philharmonic Society, 9 January 1821, Loan 48.13, f. 237r.

38. Ibid.

39. It is unclear who or how much Puzzi was teaching at this time. His students may have included some of his orchestral colleagues. There are no records of Puzzi's teaching activities until his appointment at the Royal Academy of Music in 1823. It is more probable that he was giving singing lessons to the aristocracy, since printed compositions for amateur singers by Puzzi bear dedications to patrons occasionally named as students. This matter will be discussed fully in chapter 5, pp. 202-204.

I would put myself at their exclusive disposition to play, be it accompaniment [obbligato to a vocal work] or be it *Concertante en Solos* as often as they might wish it and as often as it would be within my powers for fifty guineas.⁴⁰

Finally, Puzzi demanded that he be able to choose the orchestral part that suited him best and that he determine the assignment of parts to the other players. This last requirement clearly expresses Puzzi's practical concerns about endurance on evenings when he had both solos and orchestral works to perform. This was a common theme of his correspondence with the Philharmonic:

If at least I might be assured for myself to choose the part that suits me, that is an absolute necessity to me if on occasion I have to play solos *en des accompagnement obbligato*, the same evening that I have to play orchestral parts.⁴¹

On an evening such as the first concert of the 1823 season, this seems well justified, since the concert opened with Beethoven's first symphony followed after the interval by Haydn's 'Military' symphony and Luigi Belloli's concerto for horn and orchestra.⁴²

Nearly all of Puzzi's surviving correspondence with the directors of the Philharmonic Society can be characterised as the collision of the Society's ethos of artistic honour superseding financial gain and Puzzi's natural

40. Puzzi to the Directors of the Philharmonic Society, 9 January 1821, Loan 48.13, f. 237r.

41. Puzzi to the Directors of the Philharmonic Society, 12 January 1821, Loan 48.13, f. 238r.

42. Lack of specific records of who attended what rehearsals and performances make it difficult to sort out the particulars of exactly how much playing each member of the section did. From the figures on rehearsal and concert attendance kept in the Account Book (see appendix 1.2, table A), it would appear that there were at least three horn players present at the concert cited. Perhaps one of them would have functioned as an 'assistant', relieving Puzzi of some of the heavier orchestral playing on that evening. Generally, it would appear that the horn parts of the orchestral selections would have been adequately covered, as literature that required more than two players was seldom programmed, while the Account Book indicates that the section generally consisted of four players with three usually paid to attend all of the season's concerts and rehearsals.

desire to profit as much as possible from his engagements. Both elements, along with the fear of being seen to offer his services too cheaply, are expressed in the letter Puzzi writes upon deciding to take up a position with the orchestra in 1821:

Although the price which the directors of the *Concerts Philharmonique* have offered me is inferior to what I have received until now, I shall accept the engagement which they were good enough to offer, given that I do not wish to weigh up monetary considerations against the satisfaction of being part of such a distinguished *Concert*. I simply wish that the price I have accepted on this occasion should not be considered my usual fee.⁴³

Despite Puzzi's reluctance over fees, the £46.4s. paid to him for the 1821 season is only six guineas short of his original request of fifty guineas for the season. Examination of Puzzi's salary in relation to other principal players having similar orchestral and solo duties and with previous and successive principal horn players reveals that his level of remuneration was comparatively high. The brothers Joseph and Peter Petrides were jointly paid only £51.19s.6d. for their services as first and second horn for nine rehearsals and eight concerts during the 1814 season. For eight concerts and an unspecified number of rehearsals, Puzzi's most immediate predecessor, Charles Tully, received £21.5s.3d. When Puzzi assumed Tully's position in 1821, the fees paid to the principal horn player more than doubled. Puzzi's £46.4s. seems particularly exceptional when compared with the £27.6s. paid to the principal flute, clarinet, and bassoon players for their services at an identical number of rehearsals and concerts during 1821. Prior to Puzzi's arrival, these principal players' fees were generally commensurate with or even slightly in excess of those of the

43. Puzzi to the Directors of the Philharmonic Society, 12 January 1821, Loan 48.13, f. 238r.

principal horn.⁴⁴

In light of the Philharmonic's general attitude towards the payment of players, its directors must have thought Puzzi's abilities to be truly exceptional and his presence in the orchestra to be of great importance to tolerate his frequent demands and to make concessions to his steep terms as an orchestral player. Puzzi's salaries were the highest recorded in the 1813-1866 Account Book for a horn player.⁴⁵

The provision of such generous remuneration to Puzzi was not indefinite, nor was he exempted from the directors' desire to place all of the players on a standard pay scale.⁴⁶ A letter written to Puzzi on 13 December 1824 by Philharmonic Secretary W. Watts outlined the specifics of a revision of the payment scheme for the 1825 season:

I am desired by the directors to acquaint you that it is their intention to place all those gentlemen who fill the principal situations among the wind instruments upon the same scale, namely two guineas first night, one guinea the rehearsal, and three guinea[s] additional whenever they shall be required to come forward for a solo performance.

Requesting an early answer informing me whether they may rely on your assistance.⁴⁷

For Puzzi's wind-playing colleagues, this would have represented a significant financial improvement. However, to Puzzi, these same terms represented a substantial reduction from his 1824 fees. On 17 December 1824, he wrote:

I beg leave to state that though it is neither my province nor

44. Account Book 1813-66, ff. 3v.-13r.

45. Account Book 1813-66.

46. For an in-depth explanation and comparison of pay scales in the Philharmonic Society during this period, see David Hadley, 'The Growth of London Musical Society in the Early Nineteenth Century: Studies of the History of a Profession, 1800 - 1824', Ph.D. diss. (Harvard University, 1972), pp. 496-498.

47. W. Watts to Puzzi, 13 December 1824, Loan 48.13, f. 239r.

my wish, to dipreciate [*sic*] the talents of the other gentlemen, nor to extol my own; yet under a recollection of my engagement at the Philharmonic Concerts having been originally made on your own terms; I cannot but consider your present offer, as indicative of a desire to dispense with my services, and which I now beg permission to withdraw.⁴⁸

These fees, amounting to £34.13s. for the 1825 season, were accepted by Henry Platt, who provided his services as principal horn to the Philharmonic Society for the next twenty-four years, finally retiring in 1849.⁴⁹

Monetary dispute presents itself as the immediate cause for Puzzi's decision to terminate his orchestral engagement with the Philharmonic. It is notable that Puzzi expresses his intentions to quit outright, with no qualifications or petitions for further discussion of payment. Most importantly, the notion that Puzzi's relationship with the Philharmonic Society had reached a point of diminishing return would seem to be implicit in his resignation. By this time, continuing his orchestral engagement with the Philharmonic Society had no value for Puzzi. Ostensibly, this decision indicates that Puzzi's finances must have been sufficient but more importantly, it suggests that Puzzi felt he had gleaned all the possible benefits of association with the Philharmonic in terms of professional patronage and that this network and the new enterprises it enabled were serving him well.

48. Puzzi to the Directors of the Philharmonic Society, 17 December 1824, Loan 48.13, f. 240r. In his 1910 'precis' of the letters held in the orchestra's archives, Philharmonic Society historian Myles Birket Foster remarks: 'reduced fees offered, taken by him as a hint to retire!' (Loan 48.16, vol. 1, p. 360).

49. Platt was at last obliged to retire from all of his posts in 1850, 'having lost, from great and continuous pressure, the whole of his front teeth' (*Musical World*, vol. 25 no. 16 [20 April 1850]: 252).

THE CONCERT OF ANTIENT MUSIC

Drawing upon an even more elite audience than the Italian opera or Philharmonic Society, the Concert of Antient Music was the most exclusive member of this prestigious trio of ensembles. The Concert's body of subscribers, which included many members of the nobility and aristocracy, brought Puzzi into contact with the most prominent and wealthy elements of society (see appendix 1.2, table B for a full listing of the horn section). Frequent royal patronage and appearances were a marked feature of these concerts, where 'archbishops and dukes "presided" over events which were not remotely democratic but were royalty's principal outlet for public gestures towards music'.⁵⁰ A distinguished cadre of amateurs appeared as musical directors of the concerts; a position never delegated to a professional musician. A description by John Ella illustrates the functioning of these arrangements and the highly exclusive nature of the Concert:

The noble director of each concert usually entertained at dinner, on the evening of the performance, the conductor and a large circle of distinguished guests, who accompanied their Amphytrian to the concert, where he was seated in front of the orchestra. In this exclusive circle I remember having seen Sir W. Scott, Moore and Rogers, the poets, Sir Humphrey Davy, Sir Thomas Lawrence, and the notable political, military, and naval lions of the day.⁵¹

An essential element of the cachet of the Concert of Antient Music that attracted this aristocratic coterie was the strictly defined repertoire of 'ancient' music prescribed by the Concert's founders for the aura of erudition and cultural exclusivity they felt it engendered. This 'aggressively conservative' programming, implemented at the Concert's

50. Ehrlich, *First Philharmonic*, p. 16.

51. John Ella, *Musical Sketches Abroad and at Home* (London, 1869), p. 33.

foundation in 1776 and rigorously adhered to, stipulated that all music performed must be at least twenty years old. This was a marked contrast from the repertoire performed at the King’s Theatre and by the Philharmonic Society. A typical Wednesday evening concert programme is reproduced in illustration 1.2.

[No. 4.]

UNDER THE DIRECTION OF HIS GRACE

THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK.

Concert of Antient Music,

WEDNESDAY, MARCH the 24th, 1824.

ACT I.

Overture.....(*Esther.*).....*Handel.*

Selection from the Oratorio of *Judas Maccabeus.* *Handel.*

Concerto 1st.....(*Opera 3.*).....*Geminiani.*

Trio and Chorus. Sound the loud timbrel...*Avison.*

Song. Tears such as tender. ...(*Deborah.*)...*Handel.*

Recit. acc. But bright... }

Air & Grand Cho. As from. } (*Dryden's Ode.*) *Handel.*

ACT II.

Overture and Chaconne.....*Jomelli.*

Song. What though I trace. ...(*Solomon.*)*Handel.*

Air and Quartet. In my distress.....*Marcello.*

Recit. Brethren and friends !... }

Recit. acc. O thou bright orb ! }

Chorus. Behold ! the list'ning. } (*Joshua.*) *Handel.*

Trio. Fall'n is thy throne.

Concerto 11th.....*Corelli.*

Scene from the Oratorio of *Joshua.**Handel.*

Psalm XXXIV. Thro' all the changing. (*New Version.*)

Double Chorus. From the censer. (*Solomon.*) *Handel.*

Illustration 1.2
1824 Concert of Antient Music programme. (Reproduced by kind permission of the Department of Portraits and Performance History, Royal College of Music)

While a brief survey would reveal the horn parts of the majority of the works performed on the 24 March 1824 concert to be unremarkable, many of the Handel selections that appear on the programmes during Puzzi's four-year tenure (1823 - 1826) with the Concert are a formidable exception. The trio and chorus 'See the Conquering Hero Comes' in *Judas Maccabeus* is a well-known example of Handelian horn writing, with its high tessitura and pitching on the G crook requiring exceptional control and endurance of the executant. Passages from *Athalia* make even greater demands of the performer in the florid obbligato writing of the first horn part in the chorus 'The Gods, Who Chosen'. This passage consists of twenty-six continuous bars of intricate clarino-style writing entirely in the third octave, lying largely between the tenth and sixteenth partials. Similar writing for the horn is to be found in many of Handel's oratorios, including choruses from *Joshua* and *Deborah*. All of the above-mentioned works were performed during the 1823 season of the Concert of Antient Music.

The frequent clarino passages of these works would have made highly specialised demands upon Puzzi's technique. They were written in an idiomatic style not utilised in any of the modern literature that accounted for nearly all of the performing Puzzi undertook outside of his work with the Concert. Puzzi's own solo arrangements can be classified as idiosyncratic works for the *cor-basse* and *cor-mixte* player, emphasising fluid chromatic hand technique within a circumscribed portion of the horn's range. How Puzzi and his contemporaries would have dealt with the demands of clarino horn writing in terms of playing technique, interpretation, and choice of instrument and mouthpiece is a question that invites further investigation. When formulating any hypotheses about how Baroque music at the Antient Concert might have been performed,

Carse's comments about instrumentation merit consideration:

The regular use of clarinets, four horns [although two of the four players listed in the orchestra's roster clearly seem to be indicated as 'extras'] and three trombones for music . . . by 17th and 18th century composers raises more than a mere suspicion that 'additional accompaniments' were largely used, and that the Secretary and Librarian, Mr. W. Greateorex, an incorrigible arranger and adder of accompaniments, was kept fairly busy gilding lilies.⁵²

Perhaps Greateorex's industry also extended to the adaptation of horn parts to suit the instruments and technique of a nineteenth-century player. Alternatively, in such an interpretatively permissive environment, the players themselves may have felt free to make such alterations.

For the performance of these parts in whatever form they took, surviving receipts indicate that Puzzi received £54 for his services during the 1824 season.⁵³ A dearth of records makes salary comparison with any of the ensemble's other horn players impossible, although receipts from other performers provide contextual information valuable in determining the hierarchical prominence of various members of the Concert.⁵⁴ The £54 paid to Puzzi by the Concert cannot objectively be compared to any of his other orchestral earnings, since it is impossible to know how many performances actually required the presence of horn players. Based upon the original instrumentation, a survey of the twelve concerts of the 1824 season indicates that six clearly included horns. For an additional three

52. Carse, pp. 205-206.

53. Concert of Antient Music Receipts, Royal College of Music Department of Portraits and Performance History.

54. Concert of Antient Music Receipts. Noted violinist Nicholas Mori was paid £31.10s. as a section player in 1824, and in 1823 section flautist Willoughby Monzani received £25.4s. The £84 paid to Dragonetti in 1827 is the highest figure recorded in these receipts for an instrumentalist, but it pales by comparison with the remuneration of even the lesser-known principal singers.

concerts, programme information is insufficient (e.g. 'selection from the oratorio of *Samson*') to establish whether horns would have been required. Any insight into how much the horn section actually played is further obscured by the possibilities raised by Carse's assertion that it was 'obvious that the Royal and Noble directors of the Ancient Concert did not disapprove of the practice of bringing the orchestration of the old masters up to date' with a wide range of added instruments.⁵⁵ No indication of whether the works performed were arranged or 'original' versions is made in any of the Concert's programmes.⁵⁶

The Concert of Antient Music was a dependable source of regular orchestral engagements and clearly offered competitive fees, but its greatest benefit to Puzzi far outlasted the four years of his tenure with the orchestra and came in the form of exposure to patrons who would support him throughout his thirty-five year career as a soloist. Involvement with the Concert was Puzzi's most intimate contact with the patrons who hosted London's most lucrative private concerts. It served as an invaluable advertisement for Puzzi, placing him before an extremely wealthy and influential clientele intent upon hiring the most fashionable and popular musicians to ensure the success and prominence of their own musical entertainments. Many persons named in the approximately seven hundred aristocratic subscribers listed during this period later appear as prominent supporters of Puzzi, engaging him for private concerts in their London and provincial residences and bestowing upon him the

55. Carse, p. 206. By way of example, Carse cites the inclusion of harps, ophicleides, cymbals and triangles in later concerts when programmes still consisted of music 'which could hardly have been written for any of these instruments' (p. 206).

56. For these reasons, no table of repertoire performed has been compiled for the Concert of Antient Music.

emoluments and perquisites of aristocratic patronage.⁵⁷

OTHER ORCHESTRAL ACTIVITIES

Various other possibilities for orchestral performance existed within the metropolis outside of London's three main ensembles, although none was as established or constant. The following examples are limited to groups and instances where Puzzi could be identified as a member in primary source material. They probably represent only a small segment of the orchestras and festivals in which Puzzi and his London colleagues played, but they nevertheless serve as an indication of the various possibilities.⁵⁸

The City Amateur Concerts

These concerts were described by Carse as a series set up by the developing body of mercantile bourgeoisie patrons 'in defiance of the principle that music could not exist without the support of the Nobility and Quality, and that concerts east of Temple Bar were wrongly situated'.⁵⁹ The location of the concerts in the City of London Tavern surely indicates an audience that was largely excluded from the concert rooms of the West End.

Reviews from the *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review* show that the concerts were very similar in content to those of the Philharmonic Society:

The selections have the predominant characteristics of the time, viz. the leaning to the music of foreign composers

57. *The Performances of Antient Music for the Season* (London, 1785-1848). These programme books, containing concert repertoire, performers and a list of subscribers, were produced annually.

58. Carse mentions Puzzi in his description of the Società Armonica, stating that 'The same names occur as in the Philharmonic and opera orchestras – Lindley, Dragonetti, Nicholson, Ribas, Card, Barret, Powell, Baumann, Puzzi, Harper, and so on' (Carse, p. 225). While his assumption is logical, he cites no source for this information. Although no early personnel lists have been located by the present author, it is highly unlikely that Puzzi would have played in this orchestra, since its foundation date of 1827 places it outside the period of his tenure as an orchestral player. Platt would be a more logical candidate.

59. Carse, p. 226.

amongst whom Mozart in the vocal, and Haydn and Beethoven in the instrumental departments, stand conspicuous. The programmes are, however, very various, and our own composers meet respectful attention. The names of Attwood, Bishop, Horsley, and C. Potter appear.⁶⁰

Some chamber music was also included along with numerous vocal selections from contemporary Italian operas.

Puzzi's mention of the 'Concerts de la cité' in his 1821 letter to the directors of the Philharmonic Society provides evidence of his participation in this ensemble and includes details about his fees with the City Concerts (see p. 26). The concerts were suspended in 1823, but appear to have been revived in 1830.

Provincial Concerts

The lack of an adequate body of professional musicians in the provinces of England was widely noted by contemporary commentators such as Ella: 'With all their love for music, the people of the provinces, and the capitals of Scotland and Ireland, have no opportunity of hearing a satisfactory performance of the symphonies of the great masters.'⁶¹ Thus, the core group of London players was in constant demand to enhance the ranks of provincial orchestras, enabling them to satisfy the expectations of an audience anxious to hear Beethoven symphonies and lavishly augmented performances of oratorios. The orchestra assembled for the 1823 York Festival consisted of over 160 instrumentalists, joined by a choir of 240 voices.

In part because of the demand for London players, most provincial engagements took the form of autumn festivals lasting a few days as opposed to the serial concerts of the established London orchestras, which

60. *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review*, vol. 2 (1820): 385.

61. Ella, p. 94.

spanned the course of the social season. However, the intensity of programming at these festivals more than compensated for their infrequent occurrences. Each of the four days of the Birmingham Festival included two extended concerts. The first was devoted to large-scale sacred works where Puzzi and the horn section would have encountered much of the oratorio literature popular at the Concert of Antient Music. The evening concert featured symphonies and overtures interspersed with numerous vocal selections: programming quite similar to what a London listener would have heard in an evening at the Philharmonic Society.

The provincial benefits of 1823 were particularly well documented in the musical press, providing a glimpse of Puzzi's involvement with these orchestras (see appendix 1.2, table C, for a list of provincial concerts and their horn sections). At the York Musical Festival from 23 to 26 September, Puzzi sat at the head of a section with Peter Petrides and Joseph Petrides, C. Tully and four players from Yorkshire. In addition to a heavy programme of orchestral playing including Beethoven's Symphony in C Minor and many overtures, Puzzi was featured as a soloist playing an unspecified fantasia. Puzzi and the Petrides brothers then travelled to Liverpool for a festival performance on 29 September conducted by Sir George Smart. These players again appear in Birmingham from 7 to 10 October, where a performance of a horn trio composed by Puzzi 'expressly for this meeting' was described as 'singular, and most astonishingly played [by Puzzi, an unspecified Petrides, and Tully]'.⁶²

Provincial concerts were an important source of income during the musical drought that ensued during the off-season summer and autumn

62. *QMMR*, vol. 5 (1823): 533. The present author has not encountered the trio in any collections of Puzzi's music known to her.

months in London when the aristocracy vacated the city. In 1824, the principal instrumentalists at the Norwich festival were paid twenty-five guineas for eight to ten concerts, and for three days of playing at a festival in Oxford in 1827, Dragonetti received £33.12s. and Willman £21.⁶³ Provincial festivals were one of the few occasions when Puzzi still appeared in a horn section after his withdrawal from orchestral playing in 1827, although such instances were in conjunction with a solo performance at the festival. The Norfolk and Norwich Musical Festival of 1842 is one such example. On the second evening of the four-day festival 'Puzzi's horn solo pleased exceedingly, particularly his vocal rendering of "O te o cara" '.⁶⁴ For this solo and his services as principal horn in the orchestra, he received the sum of thirty guineas. The conditions of Puzzi's engagement were clearly defined in his contract with Edward Taylor, the manager of the 1842 Norwich Festival (see Illustration 1.3).

Benefit Concerts

Benefit concerts, also known as 'professors' concerts' and 'professional concerts', were ubiquitous in the musical landscape of the 1820s and 1830s. At these concerts, the *beneficiaire* made a direct appeal to the public for support and hoped to reap a handsome profit from the proceeds of the event. It was expected that all the performer's patrons, pupils and friends would support him through the purchase of tickets. While solo and vocal music were usually the main features of these concerts, performances of large-scale ensemble works were common at benefits and this provided yet

63. Cyril Ehrlich, *The Music Profession in Britain Since the Eighteenth Century: A Social History* (Oxford, 1985), p. 49.

64. *Musical World*, vol. 17 no. 37 (22 September 1842): 299.

another outlet for orchestral players.⁶⁵ The opportunities on offer would have been many, since at the peak of their popularity in the late 1820s and early 1830s, an average of seventy benefits occurred each season.⁶⁶ These were carefully scheduled to fill the time available between Italian opera, Philharmonic and Concert of Antient Music performances.

NORFOLK AND NORWICH MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

Red Lion Court, Fleet Street, *Ap. 27* 1842.

SIR,

I BEG to inform you that the NORFOLK AND NORWICH MUSICAL FESTIVAL will be held at St. Andrew's Hall, Norwich, in September next.

There will be Three Morning and Three Evening performances. The general Rehearsal, which every performer is required to attend, will be on Monday morning, September 12th, at Ten o'clock. The first performance will be on Tuesday evening, September 13th, and the last on Friday morning, September 16th.

As SPOHR's New Oratorio, "THE FALL OF BABYLON," will be produced at this Festival, it probably will be necessary to have more than one rehearsal of it at the Hanover-Square Rooms in the month of August next, of which due notice will be given, and at which every performer, vocal and instrumental, resident in London, will be expected to attend.

The Committee request that the acceptance of an engagement for this Festival be considered by the Performers as their consent to the following stipulations, viz.—

That they agree not to assist at any other public performance at Norwich, or within thirty miles of the same, for twenty-one days prior to the Festival, nor permit their names to be advertised for any public performance, within a similar distance, till the Festival is ended.

That they agree to perform the parts assigned them by the Conductor in the schemes of the performances.

I am directed by the Committee to offer you an engagement as *First Horn*

The terms to be *Twenty five Guineas, & Five Guineas*
in addition for a Fantasia

Your early reply will oblige,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

Sig.^r Puzzi

EDWARD TAYLOR,
Conductor.

Illustration 1.3

Puzzi's contract for the 1842 Norfolk and Norwich Festival. (Private collection)

65. Carse records that announcements for fifteen benefits appeared in the June 1828 issue of the *Harmonicon*, thirteen of which employed an orchestra (Carse, p. 227).

66. Joel Sachs, 'London: The Professionalization of Music', *Music and Society: The Early Romantic Era*, ed. Alexander Ringer (London, 1990), p. 219.

Symphonies and overtures were often placed at the beginning and end of the benefit concert programme. Pianist Lucy Anderson's 1843 benefit included Beethoven's Grand Choral Fantasia, Egmont Overture and an unspecified 'Finale Instrumental' by Mozart.⁶⁷ Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, Weber's Euryanthe Overture, and a 'Finale (Instrumental)' were the main orchestral selections at the pianist Salaman's 1833 benefit.⁶⁸ Posters for violinist Nicholas Mori's 1833 benefit promised performances of 'Beethoven's Celebrated C Minor and A Symphonies'.⁶⁹ Such concerts also included myriad operatic selections that would have required orchestral accompaniment, and a number of instrumental 'concertos' and fantasias that may also have utilised the orchestra.

The present author has not encountered benefit concert programmes or handbills that make more than cursory mention of a few select players in these orchestras, but announcements such as 'The Band will be numerous and complete in every department, selected from the Philharmonic and Ancient Concerts, Opera Orchestras, and Her Majesty's Private Band' were common and provide some indication of the source of the orchestra. Benefit-givers who could have commanded or afforded the services of the most select orchestral players would have drawn from London's core group of performers. It is logical to assume that Puzzi would have performed in the orchestras of benefit concerts in which he had been asked to appear as a soloist, since the *beneficiaire* would have been keen to make full use of the players enlisted. It is most likely that Puzzi did not

67. 'Mrs Anderson's Grand Morning Concert' (London: Her Majesty's Theatre, 26 May 1843), unnumbered concert programme, Covert Collection.

68. 'Mr. Salaman's Concert' (London, King's Concert Rooms, 30 May 1833), unnumbered concert programme, RCM PP.

69. 'Mr. Mori Evening Concert' (London, King's Theatre, 17 May 1833), unnumbered poster, RCM PP.

play in benefit concert orchestras unless he was also engaged as a soloist. Rehearsal obligations for orchestral players at benefits would have been minimal in keeping with the widely acknowledged lack of rehearsal time in London, but also because much of this repertoire was repeated from the concerts of the above-mentioned orchestras.

Payment of players -- particularly orchestral members -- at benefit concerts is a nebulous issue. It would have taken one of two forms: reciprocal repayment in kind or monetary payment. It is most likely that celebrity players such as Puzzi seldom collected fees for performing at their colleague's benefits; instead, the concert-giver then appeared *gratis* at Puzzi's benefit. Perhaps these players would have demanded a fee when they knew they would not require or be able to demand the services of the *beneficiaire* at their own concert. It seems logical to posit that lesser players who did not give benefits themselves, and whose primary role at the concert was playing in the orchestra, almost certainly did get paid. In both instances, the good working relationship with and access to a wide range of colleagues engendered by professional patronage was of paramount importance in obtaining suitable performers for one's benefit. Private concerts took the same general form as benefits in terms of repertoire and would have often made use of an orchestra.

In reviewing the orchestral environment in which Puzzi circulated, and in considering his experiences as an orchestral player during the 1820s, various patterns emerge that allow us to draw conclusions about Puzzi's career. Clearly, enough orchestral opportunities existed in London for a small group of elite performers to cobble together a full schedule of playing during the London season. Violinist John Ella's account of his engagements provides an excellent summary of how 'the best players were

engaged during the course of a typical London season'.⁷⁰ Although Ella is writing about the 1834 season, the musical landscape is largely unchanged from that of the period in the 1820s when Puzzi was active as an orchestral player.

I find during the season in London that my orchestral engagements included twelve Concerts of Ancient Music on Wednesday evenings, and twelve public rehearsals on the Monday mornings previous; six concerts of the Societa Armonica, and eight concerts of the Philharmonic Society, for symphonies, overtures, solos and vocal music. At Her Majesty's Theatre the season included sixty subscription nights -- Tuesdays and Saturdays - with a few extra benefit nights on Thursdays. Most of the benefit concerts, too, at the Hanover Square Rooms, were given with an orchestra.⁷¹

Some outlets for orchestral playing are conspicuous by their absence and Puzzi and his colleagues were in a position to be selective about the engagements they pursued. There was a hierarchy among London's orchestras that was defined not only by their audiences but also by the musicians who played in them. The English opera and 'oratorio' concerts at Covent Garden, Drury Lane and the Lyceum English Opera House were organisations that fell outside the interests of this elite group of performers and were left to a body of players who seldom appeared in the leading orchestras of the metropolis. An interesting indicator of the status of an orchestra was the number of instruments that its performers were responsible for playing. In the royal private bands and at the Theatre Royal at Covent Garden, members regularly played more than one instrument.⁷² It was an exceptional feature of the instrumentalists at the top of London's hierarchy of performers during this period that they had reached a level

70. Carse, p. 227.

71. Ella, p. 70, quoted by Carse, pp. 227-228.

72. Bishop Papers, Add. MS 29365, ff. 2-62, British Library.

on which they could afford to specialise on a single instrument.

Despite the undisputed success that Puzzi achieved as an orchestral player in London, which was marked by the comparatively high fees he received and his immediate promotion to principal in each orchestra he entered, the work conditions that even a performer of Puzzi's stature encountered indicate the difficult and sometimes demeaning environment of orchestral playing in London. While London's finest orchestral players were a select body capable of commanding some negotiating power, they were still not in a position widely to regulate or influence their treatment by employers. Puzzi was not immune from the vicissitudes and vagaries of inept management at the King's Theatre and the mediocre musical standards that this spawned. While the Philharmonic Society undertook drastic measures to further the cause of musical professionalism on many fronts, payment remained a source of perennial dispute for Puzzi. His employment pattern has shown that Puzzi's immediate solution to these issues was to abandon orchestral playing as soon as viable alternatives presented themselves. A solo career sustained by successful benefit concerts and inclusion in the lucrative circuit of private concerts, and most likely by the additional support of some other enterprise in the music business such as Puzzi's work as a theatrical agent and impresario, was a financially and socially more attractive route to the few performers who were able to attain this coveted position.

That someone as prominent and well equipped as Puzzi found it necessary to focus on orchestral playing for six years at the beginning of his London career demonstrates the importance of the orchestra in the infrastructure of the music business in London and clearly indicates that involvement in these groups was a key element for wind players wishing

to establish a successful long-term career in the early nineteenth century, even if it ultimately excluded orchestral playing. Puzzi arrived in London with numerous aristocratic connections, a strong reputation as a virtuoso performer and links with the operatic world of Milan and Paris, but it was through the orchestras that he gained the wide variety of professional and traditional patronage that was crucial for the development of his career.

Participation in each of London's major orchestras had specific benefits in preparing for and ensuring the success of Puzzi's inter-arching career as a soloist and agent/impresario. Membership of the Philharmonic Society was an endorsement of professional credibility and placed him in the esteem of his colleagues; the Concert of Antient Music was an exceedingly efficient point of contact with the aristocracy, who would be the prime supporters of his activities as a soloist and concert fixer; and the King's Theatre was his strongest link to the most vital and sustaining element of his career -- the Italian opera. In this way, Puzzi gained the initiation into London's musical world that laid the foundation for the undertakings that enabled him to leave orchestral playing for greener pastures.

II

Setting the stage: Puzzi and the Italian Opera in London.

The Season means the opera, the opera means the Italian Opera; the season is when that is and not when that is not. Then comes Jules de Glimes, and many masters of the art of song, with Pinsuti, Pilotti, Perullo, and Petriefaccio, who will 'accompany' at Puzzi's. Then is the Season, and not till then.¹

Work as an agent and impresario (The King's/Her Majesty's Theatre, the Lyceum Theatre, touring with singers of the Italian Opera) -- Giacinta Puzzi (née Toso) -- Patronage (the function of patronage in Puzzi's career, examples of patronage in Puzzi's career, royal patronage).



The emphatic insistence of the correspondent of the *Musical World* that the opera was synonymous with the social season and his recognition of Puzzi as a key provider of operatic entertainment emphasises the central position of Italian opera in the musical world of fashionable London and demonstrates the prominent place that Puzzi achieved in operatic affairs. Three manifestations of this relationship were particularly crucial in ensuring the development of Puzzi's multifaceted career: his activities as an impresario and agent, his marriage to the popular concert singer and teacher Giacinta Toso, and his patronage relationships with some of the more prominent supporters of Italian opera in London. These strong ties to the operatic world benefited him in many ways and laid the foundation for Puzzi's fame as nineteenth-century England's most

1. *Musical World*, vol. 31 no. 11 (12 March 1853): 155.

celebrated horn virtuoso.

Puzzi's work as an impresario was his single largest source of income. It enabled him to relinquish all of his orchestral posts after the 1826 season, liberating him from the demands these groups made on evening concert time during the social season and leaving him free to pursue solo engagements exclusively. Most importantly, the connections Puzzi formed with singers as an agent also placed him in a powerful position to profit from the great popularity of these performers in promoting his own career as a soloist and gave him an exclusive tool with which to cultivate patronage. This body of well-connected aristocrats provided Puzzi with an entrée into the upper echelons of London's musical society and ensured his presence in the lucrative private concert circuit. They may well have also used their position of influence with the opera management to promote Puzzi's interests and undertakings as a theatrical agent. Through her concert appearances and work as a singing teacher, Puzzi's young wife further bolstered his popularity with patrons and added considerably to the family income. She was also known as a powerful presence in the internal workings of the Italian opera at the King's/Her Majesty's Theatre and played a vital role in establishing the Puzzi home as a focal point of the operatic community. It is also clear that she and Puzzi collaborated in selecting and negotiating with singers. This chapter will examine these elements of Puzzi's operatic involvement and will assess their place as pillars of his career.

WORK AS AN AGENT AND IMPRESARIO

In 1853, the *Musical World* described Puzzi as 'the negotiator of engagements with foreign artists and the caterer of novelties for the

theatre for many years'.² This reflects a lengthy and diverse career as an agent and impresario, the more visible activities of which included work as an agent at The King's/Her Majesty's Theatre, the establishment of an *opera buffa* company at the Lyceum Theatre, the undertaking of provincial tours throughout England with members of the Italian opera in London and the provision of singers to the aristocracy at private concerts.

The King's/Her Majesty's Theatre

It is most likely that Puzzi would have quickly established ties with the singers and management of the Italian opera at the King's Theatre in London shortly after his arrival in England, as he would have been familiar with many members of this internationally active community, although the first known records of his work as an agent for the Theatre are those that chronicle the winter of 1826. During this period, he undertook a series of trips throughout Europe to make engagements for John Ebers, manager of the King's Theatre from 1821 - 1827. Puzzi must have been quite committed to the work and certain that he was in a position to gain much from it financially, since he withdrew himself from all his orchestral positions, which were at this point still an important source of income. He would have also sacrificed a season of benefit and private concert appearances to take up Ebers's commission.

A journey to Paris to complete Ebers's arrangements for engaging Zuchelli and the bass Filippo Galli was Puzzi's first trip as an agent for the King's Theatre. The transaction was successful and Zuchelli was employed for the 1827 season.³ The time Puzzi spent in Italy and Paris prior to his arrival in England was clearly a great advantage to him in travels

2. *Musical World*, vol. 31 no. 13 (26 March 1853): 189-90.

3. John Ebers, *Seven Years at the King's Theatre* (London, 1888), p. 313.

throughout Europe to engage singers, since he would have already been familiar with many of the potential candidates. An understanding of the workings of the operatic world on the continent and acquaintance with many of its principal patrons would have also equipped Puzzi with valuable resources. His knowledge and enterprise was noted by Rossini, who 'justly characterised Signor Puzzi as possessed of great intelligence in theatrical affairs, active and zealous'.⁴

Encouraged by Puzzi's success in making these two engagements, Ebers sent him on a more extensive trip through France and Italy in the spring of 1827 to fix contracts with any promising singers that he could bring back to England. Puzzi had no difficulty in finding suitable artists. Ebers seemed confident of Puzzi's judgment in selecting singers and was ready to provide full financial backing for the engagements, in many cases sending prepared contracts to him, although he reports that many of Puzzi's dealings were hampered by 'the incessant intrigues of the theatrical correspondents [agents] on the continent'.⁵ A number of factors contributed to the difficulties facing anyone wishing to make arrangements to bring European singers to England, including monopolies and competition with local theatrical agents, and intervention from aristocrats reluctant to part with their most favoured performers. Despite such difficulties, Puzzi did manage to arrange some engagements for the 1827 and 1828 seasons, including Madame Brizzi and Mademoiselles Toso, Amigo, Blasis and Ellena.⁶

These early enterprises must have been profitable for Puzzi, since he never resumed any of his orchestral playing positions. A lack of surviving

4. Ibid., p. 315.

5. Ibid., p. 317.

6. Ibid., pp. 315-320.

records makes it impossible to give even a rough estimate of Puzzi's earnings from his activities as an agent. The amounts of money changing hands in transactions with singers was staggering, even for those of unproven ability. The salaries of the singers Puzzi engaged for the 1827 season at the King's Theatre totalled £2750 with Zuchelli receiving £1130, Galli £870, Brizzi £400 and the soprano Giacinta Toso £350.⁷ No information regarding the details of Puzzi's 'commission' in making these arrangements for Ebers exists, but in this, and other similar situations, Puzzi would have received some percentage of the singers' earnings, possibly in addition to a fixed salary for his work and any money that he might have taken directly from the singers for netting them an engagement. General figures for commissions paid to agents for most of the nineteenth century range from 5 to 8 %.⁸ For similar work in fixing vocalists and instrumentalists in the 1850s, the horn player and impresario Henry Jarrett netted 10 % of the performers' fees.⁹ The £275 that could have resulted from a 10 % commission on Puzzi's engagements for the King's Theatre in 1827 would have certainly surpassed his annual earnings from his various orchestral posts. This work must surely have produced profits for Puzzi in other ways as well. By facilitating sought-after London engagements for foreign singers, he was in a powerful position to elicit their support in his activities as a performer and as a concert fixer, perhaps even making these singers' participation in joint performances with Puzzi and their willingness to be engaged by him for various concerts a condition of the deals he negotiated.

7. Ibid., pp. 392-393.

8. John Rosselli, *The Opera Industry in Italy from Cimarosa to Verdi: The Role of the Impresario* (Cambridge, 1984), p. 143.

9. John Humphries, 'Henry Jarrett -- Horn Virtuoso and Theatrical Businessman', *British Horn Society Newsletter* (July 1990): 7-9.

Ebers's description of Puzzi's travels for the King's Theatre is unusually detailed. No other single source provides as much information about his activities as an agent, but fragmentary evidence points to Puzzi's lengthy and varied involvement in the operatic world in this capacity and also as an impresario. A particularly significant indicator of his importance to the management of Her Majesty's Theatre are the annual benefits that were staged for him there. On these evenings, Puzzi was entitled to a portion of the proceeds from a full-length opera, ballet and other entertainments performed for his benefit (see illustration 2.1). This was a privilege normally reserved for the Theatre's star singers, the manager and occasionally the director. During Lumley's management Puzzi received at least six such benefits, including one each year from 1842 to 1846. In 1842 and 1843 the programme included a solo performance by Puzzi, thus the benefit had the additional value of serving as an opportunity to advertise his performing skills to potential patrons. It is significant that the Theatre's annual concession to Puzzi became his principal benefit concert as his performance activities dwindled in the late 1840s.

Her Majesty's Theatre

In 1853, Puzzi appears to have been tempted by the quicksand of theatre management. Vigorous competition from the rival Royal Italian Opera Company at Covent Garden, Jenny Lind's decision to quit the operatic stage and extreme financial difficulties placed Her Majesty's Theatre in a very weak and precarious position at the end of the 1852 season.¹⁰

Manager Benjamin Lumley tried various measures to keep the theatre open.

10. On 6 April 1847, the Royal Italian Opera opened at Covent Garden Theatre under the direction of Beale. It may have provided another outlet for Puzzi's activities as an impresario and agent, although no specific information to confirm this has been found.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

Sigr PUZZI

Respectfully informs the Nobility, Subscribers to the Opera, his Friends and the Public, that his

B E N E F I T

WILL TAKE PLACE

On **THURSDAY** next, July 13th, 1843,

When will be performed (FOR THE LAST TIME) ROSSINI'S Opera,

LA GAZZA LADRA

Ninette,	-	Made GRISI,
Pippo,	-	Made BRAMBILLA,
Giannetto,	-	Sigr MARIO,
Fernando Villabella,	-	Sigr FORNASARI,
Podesta,	-	Sigr LABLACHE.

After which, the Second Act of ROSSINI'S celebrated Opera,

GUGLIELMO TELL.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS BY

Madame PERSIANI,

Sigr MARIO,

Sigr F. LABLACHE,

AND

Sigr FORNASARI.

WITH OTHER ENTERTAINMENTS.

In the course of the Evening,

Sigr PUZZI

Will perform on the Horn a Fantasia, on the motives of Mercadante's Opera of "IL BRAVO,"

AND

M. ST. LEON

Will perform on the Violin a Fantasia on the motives of Donizetti's Opera of "LUCREZIA BORGIA."

To conclude with the New and highly successful Grand Ballet, (*in Six Tableaux*) by M. PERROT, the Music by Sigr PUGNI, entitled

ONDINE:

OU,

LA NAIADE.

The Scenery by Mr. WILLIAM GRIEVE.

Ondine,	-	Madlle CERITO,
Matteo,	(a young Fisherman)	M. PERROT,
Giannina,	(an Orphan betrothed to Matteo)	Madlle GUY STEPHAN.

DANCERS:

Madlle CERITO,

Mesdles CAMILLE, SCHEFFER, PLANQUET, BENARD, GALBY, DUCIE,

AND

Madlle GUY STEPHAN.

M. ST. LEON,

AND

M. PERROT.

Applications for Boxes, Stalls, and Tickets, to be made to Signor PUZZI, 38, Jermyn Street, St. James'; and at the Box-office, Opera Colonnade. DOORS OPEN AT SEVEN; TO COMMENCE AT HALF-PAST SEVEN O'CLOCK.

W. S. Johnson, Printer, Soho.

Illustration 2.1

Handbill advertising the opera benefit held for Puzzi at Her Majesty's Theatre during the first year of Lumley's management. (Private collection)

When his attempts to form a limited liability company failed and a royal charter and an act of parliament to incorporate the company were refused, numerous plans arose for the theatre's future and were the source of much speculation in the press. The possibility of Puzzi assuming management of Her Majesty's Theatre received particularly detailed coverage:

There is now every reason to believe that Her Majesty's Theatre will open for a season of some forty performances, on or about the beginning of May . . . The management will be undertaken by three -- perhaps the most competent persons for that purpose in the metropolis -- namely Mr. Nugent, the former superintendent of the house; Mr. Robinson, the late treasurer of the establishment; and Signor Puzzi. . . .

Signor Puzzi is extensively known and greatly trusted by a very large section of the most influential among the nobility. The house once opened, therefore, little doubt will remain of its perfect stability.¹¹

Puzzi's name also appears in Benjamin Lumley's account of his dealings with the Earl of Dudley (Lord Ward), who came to the financial aid of the theatre in 1853 and proposed to take up the management himself. Of Puzzi's part in these arrangements, Lumley writes

Through my instrumentality, Signor Puzzi, who had long been a coadjutor of my own, was retained to conduct negotiations with the artists, and to superintend the details of the enterprise; while I, as the medium of communication, was especially enjoined by Lord Ward to let Signor Puzzi know for whom he (Signor Puzzi) was acting.¹²

It is unclear if these plans were in any way attached to the first arrangement noted or if Puzzi would have been acting independently of Lumley in planning to take on the management of the theatre with Nugent and Robinson. In the event, neither scheme materialised. The

11. *Musical World*, vol. 31 no. 13 (26 March 1853): 189-90.

12. Benjamin Lumley, *The Earl of Dudley, Mr. Lumley, and Her Majesty's Theatre: A Narrative of Facts* (London, 1863), p. 6.

plans of the 'Nugentrobertsonpuzzites' were thwarted by a dispute with Frederick Gye over the lesseeship of the theatre.¹³ Struggles over occupancy and management during this period were protracted and involved numerous parties. Her Majesty's Theatre remained closed for three seasons.

Fire ended this deadlock in 1856, when the burning of the Royal Italian Opera's theatre in Covent Garden gave Lumley an opportunity to re-open Her Majesty's Theatre, where he again assumed the role of manager, thus ending any of Puzzi's managerial aspirations. While none of the above schemes materialised, Puzzi's role in them and the attention they received in the press are indicators of his prominence and high level of involvement in the workings of the Italian opera. It was probably most fortunate for Puzzi and his pocket book that none of these plans was realised, since theatre management usually ended in the financial ruin of those tempted by the 'operatic sceptre', as it did for John Ebers and Benjamin Lumley.¹⁴

The Lyceum Theatre

Puzzi's involvement in the establishment of an *opera buffa* company at the Lyceum Theatre provides the most complete illustration of his activities as an impresario. In December 1836, the *Musical World* reported that 'Signor Puzzi is hourly expected with his company from Italy, to embark in the new undertaking of establishing an *Opera Buffa*'.¹⁵ The company was the first in London to devote itself exclusively to comic opera. Donizetti, Cimarosa, Mozart, Mercadante and Ricci dominated the

13. *Musical World*, vol. 31 no. 14 (2 April 1853): 203.

14. Benjamin Lumley, *Reminiscences of the Opera* (London, 1864), p. 354.

15. *Musical World*, vol. 3 no. 38 (9 December 1836): 190.

season. The *opera buffa* did not compete with the Italian opera at the King's Theatre, but instead served as a complement, with performances scheduled to conclude before the season opened at the King's Theatre.

Puzzi served as director of this short-lived *buffa* company from 1836 to the end of 1837, his primary task and source of profit being the recruitment and hiring of the singers and orchestra. In this way, he wisely avoided the responsibilities and financial risks of management, which were assumed by John Mitchell. Puzzi unabashedly took advantage of his position as director to promote his prominence as a performer.¹⁶ While Platt and Rae were employed as orchestral players, stage bills distributed to the audience announced that 'Signor Puzzi will perform the solos written for the French horn' and often noted the particular arias that were to be embellished with Puzzi's obbligato playing (see illustration 2.2). Puzzi's name appears repeatedly on these bills, in the boldface type usually reserved for the principal singers. These notices and obbligato appearances during the opera were a powerful way for Puzzi to advertise his services to the habitués of 'Fop's Alley' and the boxes: patrons who might engage Puzzi and his singers at their private concerts. In this way, Puzzi expanded the traditional role of theatre director to include a platform for the promotion of his activities as a soloist.

The first season of this 'new Italian opera company' opened in December 1836 with a performance of Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore*.¹⁷ The principal singers included Mademoiselle Blasis and two singers Puzzi had recruited from Italy: Signor Catone, a tenor, and the baritone Giorgio Ronconi.

16. Puzzi also exploited his prominence as a performer to promote the singers of the Lyceum: on 27 February 1837, Catone and Ronconi appeared with Puzzi at the Philharmonic Society in a performance of the duet 'Qual desio, qual pensero' by Julius Benedict.

17. *Musical World*, vol. 3 no. 39 (16 December 1836): 220.

OPERA BUFFA,

Theatre Royal, Lyceum.

J. MITCHELL begs, respectfully, to acquaint the Nobility, Gentry, Subscribers to the Opera, and the Public, that the above Theatre *IS OPEN*, and to submit the following arrangements for the ensuing season of the Italian Opera Buffa:—

PERFORMERS ENGAGED.

Mademoiselle SCHERONI,

(From the Conservatoire, and La Scala, Milan.)

Madame FRANCESCHINI,

(From the Teatro, San Carlos, Naples.)

Madame BELLINI, & Miss FANNY WYNDHAM,

Signor CATONE,

Signor CASTELLAN,

AND

Signor FREDERICK LABLACHE.

THE SIXTH PERFORMANCE WILL TAKE PLACE

This Evening, TUESDAY, November 28, 1837.

Will be performed, ROSSINI'S Opera Buffa, in Two Acts,

L'ITALIANA IN ALGIERI

<i>Mustapha</i>	-	-	-	<i>Signor BELLINI.</i>
<i>Eletna</i>	-	-	-	<i>Madame BELLINI.</i>
<i>Isabella</i>	-	-	-	<i>Madame ECKERLIN.</i>
<i>Lindor</i>	-	-	-	<i>Signor CATONE.</i>
<i>Thaddeus</i>	-	-	-	<i>Signor SANQUIRICO.</i>
<i>Zerlina</i>	-	-	-	<i>Mademoiselle VARESE.</i>
<i>Italy</i>	-	-	-	<i>Signor GALLI.</i>

Signor PUZZI

Will Perform the Horn Accompaniment Obligato to the Cavatina by Signor CATONE,
"Languir per una bella."

Between the Acts of the Opera, the Band will perform ROSSINI'S Overture to
"SEMIRAMIDE."

The Operas will be selected from the following (some of which have been purchased expressly for this Entertainment, and belong exclusively to the Manager:—

Betty, (Farce in One Act)	Donizetti.	Le Cantatrici Villane	Fioravanti
Il Campanello, (ditto)	Donizetti.	L'Inganno Felice,	Rosini.
L'Impresario in Angustia	Chiarosa.	Elisa e Claudio,	Mercadante
Le Nozze di Figaro,	Mozart.	Così Fan Tutte.	Mozart.
Torquato Tasso.	Donizetti.	Il Nuovo Figaro.	Ricci.

With the Occasional Performances of the Two Farce Opera, produced last Season.

THE ORCHESTRA

Will consist of the same unrivalled Talent as last Season.

Director - **Signor PUZZI,**

(WHO WILL PERFORM THE HORN WRITTEN FOR THE FRENCH HORN.)

Composer and Conductor - **M. BENEDICT.**

Leader of the Band - **Mr. MORI.**

Conductor of the Chorus (which has been considerably augmented) **M. LEJEUNE**
Porta del Teatro - **Signor MAGGIONI.**

ET The Opera will commence at half-past Eight o'Clock, and Terminate before Twelve.

Nightly Admission to the Theatre, **Boxes and Pit, 6s.; Gallery, 2s. 6d**

T. BIRT, Printer, 39 Great St. Andrew Street, Bloomsbury

Illustration 2.2

Handbill advertising a production by Puzzi's opera buffa company at the Lyceum. (Reproduced by kind permission of the Theatre Museum)

The critic of the *Musical World* reported that while ‘little in commendation’ could be said of the ‘ultra-modern Italian’ music, the quality of the singing was quite high and the orchestra comprised the ‘greatest performers in the King’s Theatre’.¹⁸ The libretto for the 11 February 1837 performance of *Le nozze di Figaro* boasts a most impressive orchestral roster comprising many of Puzzi’s colleagues from the Philharmonic Society and the King’s Theatre (see illustration 2.3). A review of the performance in the *Musical World* confirmed the presence of these players, giving lavish praise to Dragonetti and Mori’s performances and the ‘excellent band, who one and all seemed to play for the pure love of the music’.¹⁹ The opera was repeated on 14 February, along with a performance of Beethoven’s ‘Septuor’ (Op. 20) as a benefit for Puzzi.

The *buffa* company’s second season opened on 16 November 1837, again with a performance of *L’elisir d’amore*, on this occasion attended by Queen Victoria. Also present were the Duke of Wellington ‘and all the principal nobility now in London’.²⁰ The season continued with more Donizetti and several Rossini operas including *L’inganno felice* and *L’italiana in Algeri*. While reviews reported that this selection of music was successful in attracting a ‘full and elegant audience (every private box we understand being let for the season, and almost all the stalls)’, critics noted that the quality of the chorus had become rather poor, commenting that ‘this saving of “candle-ends and cheese parings” is not the way to

18. Ibid., 220-221.

19. *Musical World*, vol. 4 no. 49 (17 February 1837): 140.

20. *Observer* (26 November 1837): n.p.. The presence of Queen Victoria at this performance may have made Puzzi feel he was entitled to use the billing ‘*corno solo* to Her Majesty’ on handbills for concerts during this period.

secure a third year's full subscription'.²¹

O R C H E S T R A .

SIGNOR PUZZI DIRECTOR.

M. BENEDICT CONDUCTOR.

Lea

VIOLINS	{	MR. HORI , LEADER.
	—	TOLBECQUE
	—	REMY
	—	WATKINS
	—	REEVE
	—	RICHARDS
	—	PIGOTT
	—	WEBBE
VIOLA	{	— ALSEPT
	—	MUSGRAVE
VIOLONCELLOS	{	— LINDLEY
	—	LAVENU
DOUBLE BASS . . .	{	— DRAGONETTI
	—	ANFOSSI
FLUTES	{	— CARD
	—	RICHARDSON
OBOES	{	— BARRET
	—	WITTON
CLARIONETS	{	— WILLMAN
	—	POWELL
BASSOONS	{	— BAUMANN
	—	GODFREY
HORNS	{	— PLATT
	—	RAE
TRUMPETS	{	— HARPER
	—	HARPER, JUNR.
TROMBONES		HEALEY
DRUMS		CHIPP

Illustration 2.3

Libretto page listing the orchestra and cast from the 11 February 1837 performance of *Le nozze di Figaro* by Puzzzi's *opera buffa* company at the Lyceum. (Private collection)

21. *Musical World*, vol. 7 no. 89 (24 November 1837): 174.

In the absence of financial records, newspaper articles are the only source of information about the general success of the season and the company's profitability:

We are informed, and believe, that it has answered the purpose of its speculators, but it has certainly not fulfilled their expectations, nor been as attractive as it deserves to have been.²²

Another critic presents a less favourable view:

We hear [Mitchell] is out of pocket by the speculation, and we regret it. . . We think he might have had better luck, if he would get rid of poor little Puzzi, who does nothing but take up room in the bills by printing his own name, and take up time in the orchestra by blowing his own trumpet.²³

It is unclear whether this critic's comments about Puzzi stem only from his ostentatious orchestral appearances or from his selection and practices in engaging singers.

It would appear that Mitchell and Puzzi's venture was far less successful in its third season and that the weaknesses mentioned in earlier reviews continued to plague the company. The poor quality of the chorus and a selection of unremarkable works, most notably Mercadante's *Elisa e Claudio*, would seem to have conspired in making this the company's final season. While the venture appears to have been unprofitable for Mitchell, Puzzi was at the very least well served by its effectiveness as a publicity campaign and he was protected from financial liability and ruin by his role as director.

Documentary evidence of the details of Puzzi's activities as an impresario and particularly as an agent for singers is comparatively scarce and at best

22. 'Lyceum 1837', unidentified newspaper clipping (n.d.), 'Lyceum 1837' box, Theatre Museum.

23. 'Lyceum 1837', unidentified newspaper clipping (31 January 1837), 'Lyceum 1837' box, Theatre Museum.

incomplete, reflecting the 'amorphous' and extemporaneous nature of such dealings.²⁴ The information that does survive, particularly in more formal accounts such as John Ebers's memoirs and in Benjamin Lumley's record of his negotiations with the Earl of Dudley, indicates Puzzi's importance and prominence in this role. Lumley's granting of annual benefit performances to Puzzi for his services is a particularly cogent illustration of his value to Her Majesty's Theatre. The extent of the press speculation regarding Puzzi's possible management of this theatre in 1853 provides confirmation of his stature among the hierarchy of opera patrons and supporters, while Puzzi's establishment of an *opera buffa* company at the Lyceum demonstrates the extent and strength of his professional contacts.

To an even greater degree than any of the specific examples considered, the pattern and shape of Puzzi's career speak eloquently of the immense importance of Puzzi's impresario work. The salaries recorded by Ebers provide only a rough indication of Puzzi's earning potential as an agent for the King's Theatre, but his decision to relinquish his orchestral posts is a clear statement of the immediate monetary value of this work. This placed him in a position which few of his instrumental colleagues enjoyed.²⁵ While this financial freedom was enough to liberate Puzzi from time consuming and comparatively unprofitable orchestral work, the true manifestation of Puzzi's prowess was the manner in which he utilised his position as an agent to ensure his success and popularity as a soloist. In

24. Rosselli, *Opera Industry*, p. 135.

25. While his fame as a horn soloist was not as widespread as Puzzi's, Henry Jarrett is notable for his lucrative and enterprising career and can be viewed as Puzzi's successor in many ways. Jarrett was very active as an agent engaging players for Jullien and Charles Hallé and also worked as an agent and assistant for Her Majesty's Theatre manager J.H. Mapleson in 1862. See John Humphries, 'Henry Jarrett -- Horn Virtuoso and Theatrical Businessman'.

this way, Puzzi was served throughout his career by the most prominent musical force of his era: the Italian opera.

Touring with singers of the Italian Opera

Puzzi's name appeared in yet another capacity with the singers of the Italian opera as he toured with them throughout Britain in the 1840s. On programmes and handbills it was accorded equal prominence with the names of Persiani, Pacini and Rubini. 'All was joy and satisfaction', proclaimed the *Musical World*, when 'Puzzi "porued [*sic*] through the mellow horn his plaintive soul" ' at Rubini's farewell concert in Cheltenham on 5 September 1842.²⁶ At these and similar performances, Puzzi appeared as a soloist, obbligato accompanist and occasionally as a substitute for a missing voice in vocal ensembles. While he was ostensibly present as a celebrated soloist, Puzzi's duties and earnings extended beyond the platform, since various factors indicate that he was also serving as a manager for the touring parties in which he performed. This was one more way in which Puzzi ingeniously allied himself with the Italian opera and profited from its great popularity.

Puzzi's strong connections with the management and singers of the King's Theatre as an agent and his experience as the director of the short-lived *opera buffa* company at the Lyceum would have made him well equipped to bring Italian opera to the provinces. Apart from his known activities as an agent and impresario in London, the strongest suggestion that he was acting as a manager on provincial tours springs from the lack of any other explanation of why he would have been present at these concerts.

Musically and logistically, a horn player is an exotic departure from the

26. *Musical World*, vol. 17 no. 39 (29 September 1842): 309.

usual constitution of a touring party. A more common and generally versatile combination for a group that often performed without an orchestra would comprise a vocal quartet (soprano, contralto, tenor, bass), pianist and violinist.²⁷ Puzzi's celebrity and long-established musical connection with singers at benefit and private concerts was undoubtedly a salient reason for his presence on tours, but can only be part of the equation when his other abilities are considered. While it is difficult to substantiate Puzzi's role as a manager on tours with material evidence, his presence logically dictates that he was involved in this manner.

Two basic scenarios for Puzzi's extra-musical involvement in touring parties present themselves: he would have served as the sole manager of a tour that he arranged, or as the travelling manager of a tour sponsored by a larger agent such as a theatre manager. It is quite probable that Puzzi organised and managed his own touring parties and that this may have been the crux of his involvement with touring, although unfortunately no documentary evidence exists to prove this incontrovertibly. Surviving evidence does, however, allow for a more specific exploration of how Puzzi acted as an agent/manager in the field for other impresarios. Rubini's farewell tour through the provinces at the end of his London career provides an interesting example.

In August and September 1842, Rubini, Nigri, Pacini, Ostergaard and Puzzi embarked on a tour that included at least ten cities; gaps in the sequence of dates and locations suggest that the total number of stops was much greater (see appendix 2, A). Benjamin Lumley, manager of Her Majesty's Theatre from 1841 to 1852,²⁸ was clearly the tour's principal guarantor, as it was reported that he realised 1800 pounds from the 'tour

27. Walter Maynard, *The Enterprising Impresario* (London, 1867), p. 116.

and farewell of the “king tenor” ‘.28 In light of Lumley’s close business relationship at Her Majesty’s Theatre with his ‘coadjutor’ Puzzi, it seems logical that he would depute Puzzi to act as a manager and tend to the business transactions that arose while travelling with the tour.²⁹ The most interesting corroborating evidence for such a scenario comes in the form of lost luggage (see illustration 2.4).

LOST

**On the Rail Road between Preston and
Birmingham, on Friday, 9th of September,
A LARGE
PORTMANTEAU,**

of Black Leather, with a Painted Cover, marked in white letters “*G. Puzzi*,” and on the Portmanteau itself a Brass Plate engraved “*G. Puzzi*,” containing a white leather Portfolio, with Trinkets and Jewellery, and a variety of Papers; also a large quantity of Wearing Apparel and Linen marked with the initials “*G. P.*” Also the amount of 150 New Sovereigns, and a quantity of Silver, the amount not exactly known. Among the Trinkets was a large Gold Seal, marked with a double “*P.*”

Whoever will give information of the above loss to Mr. WALTER, 56, Davies Street, Berkeley Square, London, that will lead to the recovery of the Property---or if Stolen, the conviction of the Offender or Offenders---shall be most handsomely Rewarded.

Sept. 15, 1842.

London: Wm. Davy, Printer, Gilbert-st., Oxford-st

Illustration 2.4
Railroad passenger’s announcement. (National Railway Museum)

28. *Musical World*, vol.17 no. 42 (20 October 1842): 337.

29. Benjamin Lumley, *The Earl of Dudley*, p. 6.

The date (9 September) and location given for the disappearance of the portmanteau fits within the movements of Rubini's farewell touring party, as the group is known to have appeared in Liverpool on 6 September and was making its way to Leamington Spa for a performance on 10 September. Some of the contents of the portmanteau, particularly the papers and the large amount of money, suggest that Puzzi was acting as the tour's travelling manager. It would have been a waste of Lumley's resources not to have utilised Puzzi's abilities in this manner, saving himself from the time, expense and hassle of accompanying the party himself.

As the manager of a touring party, Puzzi would have been responsible for a wide range of duties including arranging accommodation and transportation and dealing with financial matters. Walter Maynard provides a description of these tasks and also creates an impression of the daunting and precarious nature of travelling with a group of such formidable personalities and ensuring their presence on the stage at the appointed time.³⁰ The largest and most important organisational task facing the manager of a tour was the procurement and scheduling of venues. A party of celebrity singers would have been welcome in the provinces, since professional music-making in outlying areas still lagged behind London in quantity and quality. But even with such an attractive product, a London impresario could not possibly know all the intricacies of musical life in an unfamiliar town or city that must be considered to ensure the success of a concert. Vital details such as obtaining a venue, arranging a conflict-free concert date and selling tickets were most effectively and efficiently undertaken by a resident professor with local

30. For an anecdotal and colourful description of an impresario's travels and travails, see Maynard.

knowledge. He also had the power to endorse the concert with his approval, promoting it to his patrons and colleagues. For these reasons, the manager of a tour often made arrangements with a local professor to give the concert. When writing about a touring party including Thalberg and Signor and Madame Ronconi, the *Musical World* commented that

the gentlemen who secured the services of the party for a six weeks' tour, wrote to the principal professors in the various towns in the provinces, offering them the 'lot' at a certain price, before they decided on performances on their own account. This was fair and courteous, for it gave the resident musician an opportunity of giving patrons a musical treat, or not.³¹

Rubini's farewell concert in Brighton on 29 August 1842, 'which was given in the Town Hall by Mr. Carrol [*sic*], a resident professor', illustrates this arrangement.³² Handbills, advertisements and concert programmes often reveal the name of the local professor hosting the touring party. The *Brighton Gazette* informs the audience that tickets for reserved seats were 'to be had only at McCarroll's Music Library'.³³ The core musical selections and performers in the tours in which Puzzi participated seldom varied from stop to stop, but programmes do reflect the involvement of local professors. In Brighton, the programme was lengthened to include performances by the two McCarroll daughters on harp and piano, clearly part of the arrangements made with Mr. McCarroll in return for expediting local matters. These details of Rubini's farewell tour illustrate some of the issues that would have occupied Puzzi as a tour manager. More significantly, they suggest a network and hierarchy of impresarios and managers who might have coordinated their efforts and resources to

31. *Musical World*, vol. 17 no. 45 (10 November 1842): 362.

32. *Musical World*, vol. 17 no. 35 (1 September 1842): 276.

33. *Brighton Gazette* (25 August 1842): n.p..

mount large tours.³⁴ The examples considered clearly indicate that Puzzi was part of such a group.

In addition to his managerial concerns, Puzzi was a fully participating performer on these tours. The musical roles of Puzzi and his colleagues were fundamentally the same as at London benefit and private concerts, although the logistics of touring meant that performers had to 'do double duty' wherever possible. The bass Nigri served as a pianist, accompanying and occasionally playing a solo. He is also billed as a conductor on programme covers, indicating that he had some sort of responsibility for ensemble coordination.³⁵ Puzzi frequently appeared as an obbligato accompanist and soloist and occasionally in vocal ensemble pieces, playing the line of the absent vocalist on his horn, as was the case in Donizetti's quartet 'Chi mi frena' (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), which he performed with Persiani, Nigri and Rubini, thus taking the alto line.

The most popular extracts from the London season formed the cornerstone of the touring party's repertoire. Selections from Rossini's *Stabat Mater* were a main feature of Rubini's farewell tour. The work was so popular in London during the 1842 season that it was produced by two separate companies at the St. James Theatre and at Her Majesty's Theatre and spawned the publication of a set of '*Stabat Mater* Quadrilles, arranged from the melodramatic music'.³⁶

The concerts occurred in a wide variety of public venues including concert halls, assembly rooms, theatres and hotels. Despite the prominence

34. Puzzi's case offers only one example of the emerging business of music management during the first half of the nineteenth century. It is a facet of the music business that warrants further investigation and study.

35. During this period, it is impossible to define precisely Nigri's function in the capacity of conductor.

36. *Musical World*, vol. 17 no. 42 (20 October 1842): 339.

of performers such as Persiani and Rubini and the focus on Italian opera repertoire, ticket prices were quite moderate compared to London and the performances seem to have been targeted at a much more general audience. Average ticket prices for both of the tours examined in this section are reflected by the charges for Rubini's farewell concerts: 10s.6d. for reserved tickets when available, 7s. for single tickets and 24s. for a family ticket to admit four people. The concerts appear to have been popular with listeners, since reviews often commented on venues which were 'literally crowded'; the 5 September 1842 appearance of Rubini and his entourage in Cheltenham attracted an audience numbering 800.

The extent to which Puzzi toured with singers as a manager or as a performer is not known, although the instances that have been found in the course of this research all occur in the 1840s (see appendix 2, B for a further example of a large tour). Two main factors suggest that further investigation would confirm that the bulk of the touring he did with singers took place during this period. Firstly, Puzzi's performance activities in London were not as prolific; thus, he would have welcomed an extra source of income and would have had time to pursue it. The exclusive benefit and private concerts that were the mainstay of his solo career had begun to dwindle and decline in popularity in the late 1830s.³⁷ It is also possible that Puzzi felt his powers as a performer were diminishing,

37. The status of the benefit concert during the nineteenth-century has been recently examined by Simon McVeigh in 'The Benefit Concert in Nineteenth-Century London: From "tax on the nobility" to "monstrous nuisance"', *Nineteenth-Century British Music Studies*, vol. 1, ed. Bennett Zon (Aldershot, 1999), pp. 242-266. His research indicates that, contrary to many contemporary and modern commentators, a general decline in the number of benefit concerts did not occur in the 1830s and that benefits continued to flourish until the end of the nineteenth century. He does, however, note that the audience of benefit concerts changed significantly in the 1830s. During this period, the concerts lost much of their cachet as the preserve of elite listeners and performers: ticket prices became cheaper, less distinguished performers began to mount concerts and aristocratic attendance and interest declined (McVeigh, ed. Zon, pp.243-248). These changes signified the decline of the exclusive guinea-ticket benefit that was a pillar of Puzzi's solo career.

although critical comments refute this and lament that his public appearances were not more frequent in the 1840s (see p. 104). Secondly, the advent and expansion of railway travel would have made mounting large-scale provincial tours infinitely more profitable and efficient. The years 1836 - 1837 marked the first 'railway boom' during which forty-four companies with 1,498 miles of track were sanctioned. By 1843, over 2,030 miles of track were in use.³⁸ With Puzzi's unique combination of business acumen, performance ability, experience and contacts and an ever-expanding railroad service providing connections to the pocketbooks of more listeners, the lure of the provincial tour beckoned.

GIACINTA PUZZI (*née* TOSO)

During his impresario travels of 1827, Puzzi wrote an excited letter to Ebers from Turin about a young soprano he wished to engage for the forthcoming season at the King's Theatre: Giacinta Toso, whom Puzzi described as 'belle comme une ange, jeune de dix-neuf ans, élève du Conservatoire de Milan'.³⁹ Ebers commented that 'The animation of his [Puzzi's] expressions perhaps indicated the embryo flame which subsequently gave to Mademoiselle Toso the name of Puzzi'.⁴⁰ The couple were married shortly after Toso arrived in London.⁴¹ As Madame Puzzi, Giacinta wielded considerable influence within the hierarchy of the Italian opera, and was a highly favoured concert singer and teacher of the aristocracy. Any in-depth study of Giovanni Puzzi's professional life would be incomplete without considering the substantial contributions

38. Asa Briggs, *A Social History of England* (London, 1983), p. 210.

39. Ebers, *Seven Years*, p. 318.

40. Ibid.

41. The wedding took place on 24 July 1827 at St. James's Church, Westminster.

that Giacinta Toso made to Puzzi's career and prominence in London's musical life.

Toso's first appearance at the King's Theatre was in March of 1827, when she sang the part of Agia in Rossini's *Pietro l'eremita*. During this season, she made several other appearances as a principal in Rossini's *Ricciardo e Zoraide* and *La gazza ladra*, and in Coccia's *Maria Stuarda regina di Scozia*. In July, she sang the title role in Mercadante's *Didone*, an opera that Giovanni Puzzi had brought back from Milan during the same trip on which he met Toso, intending it for her London début. Instead, the work was featured at Madame Puzzi's first benefit at the King's Theatre on 5 July 1827 (see illustration 2.5).

When Toso first arrived in England, she 'was received with a warmth proportioned to the accounts which had preceded her, and was everywhere invited and admired'.⁴² As the season progressed, critical accounts concluded that while Toso 'possessed many of the elements which lead to exalted rank' as a *prima donna*, her performances were marred by an awkward stage presence and unfinished vocal technique, elements of her performance that she had not yet had the time or experience to perfect.⁴³ Although she retired from regular appearances on the London stage after this one season, she subsequently appeared at La Scala in 1835 to sing in the premiere of Donizetti's *Maria Stuarda* (original version) with Malibran. She also gave a benefit at the King's Theatre in June 1836, where she appeared in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* with Grisi, Rubini, Lablache, and Tamburini.

42. Ebers, *Seven Years*, p. 319.

43. J.E. Cox, *Musical Recollections of the Last Half Century* (London, 1872), p. 147. Giacinta Toso was scarcely twenty years old when she made her London début.

MADAME PUZZI

(Late Signora Toso,)

Respectfully begs leave to announce to the NOBILITY, SUBSCRIBERS to the
OPERA, and the PUBLIC, that her BENEFIT will take place at
this Theatre

ON THURSDAY, THE 5th OF JULY, 1827,

WHEN WILL BE PERFORMED,

For the First Time in this Country, a New Opera Seria, in Two Acts, composed
by Mercadante, the Poetry from *Metastasio*, entitled

DIDONE.

THE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS BY

Madame PASTA,

Madame CORNEGA,

AND

Madame PUZZI.

Signor CURIONI,

Signor DEVILLE,

And Signor GIUBILEI.

After the Opera will be presented, for that Night only, an Opera Buffa, in One
Act, composed by *Rossini*, entitled

L'INGANNO FELICE.

THE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS BY

Madame PUZZI,

Signor TORRI,

Signor DE ANGELI.

Signor GIOVANOLA,

and

Signor GALLI,

The Performance to conclude with

A FAVOURITE BALLET.

Signor PUZZI begs leave to add, that, having declined, this Season, his *Annual
Concert*, he solicits the usual Patronage of his FRIENDS in favour of his and
Madame Puzzi's joint Benefit.

The intention of the Subscribers respecting the Boxes is earnestly entreated
to be sent as early as possible to Madame Puzzi. The Price of Boxes will be as
under:—

Pit Tier, - - - - -	Four Guineas.
Ground Tier, - - - - -	Five "
One Pair, - - - - -	Four "
Two Pair, - - - - -	Three "

Applications for Boxes and Tickets to be made at Signor Puzzi's, No. 19, *Piccadilly*;
or at Mr. ENERS's, No. 27, *Old Bond Street*.

Illustration 2.5

Handbill advertising Giacinta Puzzi's benefit performance at the King's
Theatre shortly after her arrival in London. (Private collection)

While her stage appearances were only occasional, Giacinta Puzzi
was an important contributor to the family finances. She was a regular
performer at London's most fashionable concerts, appearing frequently on
programmes with Giovanni and quickly establishing herself as a popular
singer in aristocratic circles. Her concert activities expanded to include

appearances apart from those with Giovanni. Both contemporary and modern accounts suggest that she was indeed a more prominent public figure than her husband. One critic at a Philharmonic Society concert refers to a performance of the aria 'Se amore soltanto' given by 'Madame Puzzi and her smaller half'.⁴⁴ Reginald Morley-Pegge concluded that Giovanni 'was a great personality in London musical circles, even if perhaps a little overshadowed by his wife, who, as a singer, was more widely known to the public at large'.⁴⁵ In this way, Giacinta's popularity would have extended Giovanni's circle of patrons.

Giacinta played a notable role in the management of the King's Theatre. As 'a clever foil, a ready-made excuse, a permanent apology, an efficient representative, and as excellent a means of evading an unpleasant proposition as any sleeping partner ever referred to', she succeeded in greatly helping to smooth over the perpetual disputes between singers and management, earning her the title 'Mamma Puzzi'.⁴⁶ She

was a remarkable woman, who . . . should have been born a man, and if properly educated would have been fitted for a Minister of State (of the Machiavelli order, however).⁴⁷

The tenor Antonio Giuglini, on whose behalf Giacinta intervened on numerous occasions, was taken to swearing by 'the Holy Virgin and Madame Puzzi'.⁴⁸ Giacinta was also acknowledged as an expert on singing:

She had great judgment and sound knowledge and experience. Her

44. *Harmonicon*, vol. 11 (July 1833): 154.

45. Reginald Morley-Pegge, *The French Horn: Some Notes on its Evolution and Technique*, 2nd. ed. (London, 1973), p. 161.

46. Willert Beale, *The Light of Other Days as Seen Through the Wrong End of an Opera Glass* (London, 1890), p. 74.

47. Tina Whitaker, *Sicily and England: Political and Social Reminiscences 1848 - 1870* (London, 1907), p. 217.

48. John Mapleson, *The Mapleson Memoirs 1848 - 1888* (London, 1888), p. 49.

opinions on the merits and potentiality of voices were received by many managers as official.⁴⁹

During Lumley's management at Her Majesty's Theatre, she was 'intimately connected' with operatic affairs, and Wilhelm Ganz records that both Puzzi were active in recruiting singers for the theatre: 'For many years she and her husband, Signor Giacomo [*sic*] Puzzi, made the engagements for Benjamin Lumley'.⁵⁰ Whitaker records that Giacinta was also involved in fixing singers for private concerts.⁵¹ The Puzzi's home, largely through Giacinta's efforts, was 'the rendezvous, and second home, of all the Italian operatic stars' in England.⁵² Unquestionably, each Puzzi enhanced and reinforced the strengths of the other, and their prominence and success in operatic affairs was the result of a team effort.

Teaching, however, was one area that offered more of an opportunity for Giacinta to contribute to the family earnings than it did for Giovanni. While little market for teaching the horn existed outside of a small body of students preparing to become professional players, Giacinta capitalised on the great demand for singing lessons by affluent amateurs. All her biographers note that she taught extensively. Cox records that

Madame Puzzi has been most successful as a teacher of singing, and has turned out some of the most proficient sopranos, both in public and private life, during an energetic and active career.⁵³

49. 'Obituary', *Musical Times* (1 September 1889): 547.

50. Wilhelm Ganz, *Memories of a Musician* (London, 1913), p. 286.

51. Whitaker, p. 221.

52. *Ibid.*

53. Cox, p. 148. Giacinta's three daughters were among these students. Fanny in particular received many positive reviews of her singing at concerts and her performances were said to be 'the best evidence of Madame Puzzi's genius as a teacher' (*Musical World*, vol. 41 no. 19 [9 May 1863]: 295). Fanny Puzzi pursued an active musical career and wrote a number of canzonets and short piano pieces that were published.

Rossini respected her abilities and commended pupils to her through letters of introduction.⁵⁴ At the half guinea and guinea fees per lesson that the fashionable teacher was able to command, Giacinta's teaching activities were a significant source of revenue and were credited in part as furnishing Giovanni with 'a good provision, which he enjoyed to an advanced age'.⁵⁵ In the 1850s, it was estimated that a fashionable teacher of the piano 'occupying a high position must realise by teaching alone at least £2,000' per year.⁵⁶ Figures for a popular singing teacher would be comparable. Giacinta's pupils would have yielded an additional profit when they purchased tickets to the various concerts she organised, the largely vocal programmes of which were clearly compiled with their interests in mind.

Giacinta's teaching and concert-giving activities were particularly important to the family in the late 1850s and 1860s. A review of Giacinta's 1855 benefit concert reported that 'Signor and Madame Puzzi, we understand, have bidden adieu to public life, and are about to depart for Italy, and live in retirement'.⁵⁷ Giovanni appears to have spent much time on his estate of Monferrato in Piedmont, 'leading the life of a country gentleman' in his later years. But to Giacinta,

who kept her vital energies of youth until an advanced age, a prolonged existence in the country would have been impossible, and she remained for the greater part of the year

54. Herbert Weinstock, *Rossini: a Biography* (London, 1968), p. 337. In 1866, Rossini wrote a letter of introduction to 'Madame Puzzi Toso' for Teresa Carrenjo.

55. Cyril Ehrlich, *The Music Profession in Britain Since the Eighteenth Century: A Social History* (Oxford, 1985), p. 19; *Athenaeum*, no. 2524 (11 March 1876): 371.

56. H. Byerley Thompson, *The Choice of a Profession: A Concise Account and Comparative Review of the English Professions* (London, 1857) p. 318. Cited by Deborah Rohr, 'A Profession of Artisans: The Careers and Social Status of British Musicians, 1750 - 1850', Ph.D. diss. (University of Pennsylvania, 1983), p. 294.

57. *Musical World*, vol. 33 no. 21 (26 May 1855): 333.

in England, with her two elder daughters, Emily and Fanny.⁵⁸

MADAME PUZZI
Has the honour to announce to her kind Friends, Subscribers, and Pupils,
that the Second of her

THREE SOIREEES MUSICALES
WILL TAKE PLACE ON
THURSDAY, JANUARY 25th, 1872,
AND THE THIRD ON
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8th, —
AT
24, BELGRAVE SQUARE,
BY THE KIND PERMISSION OF
The Marquis and Marchioness of Downshire.
To commence at Nine o' Clock.

PROGRAMME OF THE SECOND SOIREE.
PARTE PRIMA.

QUARTETTO, "Ridiamo cantiamo." Rossini.
Mlle. FANNY PUZZI, Mr. TRELAWNY COBHAM,
Mr. THORLEY (Amateur), and Signor CIABATTA.

SOLO, Violoncello, { a. "Cujus animam." } Rossini.
 b. "Tarantella." }
 Mons. PAQUE.

SONG, "Thine is my heart." Schubert.
Mr. TRELAWNY COBHAM

DUETTO, "Il Convegno." Lucantoni.
Madame BENTHAM and Mr. BENTHAM.

ARIA, "Assisa a piè" (Otello.) Rossini.
Mlle. FANNY PUZZI.

ROMANZA, "O donna amata." Pissuti.
Mr. THORLEY (Amateur).

ARIA, "In questo semplice." (Belly) Donizetti.
Madame FLORENCE LANCIA.

QUARTETTO, "Un di se ben rammentomi." (Rigoletto) Verdi.
Madame FLORENCE LANCIA, Madame BENTHAM FERNANDEZ,
Mr. BENTHAM, and Signor CIABATTA.

PARTE SECONDA.

TERZETTO, "Vanne a colei." Sir M. Costa.
Mlle. FANNY PUZZI, Mr. BENTHAM, and Mr. THORLEY.

CAVATINA, "Nobil Signor." (Ugonotti) Meyerbeer.
Madame BENTHAM FERNANDEZ.

ROMANZA, "Amore e dolor." (First time) Schira.
Signor CIABATTA.
(Accompanied by the Composer.)

SOLO, Piano, { a. "Fantaisie sur des motifs de Marta." } Del Bianco.
 b. "Valse des amours." }
Mlle. DEL BIANCO.

ROMANZA, "La Partenza." Rossini.
Mlle. FANNY PUZZI.

ROMANZA, "Di stelle gemmato." (Adriana Lecouvreur) Vera.
Mr. BENTHAM.

DUETTO, "Dal giorno." (Ali Baba) Bottesini.
Mlle. FANNY PUZZI and Mr. THORLEY.

TRIO, "The hawthorn in the glade." (May Queen) Sir W. Sterndale Bennett.
Madame FLORENCE LANCIA, Mr. COBHAM, and
Signor CIABATTA.

CORO FINALE, "Din, din, bon soir." Carulli.
TUTTI.

At the Pianoforte - Herr W. GANZ.

TICKETS for the THREE SOIREEES, ONE GUINEA.
For ONE only, 10s. 6d.
To be had of Madame Puzzi, 30, Welbeck Street,
Cavendish Square.

Illustration 2.6
Programme from one of Giacinta Puzzi's soirées . (Private collection)

58. Whitaker, p. 221. The youngest daughter, Guilia Pompea, resided with her father in Italy.

While Giovanni announced his retirement at the age of sixty-three, this was a period of intense activity for forty-five year old Giacinta. After a period of absence from the London concert scene during 1858 and 1859, a wide variety of concerts organised and promoted by Giacinta became focal points of the social season. In addition to the lavish 'annual morning' benefits that she had been presenting for years, Giacinta mounted a series of 'soirées musicales' and 'matinées d'invitation'. These concerts continued to cater for the aristocracy; at the matinées attendance was determined by the distribution of 'cartes d'invite' and the soirées were held at private venues such as the residence of the Marchioness of Downshire (see illustration 2.6). At the 1866 matinée,

Upwards of sixteen hundred persons were present, and among them numbers of the very cream of the aristocracy. Madame Puzzi, who has long enjoyed the reputation of being one of the most eminent vocal professors . . . has had her connection principally in the upper circles and this accounts for the brilliant and fashionable company brought together by the cards of invitation.⁵⁹

The presence of such a numerous and illustrious clientele gathering upwards of five times a year for Giacinta's various concerts suggests that they were a profitable enterprise.

In examining Giacinta's activities, it is readily apparent that she was a vital contributor to Giovanni's financial and professional success in two fundamental ways. Her extensive undertakings as a teacher and presenter of concerts constituted an immediate and direct monetary contribution to the family finances. Although Giovanni was most likely the official transactor in negotiations with singers, Giacinta's active role in making engagements for the theatre must also be considered in this category. Perhaps of even greater consequence is the immeasurable but invaluable

59. *Musical World*, vol. 44 no. 18 (5 May 1866): 286.

way in which Giacinta's prominence in the workings of the theatre, her widespread favour with the aristocracy and her natural affinity for public life would have enhanced and strengthened Giovanni's undertakings, making their partnership a lucrative alliance.

PATRONAGE

The function of patronage in Puzzi's career

Patronage, particularly by the members of the most elite aristocracy who held sway at the Italian opera house at The King's/Her Majesty's Theatre, was important to Puzzi throughout his career and was vital to his success as both a fixer on the private concert circuit and as a soloist. It facilitated the development of other areas of his career as well, such as his activities as a theatrical agent and fixer for other concerts. Although the musician in early nineteenth-century London is popularly -- and sometimes accurately -- portrayed as an independent professional breaking free from the 'traditional' (often implying servile and demeaning) patronage relationships of the past, Deborah Rohr illustrates that the transition was much more complicated and that musicians continued to favour the financial and social benefits of aristocratic patronage during this period over the obstacles of operating as independent professionals.⁶⁰

This hypothesis is reinforced by an understanding of the status of the aristocracy in British Society during the first half of the nineteenth century. Despite the general acceptance of the Great Reform Act of 1832 as a watershed event in strengthening the middle-class voice in politics, it had a negligible effect on the 'social and cultural authority of the aristocracy'

60. See Rohr, chapter three.

and is not regarded as 'a key event in the history of the peerage'.⁶¹ It was not until the 1880s that the decline of the aristocracy began in earnest. Up to this point, the nobility, baronetcy and gentry comprised the wealthiest segment of British society and maintained their prominence in political office.⁶² This placed the aristocracy in a position of socio-musical power during the prime years of Puzzi's career and made them the natural focal point of his efforts to promote himself.⁶³

Despite their level of power and their crucial role in defining musical tastes and establishing the popularity of various performers, English aristocracy seldom engaged in a form of patronage as extensive and comprehensive as that of their continental European counterparts.

Musicians in Britain during Puzzi's career

enjoyed virtually no protection by patrons, and instead had to pursue free-lance careers based entirely on the 'capitalist cash nexus.' On the other hand, the 'open' competition which characterized the system of free-lance careers continued to be dependent upon traditional determinations of merit by amateur patrons.⁶⁴

In the case of Puzzi's career, this is evident in the wide range of patronage-based employments and benefits that he pursued and in his efforts to gain favour with a large number of the aristocracy.

61. Jennifer Lee Hall, 'The Re-fashioning of Fashionable Society: Opera-going and Sociability in Britain, 1821 - 1861', Ph.D. diss. (Yale University, 1996), p. 2.

62. David Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (New Haven, 1990), pp. 16-18, cited by Hall, p. 3.

63. Hall looks to the 'cultural domain' to 'explain both the persistence of the elite's authority and the ways in which it was slowly transformed'. She posits that despite the 'rise' of the middle class during this period, the aristocracy remained the controlling musical force at the Italian opera by 'leading, accommodating, or excluding the middle classes, depending on the circumstances' (Hall, p. 5).

64. Rohr, p. 76.

Musical patronage existed in many different forms.⁶⁵ Professional patronage and public patronage by the middle class and aristocracy were naturally important to Puzzi in establishing himself among colleagues and listeners, but private aristocratic patronage was most significant to Puzzi in that it was the backbone of his most lucrative engagements as a performer and provided an arena for his activities as a theatrical agent. Puzzi's relationships with his aristocratic patrons served him in many ways. Most direct was the success with which he established himself in the private concert circuit as a performer and concert fixer. His patrons also provided him with exclusive venues for his benefit concerts, no doubt promoted his ventures as an impresario, bequeathed him money and instruments and favoured his benefit concerts and opera productions with their attendance and ticket fees. His prominent and international array of patrons also conferred status and social respectability upon Puzzi and were a powerful indication of his position in musical society.

Through his nationality and position in London's musical life, Puzzi was in an ideal position to appeal to the desires of this elite group of patrons. The overwhelming interest of the aristocracy in foreign -- particularly Italian -- music and musicians during the early nineteenth century is well noted in contemporary publications. In addition to the novelty value of the exotic, Puzzi's continental experiences would have imbued him with social polish and a 'gracious' attitude towards patrons that was generally acknowledged to be lacking in his English counterparts.⁶⁶ Indeed, Puzzi appears to have built up a base of aristocratic patronage long before his arrival in England during the period when he

65. Rohr, p. 79. Rohr delineates ten types of patronage: church, military, municipal, private middle-class, public middle-class, private royal, public royal, private aristocratic, public aristocratic, and professional.

66. Rohr, p. 98.

toured Europe as a teenage horn virtuoso.

While many of his colleagues also had the advantage of being foreign, it was his connection with the Italian opera and particularly with its singers that served to set Puzzi apart in his success in procuring patronage. The high degree of access to singers and negotiating power that Puzzi's role as an agent and impresario imparted to him would have put him in an ideal position to make the stars of the King's/Her Majesty's Theatre available to his patrons at private concerts and other events, thus making him a highly desirable member of their musical retinue and likely giving Puzzi a particularly elevated status in the hierarchy of musicians circulating among the aristocracy. In this way, Puzzi and his patrons would have enjoyed a mutually beneficial relationship.

Examples of patronage in Puzzi's career

The details of Puzzi's interaction with his patrons are difficult to piece together and few in-depth cases have been found. However, factors such as his widespread favour with the aristocracy at their private concerts clearly indicate that Puzzi enjoyed numerous successful patronage relationships and those items that have been uncovered point to a variety of manifestations of private aristocratic patronage.

Reviews of private concerts in the society pages of various newspapers and a small number of surviving concert programmes provide an indication of who was engaging Puzzi as a performer. Names which occur repeatedly during the years 1817 - 1855 include Mrs. Boehm, Lady Shelley, Mrs. Villiers, Countess St. Antonio, Prince Esterhazy, Mr. Parnter, Countess Brownlow, the Marchioness of Normandy, the Duke and Duchess of Beaufort, the Duke of Wellington, Sir William Adby, Sir George Warrender, the Earl of Cholmondeley and the Earl of Lonsdale.

Puzzi was said to have been 'an habitué at Lady Blessington's, and a friend of the Count d'Orsay'.⁶⁷ Nearly all of Puzzi's patrons were traditional members of the British aristocracy -- typically landed members of the peerage who were part of 'fashionable society'.⁶⁸ Very few of them were members of the emerging professional bourgeoisie. Whitaker's observation that Puzzi 'had so many acquaintances amongst the literary and musical celebrities of the period that his reminiscences would have been most interesting' had he recorded the 'acquaintances and episodes' of his life suggests that he had patrons within artistic circles as well.⁶⁹

Many of Puzzi's patrons were prominent supporters of the Italian Opera, an institution that was controlled by the upper echelons of the aristocracy and depended upon them for its financial survival. Some of them wielded a substantial degree of influence over its affairs. The Count St. Antonio, who was later created Duke of Cannizaro, held eight 'property boxes' at the King's Theatre in the 1820s and was one of the 'great patrons' who served on the advisory committee of 'nobility and gentry' in place

67. Whitaker, p. 218.

68. The composition of the aristocracy was in great flux during the first third of the nineteenth century, largely owing to the incorporation of members of the middle class into the ranks of the aristocracy. One third of all new peerages granted from 1803 - 1830 were to men with little or no land (J. V. Beckett, *The Aristocracy in England 1660 - 1914* [Oxford, 1986], pp. 46, 69-70, cited by Hall, pp. 161-162).

69. Whitaker, p. 218. Unfortunately, Puzzi is not known to have left a written account of his life. Madame Puzzi's wide and influential circle of acquaintances and her intimacy with the inner workings of the Italian Opera led Cox to state similarly that 'the information which it is to be hoped she will at some point communicate to the public could not be otherwise than curious, amusing, and instructive', but she too appears to have left no memoirs (J. E. Cox, *Musical Recollections of the Last Half-Century* [London, 1872], pp. 147-148).

during the early 1800s.⁷⁰ Through their membership of the committee, often much to the distress of the managers and music directors, these patrons exerted their power in the selection of repertoire, singers and theatre staff.⁷¹ Sir John Shelley and the Earl of Cholmondeley were also members of the opera committee during Puzzi's early years in London. The Duke of Wellington and the Earl of Lonsdale, two of Puzzi's most substantial patrons, were also fixtures of the Italian opera-going aristocracy.

The influence of these patrons at the opera was a feature that would have made association with them attractive and perhaps profitable for Puzzi even beyond his participation in their private concerts. No empirical evidence exists, but Puzzi's favour with these patrons could well have been crucial in his promotion from horn player at the King's Theatre to an agent enlisted to engage singers. While Ebers records himself as having appointed Puzzi to this position, the aristocracy certainly possessed the power to initiate and insist on the appointment and Puzzi was in an ideal position to curry their favour and promote his skills as an agent. It was indeed auspicious for Puzzi that he arrived in London during an intense period of aristocratic involvement at the Italian Opera. The 1820s, the

70. David Warren Hadley, 'The Growth of London Musical Society in the Early Nineteenth Century: Studies of the History of a Profession, 1800 - 1824', Ph.D. diss. (Harvard University, 1972), pp. 147, 153. To raise the funds necessary to sustain the King's Theatre, managers sold theatre boxes to patrons. In recognition of the patron's financial strength and the importance of their satisfaction in sustaining this support, King's Theatre managers established aristocratic committees that became intimately involved with the running of the theatre. In this manner, the Italian Opera in London was run by the British elite from the 1780s through the 1820s. For an extensive discussion of property boxes, management committees and aristocratic involvement in the Italian Opera during this period, see Hall pp. 171-188.

71. The power of the committee during Ebers's management was absolute. They frequently supplanted the wishes of William Ayrton, the music director, and prompted his resignation in 1821. The manager was often in a position to do little other than act as an intermediary between singers, the music director and the committee (Hall, pp. 179-183). Count St. Antonio's wishes were the determining factor in the appointment of Chevalier Petracchi as the new (and unsuccessful) music director for the Theatre upon the departure of William Ayrton (Hadley, p. 161).

formative years of Puzzi's London career, marked the peak of this activity. During the 1830s, weak performances at the opera and the threat of the cholera epidemic in the City caused the aristocracy to channel their energies elsewhere, particularly into politics. When they returned in the 1840s, the middle-class presence at the Italian Opera had proliferated and music critics were now 'aggressively [promoting] what they perceived to be bourgeois interests and a cultivated musical taste heavily influenced by the German musical tradition'.⁷² Puzzi's arrival during this window of aristocracy-controlled and Italian Opera-centred musical activity illustrates why the Italian opera was so central to his career.

Puzzi's relationship with two of the Italian Opera's very prominent patrons offers the opportunity to examine some of his more comprehensive relationships with patrons and provides evidence that even in the context of an emerging free-lance market place, extensive and enduring patronage relationships were cultivated with members of the aristocracy. The Duke of Wellington was Puzzi's first and most illustrious English patron. He was an exceptionally active member of London's musical aristocracy and was a fixture at the Italian opera at the King's/Her Majesty's Theatre, where he was a box holder for many years. He was an avid concert-goer, probably enforced to a degree by his status as a highly prized guest, and his name is present in the reviews of nearly all the private concerts detailed in the society sections of papers such as the *Morning Post*.

It was through Wellington's instrumentality that Puzzi settled in London, since both he and the two singing DeLihu sisters appear to have been claimed by Wellington as spoils from the Battle of Waterloo and came to England under his patronage in 1816. The Duke's enthusiasm for

72. Hall, p. 15.

Puzzi and the details of his arrival in England are recorded in the following anecdote:

it was arranged that [Puzzi] should make his début at Hertford House immediately after his arrival. On reaching London, Puzzi found, to his despair, that his precious horn had been detained at Dover, but such was the Duke's interest in his protégé that he himself sent a special messenger to the coast, and the horn arrived in time.⁷³

Puzzi and the DeLihu sisters appear to have been brought to London together deliberately as an act. Wellington was said to have been particularly fond of the horn and the voice, since their acoustic properties allowed him to appreciate them even though his hearing had been impaired in battle. Even after the popularity of the sisters faded, Puzzi appeared most frequently at Wellington's concerts in tandem with singers as an obbligato player. Musical evidence of one such performance survives in Puzzi's 1839 manuscript copy of Burghersh's 'Raggio di luna' for tenor and horn obbligato, which bears the inscription 'Cantata di Rubini ai concerti del Duca di Wellington' in Puzzi's hand upon the cover.⁷⁴ This commentary probably refers to a concert held at Apsley House in July 1839.⁷⁵

Puzzi's relationship with Wellington was extensive both in terms of length and in the ways he served his patron. In an anecdote in Ella's *Musical Sketches*, we learn that Puzzi was present as a performer at private concerts which the Duke attended and that Wellington appears to have listened more carefully than is often assumed of aristocracy at private

73. Whitaker, p. 218.

74. See works catalogue no. 54. Burghersh was another retired military lion who channelled his energy into and exerted his influence upon London's musical life at the end of the Napoleonic Wars.

75. Concert programme found in an unidentified newspaper clipping (possibly the *Times*) dated 1 August 1839, RCM PP.

concerts. At a concert given by Sir George Warrender in 1830, Ella writes about the Duke's disappointment in the omission of a song by the Italian *buffo* De Begnis and of a horn solo by Puzzi, causing him to exclaim 'capital concert, capital concert, Warrender; but Ella has omitted two pieces'.⁷⁶

The Duke's various residences were the scene of sumptuous musical entertainments ranging from regularly occurring private concerts held at Apsley House to more intimate gatherings such as the week-long affair held at Strathfieldsaye to fill the musical void of Easter week in 1840. The closure of the Italian opera during this period allowed him to entertain the Austrian Special Minister, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and other titled guests with evening concerts by Grisi, Tamburini, Puzzi and Vilotti.⁷⁷

The attendance lists of Wellington's concerts bristled with titles and he frequently hosted musical 'entertainments' in honour of various distinguished guests. At an 1819 concert given for the Prince Regent, Puzzi played in a trio with Bochsa (harp) and Baermann (clarinet) 'which produced the greatest effect'.⁷⁸ Exposing Puzzi to listeners and potential patrons such as the Prince Regent made Wellington an especially valuable patron for Puzzi, particularly while he established himself in London. During this period, Wellington would have functioned as a veritable introduction service to England's high society.

Puzzi continued to be an essential part of these concerts off as well as on the platform. Together with his wife, he was responsible for myriad details of their organisation:

76. Ella, pp. 24-25.

77. *Reading Mercury* (25 April 1840): n.p..

78. *Morning Post* (1 July 1819): n.p..

The concerts at Apsley House, Hertford House and Cannizaro were always arranged by the Puzzi, the choice of singers and the programme being entirely left to their judgment.⁷⁹

The position of the Puzzi in the Italian opera community combined with the Duke's stature as a patron would have given them the power to make engagements easily with whatever singers and instrumentalists were desired. Puzzi's success in mounting these concerts for Wellington would have been an advertisement for others wishing to give similar entertainments. Indeed, Puzzi's services as an agent were called upon for such illustrious occasions as the royal visit to Woburn Abbey, for which the *Morning Post* reported that he 'superintended the band and all musical arrangements'.⁸⁰

William Lowther, the Second Earl of Lonsdale, is another patron with whom Puzzi appears to have had an extended relationship. He died in 1872 and left Puzzi a sum of 2,000 pounds in his will.⁸¹ Lonsdale's 'great wealth . . . and the influence of his family gave him importance in his party' and he 'paid large subsidies for the maintenance of Italian opera in London'.⁸² Lonsdale was a prominent figure in the Italian opera circle and was an active member of the King's Theatre's committee of aristocratic advisors in the 1820s.⁸³ Puzzi's presence at the King's Theatre during the 1820s as a player and his association with a large number of patrons who

79. Whitaker, p. 221.

80. *Morning Post* (28 July 1841): n.p..

81. Will and Last Testament of William Lowther, 18 February 1871, p. 7, London Public Record Office.

82. *Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Sidney Lee, vol. 12 (London, 1909), p. 224. Lonsdale's landed annual income was said to amount to almost £100,000 (Hall, p. 189).

83. See Hadley, p. 605 for details of Lonsdale's involvement in King's Theatre management decisions in 1818 and of his membership of the advisory committee in 1820-21. *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review*, vol. 4 (1822): 241-242 mentions his continued involvement with this committee in 1822.

were intimately connected with the Theatre no doubt led to his contact with Lonsdale.

The placement of Puzzi's name within Lonsdale's will is of interest for the questions it raises about Puzzi's status and the nature of his relationship with the Earl. Its position relatively close to the beginning of the main body of the will among the names of various relatives and long-standing family servants suggests that Puzzi's relationship with the family was one of some substance and permanence. It is notable that the names of no other musicians appear in the will. There is no mention of the services that Puzzi rendered to the Earl to receive such a generous benefaction, although it seems likely that he may have served him in some capacity as a non-resident household musician, arranging and overseeing, as well as participating in, private concerts given by the Earl. As with Wellington, Puzzi's position of influence as an agent at the King's Theatre and the advantages this would have given him in obtaining singers and other performers was unquestionably a primary factor in Lonsdale's generous patronage.

Royal patronage

The use of the title ' "Corno Solo" to Her Majesty', which appears on a concert programme from 1838, would seem to suggest that Puzzi enjoyed some form of royal contact or patronage (see illustration 2.7). The origins of the title are nebulous. It is unclear whether this title was self-bestowed or if it was an official endorsement, and if so, when and where it was granted. The pianists Lucy Philpot Anderson and Louise Dulken also made use of a similar title in concert programmes and advertisements. It is possible that Puzzi's title may have originated outside of England. One biographical source states that he was decorated with the title of horn

Regardless of its origin, the possible types of royal patronage implied by the use of such a title were invaluable to a musician. Royal patronage in the form of an invitation to perform at court bolstered a musician's career by enhancing his prestige and recognition to an even greater degree and more rapidly than appearances before the aristocracy.⁸⁵ Very little information about Puzzi's performances for royalty has been found, but the occasional newspaper review mentions appearances at royal residences. In 1831, Puzzi played in a concert given by Queen Adelaide at St. James's Palace.⁸⁶ Puzzi would have also been a focal point of royal attention when Queen Victoria attended the season opening of his *opera buffa* company at the Lyceum Theatre on 16 November 1837. Other possibilities for royal contact were the numerous command performances at Queen Victoria's court:

musicians both native and foreign, who created a sensation on any of London's musical stages, were likely to receive the Queen's command to perform before her in private.⁸⁷

A formal appointment within Victoria's court, such as a place in the Queen's Private Band would seem a possible qualifier for the use of the title ' "Corno Solo" to Her Majesty'. However, Puzzi never held a post as a

85. For a discussion of the value of the royal command, see Michael Budds, 'Music at the Court of Queen Victoria: A Study of Music in the Life of the Queen and Her Participation in the Musical Life of Her Time', Ph. D. diss. (University of Iowa, 1987), p. 571-573.

86. *Harmonicon*, vol. 9 (1831): 172. Puzzi appeared with Dragonetti, Lindley, Madame Pasta, Signor and Madame Rubini and Signori Curioni, Santini, De Begnis and Lablache.

87. Budds, p. 570. Although Puzzi does not appear in Budds's list of musicians receiving the Queen's command, it seems most likely that at some point he would have appeared before Victoria in this capacity. Other prominent names that do not appear on Budds's list include Dragonetti, Mori, and Spagnoletti. This either indicates that Budds's list is not complete or points to an interesting trend that warrants further investigation, since it is difficult to imagine that Victoria would not have commanded a concert from some of the era's most illustrious musicians. Perhaps she used another outlet to bring them before her.

musician in the royal court.⁸⁸ While this may initially appear surprising, the names of London's most celebrated wind players -- Puzzi's colleagues in the Philharmonic Society, the King's Theatre orchestra and the Antient Concert -- are conspicuously absent from the band's rosters.⁸⁹ It is also telling that, as with the members of second tier theatre orchestras, the majority of the performers in the Private Band played more than one instrument.

Although the members of Her Majesty's Private Band were said by the musical press to be among the finest in the country, if presence at the most prestigious concerts and in the most celebrated orchestras in London is used as an indicator of success and professional standing, then the Private Band did not have England's most elite performers among its ranks. A letter from a disgruntled band member reveals the reasons for this:

the principal part of the members [of the Private Band] only receive £80 or £100 per annum, . . . and are required for that sum to be always in readiness to fulfil Her Majesty's commands, to the loss of all other engagements which they may by chance make.⁹⁰

Such a post was entirely contrary to the career pattern of London's most popular free-lance players. While too little information has been found to provide a complete picture of Puzzi's involvement with royalty, it is certain that, although he was not in a royal post, he had a number of more profitable opportunities to reap the benefits of royal contact through

88. From at least 1820 through 1837, the two horn posts in the Private Band were held by G. Schroeder and G. Hardy.

89. The clarinettist Joseph Williams, who played principal clarinet at the King's Theatre in 1829 and was invited to join the Philharmonic Society in 1840, is a notable exception, although it is clear that he was superseded as a performer and musical figure by Thomas Willman, who does not appear in the Private Band. See Budds, p. 731.

90. *Musical World*, vol. 33 no. 20 (7 April 1855): 216, quoted by Budds, pp. 748-749.

other channels such as private concerts.

In reviewing Puzzi's career, it is clear that Puzzi benefited from a diverse range of types of patronage and that this support was a vital element of his financial success, probably standing in importance alongside his earnings as an agent for the Italian opera. Private aristocratic patronage, sometimes including extended relationships with patrons, was a dominant feature of Puzzi's career throughout his working lifetime. His compliance with the demands of patronage and his willingness to pander to the aristocracy was typical of continental and late eighteenth-century convention and mirrors the over-ridingly Georgian nature of Puzzi's career. However, his approach to patronage and his relationships with patrons was probably more greatly influenced and determined by his access to singers and his abilities as a fixer and agent. These assets placed Puzzi in a position to be attractive to patrons not only as a performer, but also as a single resource capable of catering for all their needs in mounting concerts and ensuring their stature among the socio-musically elite echelons of society. This allowed Puzzi to develop intimate and enduring relationships with his patrons, yet his aggressive entrepreneurialism and cultivation of many patrons reflects the more independent and free-lance nature of the music business developing in London during this time.

When reviewing the ways in which patronage, Puzzi's strong connections to the King's/Her Majesty's Theatre as an agent and his central position within the community of Italian opera singers in London served him, it becomes quickly apparent that they were all inter-related and enabled each other. This symbiosis provided Puzzi with the essential materials to build a distinguished career as a soloist: capital, access to the most popular singers as a fixer and performer, and a receptive and lucrative audience.

III

'Corno solo':

Puzzi's activities as a soloist and his place in London's concert life

If they want the horn I'll have Puzzi.
The Duke of Wellington writing to Priscilla,
Lady Burghersh on 26 July 1839.¹

Public music-making (subscription concerts, chamber concerts, benefit concerts) -- Private music-making.



Because of its singularity and high profile, Puzzi's long reign as nineteenth-century Britain's foremost horn soloist was the most prominent feature of his varied career. His virtual monopoly of solo engagements in London's most prestigious concerts lasted nearly forty years and was unmatched by any previous or successive horn player in England during the century.² This accomplishment and his popularity among the most exclusive circles of musical patrons conferred upon Puzzi the highest social status an instrumentalist could attain.³ Such remarkable success was the product of a unique combination of factors. Puzzi's ability as a performer was exceptional and unrivalled. An innate understanding of his musical environment and a high degree of enterprise as manifested in his involvement with the Italian Opera, enabled Puzzi to capitalise on

1. Lady Rose Weigall, ed., *Correspondence of Lady Burghersh with the Duke of Wellington* (London, 1903), p. 113.

2. Puzzi's first public solo appearance in England was in 1817 with the Philharmonic Society and his last was in 1855.

3. Deborah Rohr, 'A Profession of Artisans: the Careers and Social Status of British Musicians, 1750 - 1850', Ph. D diss. (University of Pennsylvania, 1983), p. 245.

his talents. Additionally, Puzzi's solo career coincided with the height of the benefit and private concerts' popularity in the 1820s through the early 1840s, providing him with ample performance opportunities. This chapter will examine how Puzzi exploited his musical environment as a soloist.

Puzzi's activities as a soloist were widespread and extensive. His appearances were featured in nearly every type of concert in early nineteenth-century London's aristocratic and burgeoning middle-class musical scene. In 1860, Sir George Smart compiled a record of all the concerts he conducted from 1798 to 1858, listing them by type and by specific name as follows: professor's concerts, concerts for charities, private concerts, oratorios in London, performances at festivals and concerts outside of London, royal concerts, Philharmonic concerts, amateur and London subscription concerts, Masonic dinners, and music at Covent Garden Theatre.⁴ Whilst this list cannot be said to account for all concert activity in London during this period, it provides a particularly good depiction of the array of performance opportunities available to Puzzi, since Smart was one of the most active musical figures during the period of Puzzi's solo career and the two men circulated largely in the same musical circles. Smart's list covers a wide span of concerts, ranging from those intended for a very general audience to exclusive private concerts. Puzzi's frequent appearances at nearly all of these types of performances reflect his active and diverse career as a soloist.

Despite this wide variety of concerts, Puzzi's activities as a soloist and the music that he played would have varied little from one engagement to another. Nearly all subscription, benefit and private

4. Smart Papers, vol. 10, Add. MS 42,223, p. 152, British Library.

concerts adhered to the popular 'grand miscellaneous' programme.⁵ These 'monster concerts' consisted largely of vocal selections (sometimes with obbligato accompaniment), virtuoso instrumental solos that were written by their performers and chamber music. An overture and a symphony were often included to open and conclude each half of the programme. At any given concert, Puzzi would have generally played some sort of a solo with orchestral or piano accompaniment and/or appeared with a singer as an obbligato player (see illustration 3.1).

A cursory glance at any of these programmes reveals how much performances with singers were part of Puzzi's activities as a soloist. Such appearances often outnumber his horn solos on each programme. From his earliest appearances in England, Puzzi was connected with singers. The *Athenaeum* records that Puzzi 'first came to this country in 1818 [*sic*], with two lady vocalists, who sang duets, accompanied by him, with rare perfection'.⁶ The singers in question are the DeLihu sisters, who were brought up by the Empress Josephine and who would have been a presence in Napoleon's court during the period when Puzzi held a post in the Emperor's private band.⁷ Puzzi made numerous public appearances with the sisters at benefit and Whitsun Eve concerts in 1818 and 1819 and also at the Philharmonic Society concert on 10 May 1819. More importantly, although they were 'mediocre singers, amateurs turned artistes, and who relied more on their beauty and the *réclame* of their

5. Nicholas Temperley, 'Instrumental Music In England 1800 - 1850', Ph.D. diss. (Cambridge University, 1959), p. 42.

6. *Athenaeum*, no. 2524 (11 March 1876): n.p..

7. Tina Whitaker, *Sicily and England: Political and Social Reminiscences 1848 - 1870* (London: 1907), p. 217. Whitaker would have been informed in many of her recollections about Puzzi through the relationship between her mother and the Puzzi. Giacinta Puzzi looked after Whitaker's mother during her youth. I am indebted to Martin Prowse for making me aware of both this book and Whitaker's connection with the Puzzi.

upbringing than on their talents', they seized the imagination of the aristocracy and were 'in great vogue' at private concerts during the 1818 and 1819 seasons.⁸ Their aristocratic appeal made them a profitable pair with whom to ally oneself. This pattern of association with fashionable singers remained unbroken throughout Puzzi's solo career and, as is evidenced by Puzzi's relationship with the DeLihu sisters and their common musical abode in Napoleon's court, was well established before he reached England.

PROGRAMME.

PART I.

Overture.....(*Egmont*).....*Beethoven*.
Duetto, Mlle. PACINI and Signor FORNASARI,
"Si mel credi".....(*Ercole di Grenata*).....*Meyerbeer*.
Concert Stuck, Pianoforte, Mrs. ANDERSON.
C. M. von Weber.
Grand Scene, Madame REITER BILDSTEIN (Niece de
Madame Stockhausen.) (*Der Freyschutz*) *C. M. von Weber*.
New Fantasia, Corno, Signor PUZZI, sur les motifs
du Bravo, "Ah per sempre".....*Puzzi*.
Duetto, Madame PERSIANI and Signor MARIO,
"Da quel di che t'incontrai".....(*Linda di Chamounix*)
Donizetti.
Aria, Herr STAUDIOL, "Der Monck".....*Meyerbeer*.
Fantaisie, Violon, sur des Motifs de *Lucrezia Borgia*.
Mons. ST. LEON.....*St. Leon*.
Aria, Mlle. MOLTINI, "Al dolce guidami," Corno
Obligato, Signor PUZZI....(*Anna Bolena*)...*Donizetti*.
Duetto, Madame GRISI and Signor LABLACHE,
"Signorina intanta fretta" .. (*Don Pasquale*) .. *Donizetti*.
Aria, Madame PERSIANI, "Vedrò al fin".....*Vaccini*.
Grand Choral Fantasia (as performed at the Third
and Fifth Philharmonic Concert this season), Pianoforte,
Mrs. ANDERSON, the Solo Vocal Parts by Mesdames GRISI,
PERSIANI, MOLTINI, REITER BILDSTEIN, Mlle. PACINI,
Miss M. B. HAWES, Signori MARIO, LABLACHE,
FORNASARI, Herr STAUDIOL, and Mr. J. PARRY.
Beethoven.

Between the Parts,
Mr. JOHN PARRY will sing his New Song,
"The Accomplished Young Lady."

PART II.

Fantaisie Elegante, pour le Violoncelle,
exécuté par DE MUNCK.....*De Munch*.
Aria, Madame GRISI, "Dall' asilo nella pace".....*Costa*.
Duetto, Mlle. MOLTINI and Signor FORNASARI.
"Io t'amai".....(*I Normanni in Parigi*).....*Mercadante*.
Ballad, Miss MARIA B. HAWES,
"Oh, chide me not, my mother dear".....*M. B. Hawes*.
Aria, Signor MARIO, "Mignon".....*Beethoven*.
Swiss Airs, Madame REITER BILDSTEIN .. *Stockhausen*.
Terzetto, Madame PERSIANI, Mlle. MOLTINI, and
Mlle. PACINI, "Le faccio un inchino".....*Cimarosa*.
Duetto, Signor LABLACHE and Signor FORNASARI,
"Se fiato in corpo avete".....*Cimarosa*.
Finale Instrumental.....*Mozart*.

THE BAND

Will be numerous and complete in every department, selected from the
Philharmonic and Ancient Concerts, Opera Orchestras, and Her
Majesty's Private Band.

Conductor.....M. BENEDICT.

Leader.....Mr. LODER.

J. MALLETT, PRINTER, WARDOUR STREET, SOHO.

Illustration 3.1

Programme from Lucy Anderson's 'Grand Morning Concert', 26 May 1843, illustrating Puzzi's typical solo repertoire. (Reproduced from the Covert Collection)

8. Ibid., p. 218.

The wide variety of concerts in which Puzzi appeared as a soloist can be divided into two main types. Public concerts presented for the financial benefit of their organisers (most of whom were musicians) are the most visible. Any such undertakings can be loosely defined as benefit concerts.⁹ These took the form of various subscription, touring and chamber music concerts as well as the ubiquitous performances that the performers themselves referred to as 'benefits'. Private concerts where musicians were hired either directly or indirectly by a patron make up the second type of concert, which was the mainstay of a successful soloist's career. An examination of the main concerts from both categories in which Puzzi performed and the details of his participation follows.

The information for this section has been drawn from a variety of sources related to Puzzi's performances. These include concert programmes, handbills and other advertisements, musical periodicals, English daily newspapers, French and Italian papers and society papers such as the *Court Journal*. Details of concert venue, location, occasion, type, date and works performed have all been entered into a database, resulting in over 200 entries spanning from 1817 to 1856. The sheer volume of material, particularly with respect to periodicals, has made it impossible to search all relevant sources. Instead, a representative body of information has been compiled. Because concert programmes and handbills often provide the most extensive information about performers and repertoire, the foundation of the database has been a comprehensive survey of all significant archives and collections in England that contain these items. It has also been possible to search thoroughly the English

9. Joel Sachs, 'London: The Professionalization of Music', *Music and Society: The Early Romantic Era*, ed. Alexander Ringer (London, 1990), p. 206.

musical periodicals published from 1817 to 1860.¹⁰

PUBLIC MUSIC-MAKING

Subscription Concerts

Some of Puzzi's earliest engagements were performances at subscription concerts mounted by his colleagues. These concerts took on a variety of forms, each targeting a specific audience and reflecting the diversity of London's concert life. Puzzi's participation in a wide range of subscriptions illustrates the breadth of his solo career. During the early part of the 1820s, he frequently appeared as a soloist at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, playing in the Whitsun Eve subscriptions directed by Sir George Smart and in Henry Bishop's Lenten Oratorio Concerts. He also took part in similar concerts at Covent Garden. These large scale entertainments, often termed 'a grand selection of sacred, antient, and modern music', featured a lengthy programme of nationalistic and semi-sacred music interspersed with English songs, virtuoso instrumental works, and the occasional operatic selection.¹¹ The repertoire, time, and ticket price of these concerts reflects the fact that they were patronised by the largely lower-middle class audience that would have attended music theatre productions at these venues when they were in season. The chamber music concerts in which

10. There are various problems inherent in working with concert programmes and handbills. These include the printing of programmes for concerts that did not take place (although instances of newspaper reviews of concerts that did not occur are also known), their inability to reflect any last-minute changes in the programme that might have transpired (singers were notorious for cancelled engagements) and dependence upon the physical survival of these fragile documents. Puzzi lived during an era when musical periodicals flourished. The study of these somewhat compensates for the problems presented by programmes, but their coverage is often scant and intermittent. While it is not within the scope of this dissertation to undertake a complete newspaper survey for the forty-three years of Puzzi's career, daily papers are indispensable in offsetting the problems encountered in working with programmes and the musical press. Thus, they have been selectively consulted throughout the period spanned by Puzzi's career and selected years have been surveyed in-depth, in the manner of a 'core sample', to confirm that patterns emerging in the body of information amassed for the database are representative.

11. 'Whitsun-Eve concert' (London: Drury Lane, 29 May 1819), unnumbered concert programme, RCM PP.

Puzzi played and organised, which will be discussed later in this chapter, were also generally presented as subscription concerts.

Carte's 1843 subscription concert at the Bridge House Hotel located by London Bridge was a departure from Puzzi's usual West End engagements. Both the City location and list of patrons suggests that this concert was part of a growing interest in music by London's merchants and professionals. Puzzi would later tap this audience for his chamber music series. A number of subscription concerts catered to the more traditional aristocratic listener. Concerts such as the *matinées* mounted by Madame Delabarre in 1841, at which Puzzi performed a fantasia on Schubert melodies and a Beethoven quintet, drew upon the same patrons as benefit concerts.

It is impossible to estimate in how many subscriptions Puzzi would have played, but they most likely constituted a small percentage of his solo engagements early in his career. Although no figures exist, appearances at these concerts were probably not as profitable as his solo orchestral engagements and certainly not as lucrative as participation in private concerts. Subscriptions would have been most valuable to Puzzi for the opportunities they offered to build contacts with other musicians and served their importance largely in fostering professional patronage. In the 1830's, Puzzi's interest in playing in these concerts appears to have dwindled. By this point he had established himself as a leading soloist in benefit and private concerts and could afford to be selective, choosing to play at more exclusive and profitable concerts.

Provincial subscription series, like orchestral festivals, were highly dependent upon London musicians. Puzzi travelled to Manchester on at least two occasions to appear in a 'Gentleman's Concert', where he accompanied singers as an *obbligato* player and performed unspecified

solos. In Birmingham, he appeared at the twenty-first annual subscription of the 'Private Concerts'. Both the ticket price (comparable to that for Oratorio and Whitsun Eve concerts) and the programme of the 1838 'Great Musical Attraction' at the Assembly Rooms in Sherborne indicate that this concert was directed towards a less exclusive audience.

Concerts which were not undertaken as individual speculation were rare.¹² Charity fund-raising concerts such as the 1821 Grand Musical Festival to raise money for the rebuilding of Westminster Hospital and the 1844 Regent's Park concert 'in aid of the funds of the royal dispensary for diseases of the ear' were some of the few exceptions.¹³ Subscriptions were also mounted to benefit certain institutions. One of Puzzi's most visible contributions to the Royal Academy of Music was his appearance in the Royal Academic Concerts of 1826, both as a member of the orchestra and as a soloist. A similar series of concerts aided the Edinburgh Professional Society of Musicians in 1839. Puzzi would not have received fees for his performances at any of these concerts.

Chamber Concerts

A proliferation of chamber concert series appeared during the 'chamber music rage' of 1836 - 1842, beginning with Blagrove's Quartet Concerts, which were quickly followed by Mori and Lindley's Classical Concerts.¹⁴ These initial string quartet concerts gave rise to a series of performances that were centred around a variety of instruments, such as Moscheles's Pianoforte Soirées and Puzzi's Classical Concerts for Wind Instruments.

12. Sachs, ed. Ringer, p. 206.

13. 'Concert, In aid of the funds of the royal dispensary' (London, Regent's Park, 29 June 1844), unnumbered concert programme, Seguin scrapbook, RCM PP.

14. For detailed information about chamber music in London during this period, see Christina Bashford, 'Public Chamber-Music Concerts in London, 1835 - 50: Aspects of History, Repertory and Reception', Ph.D. diss. (University of London, 1996).

Although chamber music frequently occurred at the Philharmonic Society concerts and occasionally appeared on programmes at benefit concerts, these new series were the first to focus on this repertoire, providing a setting where it was not shoe-horned between overtures, symphonies and numerous vocal selections. While these concerts included appearances by the Italian opera singers, they were no longer the main pillar of the programme and the atmosphere of these performances was much more conducive to serious listening than the typical concerts attended by fashionable London. This new musical focus, combined with the concerts' placement on the periphery of the season, attracted a different audience, which included members of the rapidly expanding professional and business class and many professional musicians.

Puzzi was active as a performer in various chamber concert series. Occasionally, he appeared in his traditional role with singers as an obbligato player, but more often as a chamber player in works that required a horn. Solo instrumental performances were relatively rare at such concerts, although Puzzi's few appearances in this capacity are notable because the works he played marked a great departure from his usual opera-derived repertoire. At Blagrove's 4 May 1837 Benefit Quartet Concert, he played an arrangement of Corelli's Sonata No. 9 in F, a choice indicative of the emphasis on non-vocal music at these concerts.¹⁵ Puzzi's solo performances at chamber concerts also constituted his greatest contact with original horn music in a concert setting. The only documented instance of Puzzi performing any of the standard Classical horn repertoire that the present author has located occurs within this context. At

15. A later copy of Puzzi's Corelli trio sonata arrangement titled 'Corelli's No. 9' has been preserved in the Covert Collection and is notable for being one of the few non-vocally derived manuscripts from Puzzi's library that survives. See cat. no. 20 in the works catalogue in volume 2 of this dissertation.

Moscheles's second Pianoforte Soirée at the Hanover Square Rooms on 4 March 1837, Moscheles and Puzzi played the Beethoven Sonata for Piano and Horn, Op. 17. Puzzi's choice of repertoire on this instance was most likely dictated by Moscheles, who was an enthusiastic supporter of Beethoven and frequently invited virtuosi to perform 'serious' instrumental music at the Soirées.¹⁶

In the spring of 1838, Puzzi sought to capitalise on the growing popularity of chamber music concerts by producing his own series, the Classical Concerts for Wind Instruments. They were presented as a subscription series of three concerts during February and March. The principal players were Puzzi, Willman (clarinet), Sedlatzek (flute), Barret (oboe) and Baumann (bassoon), a quintet whose 'powers thus concentrated may perhaps be considered as unrivalled'.¹⁷ This group was augmented by additional horn (Rae), clarinet (Bowley) and bassoon (Godfrey) players and a double bass (Dragonetti) for larger *harmonie* works. Moscheles appeared at the second concert in Spohr's piano quintet. The concerts, which featured 'selections from the beautiful compositions of Krommer, Reicha, and other German writers of *Harmonie Musik* [*sic*]' were the only London performances during this period that were primarily devoted to chamber music for winds.¹⁸ While such works by Beethoven and Spohr were frequently heard at the Philharmonic Society concerts, reviews of the series record that the compositions of Krommer and Reicha were 'hitherto unknown specimens to the British public'.¹⁹ Reicha's quintets were a staple item at Puzzi's concerts and are a cornerstone of the wind quintet

16. Personal correspondence from Christina Bashford, 21 March 2000.

17. *Musical World*, vol. 8 no. 103 (1 March 1838): 145.

18. *Musical World*, vol. 9 no. 98 (26 June 1838): 57.

19. *Musical World*, vol. 8 no. 100 (9 February 1838): 89.

repertoire today. Performance of Reicha's Quintet in B-flat (no opus number specified) attracted special note:

The excellence of the scherzo in the opening Quintett particularly claimed attention, it is a rare exotic of delicate fragrance, and our thanks are due to those who have displayed so much taste and industry in transporting it to the English concert-room.²⁰

These concerts and the music they featured were a striking change from the 'grand miscellaneous' concerts focusing on operatic literature that were the mainstay of Puzzi's career as a performer. The introduction of many standard works in the chamber winds repertoire to English audiences was arguably Puzzi's most original contribution to London's musical scene. In many ways, the Classical Concerts for Wind Instruments were the most progressive of Puzzi's undertakings. The general nature, audience (including many 'eminent professors') and repertoire of these series are more indicative of the movement towards concerts favouring instrumental music performances in a serious listening environment that began to emerge during this period than of the decidedly aristocratic, Georgian flavour of the rest of Puzzi's career. These differences are evident in reviews of Puzzi's wind concerts:

The programme of this new species of performance is short; but each piece is a string of pearls . . . the little band of performers are encircled by their attentive auditors. . . The prolonged silence indicates the deepest interest.²¹

Unfortunately, the Classical Concerts for Wind Instruments survived for only one year. Critical complaints about the limitations of wind repertoire and tone colour reveal that listeners in London were not yet ready to

20. *Musical World*, vol. 8 no. 103 (1 March 1838): 146.

21. *Musical World*, vol. 8 no. 98 (26 Jan 1838): 49-50.

sustain a series of this type on a long term basis.²²

'Benefit' Concerts

The height of Puzzi's solo career coincided with the great popularity of benefit concerts during the 1820s and 1830s. Members of the aristocracy would be faced with the prospect of having to attend scores of benefits each year. By the end of the seventeenth century, 'the benefit system began to be regarded as a "tax on the nobility", with many of the top performers taking a benefit . . . as if by right'.²³ Indeed, Puzzi and his wife generally indulged in at least one annual benefit each throughout their London careers.

The lure of these concerts was irresistible to performers even though only a very small percentage realised any financial gain from them. The expense of mounting a benefit was formidable. Players depended on their colleagues to 'assist' gratuitously at each other's benefits, although it was not uncommon for celebrity instrumentalists occasionally to charge for their services.²⁴ Singers of the greatest celebrity that the benefi-
ciare could obtain were an expected feature of these concerts and were the determining factor in drawing a large audience. Indeed, it was commented that the key to the 'particularly' successful benefit concerts of 1827 was the presence of Madame Pasta, who 'in no one instance failed to

22. *Athenaeum*, no. 53 (10 February 1838): 107, cited by Bashford, p. 134. Chamber music for winds did continue to be performed in a more general context. It was a regular feature of John Ella's Musical Union concerts. At the 1 April 1845 concert, Puzzi performed in Onslow's Sextet in C minor, Op. 30, with Mrs. Anderson (piano), Ribas (flute), Lazarus (clarinet), Baumann (bassoon), and Casolani (double bass). This was Puzzi's only appearance at the Musical Union concerts. Henry Platt assumed Puzzi's place in subsequent concerts.

23. Simon McVeigh, *Concert Life in London from Mozart to Haydn* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 36. For further information on benefit concerts in London during this period, see Simon McVeigh 'The Benefit Concert in Nineteenth-Century London', *Nineteenth Century British Music Studies*, vol. 1, ed. Bennett Zon (Aldershot, 1999), pp. 242-266.

24. In 1829, Dragonetti charged £4 for playing at the benefit of singer D. Donizelli. (Fiona Palmer, *Domenico Dragonetti in England (1794 - 1846): The Career of a Double Bass Virtuoso* [Oxford, 1997], p. 194).

draw a large audience' at the benefits where she appeared.²⁵ However, unless a special relationship with the beneficiare existed, singers were almost always 'enormously paid' for singing 'the hackneyed things' that appeared with little variation on programmes throughout the season.²⁶ The *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review* readily identified this as one of the greater obstacles to mounting a successful benefit:

As the singers in estimation (and there are comparatively few,) grow into greater request, more difficulty attends the attempts of rising professors, and even of the really eminent, to assemble a band, and to make a benefit profitable.²⁷

Beyond this, the charges for publicising the concert and hiring rooms had to be met. In 1823, the *QMMR* estimated that a concert cost approximately £150 to £210 to produce:

Hence, it is only the professor whose reputation, connection, or musical promise can command numbers, that is really advantaged. Most, even of the second class, find their benefits a loss, and consequently these concerts would be fewer were it not that the desire of being known and the power of obliging and forming connections, are sufficient inducements to hazard the chance.²⁸

With his strong connection to singers and the negotiating power that his activities as an agent at the King's/Her Majesty's Theatre fostered and his resulting favour among the aristocracy, Puzzi was one of the small group of performers in a position to profit from benefits.

Puzzi's own benefits assume three distinct forms that reflect the phases of his musical career. In the earlier part of his career, from 1823 to 1833, they

25. *Harmonicon*, vol. 5 (1827): 147.

26. *Harmonicon*, vol. 7 (1829): 146.

27. *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review*, vol. 6 (1824): n.p..

28. *QMMR*, vol. 5 (1823): 251.

were typical benefit concerts presented by Puzzi (sometimes jointly with his wife) with the aid of leading orchestral colleagues and singers.²⁹ During this period, he was a regular performer in others' benefits. As Puzzi's involvement with the managers of the King's Theatre increased and he became more selective as a performer, opera benefits given for Puzzi by the management replaced his annual concerts. Since he was no longer directly drawing on the resources and favours of other players to support his concerts, there was a corresponding decrease in his participation in colleagues' benefits. Finally, from 1846 onwards, Giacinta's various benefit concerts became the family's main instrument of public appeal in this manner. By this point, Puzzi had largely retired from both his activities as a performer and those as an agent at the King's Theatre. Giacinta's concerts and teaching were now the musical focal point of the family. Puzzi's last publicised benefit concert, at which he did not perform, was held in 1855:

Signor Puzzi did not himself appear on this occasion, a circumstance much to be regretted, since the last time he played in public - some few months ago - he proved himself to be still in possession of the secret of bringing out a fine tone from his instrument.³⁰

The benefits Puzzi mounted in the 1820s and 1830s were generally recorded by the press and thus offer some insight into the entrepreneurial drive of his undertakings as a soloist. The singers who participated in Puzzi's benefits reflect his professional status and ability to make such engagements. This placed his concerts in the highest realm with regard to aristocratic and social appeal and was the basis for his success in an arena where so many failed. Grisi, Persiani, Garcia, Tamburini, Luigi Lablache,

29. It is probable that Puzzi took benefits before 1823, although no documentation has been found. His first known appearance in a benefit was at Miss Sharp's concert on 7 May 1818.

30. *Musical World*, vol. 33 no. 26 (30 June 1855): 418.

Rubini, Mario, Dobler, Ivanoff, F. Lablache, and Begrez were regular performers at Puzzi's benefits where 'all the opera corps assisted' and 'the entire strength of the Italian opera was assembled'.³¹ Instrumentalists are seldom mentioned in reviews of Puzzi's concert and no surviving programmes from these concerts have been found. Although the vocalists of the Italian opera were clearly the main focus of these concerts, Puzzi did appear in his instrumental colleagues' benefits and thus probably engaged their services at his concerts.³²

A survey of the press reviews of benefit concerts reveals that there was a hierarchy among these concerts and that the beneficiare took deliberate steps to effect a certain image and attract a specific audience. Through his choice of performers, repertoire, venue and ticket price, Puzzi fashioned benefits where the atmosphere was much like an aristocratic private concert. While venues such as the Hanover Square Rooms, Willis's Rooms, the Theatre Royal on Drury Lane and the concert room of the King's Theatre were popular locations for London benefits during this period, Puzzi frequently held his concerts in private homes. Lady Augusta Wentworth's mansion Connaught Place (4 June 1832), Mr. Mills's mansion Camelford House (24 May 1830) and the Countess Cornwallis's residence (14 June 1833) were all locations for these events. Other hosts included Sir George Warrender, prominent opera patron and supporter of the Royal Academy of Music (3 June 1829). Despite the fact that all of these concerts were benefits and tickets were sold, staging them in private homes raised the tone of the gathering and created the more exclusive atmosphere of a private concert. In this more intimate setting

31. Review of Puzzi's benefit in the *Morning Post* (29 June 1839): n.p..

32. Puzzi played in the benefits of numerous colleagues including those of Ries, Nicholson, Grotto, Mori, Hawes, Blagrove, Holmes (piano), Mrs. Anderson, and Mad. Dulcken.

guests approach the instrument or the singer -- lounge from room to room or on the staircases -- converse, and come or go at pleasure, and with far more ease than can be accomplished in public rooms. All these circumstances tend to withdraw most persons above the middle ranks from public concerts.³³

The *Harmonicon* reported that the evening at Connaught Place 'drew a very fashionable audience, and the whole partook more of the nature of an elegant private party than of a subscription concert'.³⁴

From 1829 onwards, more benefit concerts, including Giovanni and Giacinta Puzzi's, were held in the concert room of the King's Theatre. During this year, Theatre manager Pierre Laporte enacted his plan to increase the rentals of the 'decrepit small concert hall in the opera building' by stipulating that the opera singers of the King's Theatre could appear only in concerts held on the premises.³⁵ The actual enforcement of this ruling was erratic until Lumley joined the management as Laporte's assistant in 1836 (thus explaining Puzzi's ability to engage members of the Italian opera at benefits in private homes in the early 1830s). Joel Sachs notes that the ensuing crack-down led benefit and other concert givers to engage singers from outside the Theatre and concludes that this eventually resulted in movement away from Italian music and performers.³⁶ The pinch of Laporte's action was felt by players who depended on the aristocratic attendance that only these singers could ensure:

In order to get some of the opera-singers [for his benefit], Mr.

33. *QMMR*, vol. 7 (1825): 210. Although this account was written about the growing popularity of private concerts over public, it can be applied to the discussion of Puzzi's use of private venues and staging of benefits that were distinctly patterned along the lines of private concerts.

34. *Harmonicon*, vol. 10 (1832): 154.

35. Sachs, ed. Ringer, p. 222.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 223.

Vaughan was obliged to change his locale, and by this means obtained Madlle. Sontag, Mad. Malibran, and Signor Donizelli.³⁷

Since Italian opera was so central to the careers of Giovanni and Giacinta Puzzi and to the interests of their aristocratic patrons, they obliged the management and held nearly all their subsequent benefits at the King's Theatre.

Even when such restraints were imposed on a performer's choice of venue, ticket price was a powerful means of ensuring the exclusivity of one's benefit if the performer's reputation was such that he could command a steep admission price without losing his audience. In its review of Puzzi's 3 June 1825 concert, the *Harmonicon* exclaimed 'Tickets one guinea each!'.³⁸ The punctuation suggests that this was particularly exorbitant. This was not an unheard of price for a benefit concert during this period, although the 'guinea concert' not infrequently drew criticism in contemporary accounts and in some cases it was noted that it did discourage listeners from attending. Reminiscing about the quality and value that benefit concerts 'in days gone by' represented, Ella appends a programme from pianist Edward Schulz's 7 June 1836 benefit where performers included Puzzi, Malibran, Tamburini, Rubini, and Lablache.³⁹ Ella cites 10s.6d. as the price of admission to the concert. The *Quarterly Music Magazine and Review* bemoans the half-guinea price charged by benefit givers in 1823 as 'extravagant'.⁴⁰ In 1825, the pianist Miss Szymanowska gave a benefit where 'Many of the Royal Family were

37. *Harmonicon*, vol. 7 (1829): 146.

38. *Harmonicon*, vol. 3 (1825): 165.

39. John Ella, *Musical Sketches Abroad and at Home* (London, 1869), pp. 140-141.

40. *QMMR*, vol. 5 (1823): 251.

present but the company was not particularly numerous, although of a high class, for guinea admissions rather deter visitors'.⁴¹ A survey of Puzzi benefit reviews included in the *Harmonicon* from 1823 - 1833 indicates that one guinea was the standard price for a ticket to his concerts and that the rooms were well filled, sometimes to an 'overflow'.⁴²

The repertoire, performers, venues and ticket prices of Puzzi's benefits indicate that these concerts were in the highest stratum of prestige and exclusivity among benefits. Puzzi succeeded in making these concerts work for him by modelling his benefits after private concerts, thus creating an atmosphere desirable to the most aristocratic patron, who could and would expect to pay guinea ticket prices. Success at this level required the clout and connections that a figure like Puzzi possessed -- elements that were generally in place before the benefit was staged rather than the result of these concerts, as many performers hoped.

PRIVATE MUSIC MAKING

Private concerts

The beginning of Puzzi's prime years as a soloist coincided with the resurgence of popularity of the private concerts in the 1820s. During this period aristocratic support of public concerts dwindled as patrons chose to mount lavish concerts in their homes. This can be interpreted as a reticence to mingle with the newly emerging and moneyed professional class that now attended public musical events and a desire to schedule concerts at hours which would not interfere with aristocratic dining and social schedules (it was not uncommon for private concerts to commence

41. *Harmonicon*, vol. 5 (1827): 147.

42. *Harmonicon*, vol. 6 (1828): 168.

after 10.00 in the evening).⁴³

Private concerts were often mounted as a display of wealth, and much like dinner parties, they were given amongst each other 'in rivalry or return'.⁴⁴ The programmes, nearly identical to benefit concerts, seldom varied from concert to concert and critics and performers often complained of the poor quality of music making. The following description is a typical view of the function of the private concert:

The donor looks to find his reward, not in the pleasure his friends receive from the music, but in the commendation which attends the large cost and the extended number of his party - the size and magnificence of his rooms, the supper, the power to purchase the presence of the Pasta, or to concentrate "all the talent" [of the Italian opera], and lastly, the paragraph in the Morning Paper.⁴⁵

As this passage indicates, the private concerts revival also coincided with the height of the popularity of foreign musicians:

It forms a curious feature of inquiry into this department of music, that if you ask some of the English professors, they assure you private parties were never less frequent; if you address the question to the foreign artist, he says they never were so general.⁴⁶

Puzzi was in an ideal position to profit from both of these trends and to capitalise on his aristocratic appeal and strong links to the opera, making him a fixture at private concerts.⁴⁷

Private concerts were generally the most sought-after engagements

43. QMMR, vol. 7 (1825): 210. For an in-depth account of the revival of private concerts during the 1820s and its effect on the music profession, see Rohr, p. 95.

44. QMMR, vol. 6 (1824): 232.

45. QMMR, vol. 7 (1824): 297. The 'Morning Paper' no doubt refers to the *Morning Post*.

46. QMMR, vol. 5 (1823): 251.

47. Not surprisingly, disapproval of foreign musicians garnering so much money from the aristocracy and their apparent neglect of British musicians was often voiced in musical periodicals, prompting defenses of popular foreign performers that justified their entitlement to English patronage. In articulating the reasons for the success of the Puzzi's' June 1839 benefit concert, the reviewer writes: 'Another claim on the patronage of amateurs, which is always admitted to be valid, is that they [Giovanni and Giacinta Puzzi] may be considered as thoroughly naturalised in this country.' (*Morning Post* [29 June 1839]: n.p.).

by musicians. The *QMMR* reported that during the 1824 season, Rossini's 'public obligations have been postponed to his private obligations'.⁴⁸ This is readily understandable in light of the fifty guinea fee he commanded for his services as a conductor and accompanist and an appearance by his wife Signora Colbran-Rossini.⁴⁹ It was estimated that vocalists cost the host at least 100 to 120 guineas per concert, with principal singers demanding at least 25 guineas and lesser female singers generally receiving 5 to 10 guineas.⁵⁰ Some singers were engaged at these fees up to three times a week from February to July and Sachs writes that 'favoured' performers played at up to three parties a night.⁵¹

Few comparable figures exist for instrumental performers, although Palmer states that Dragonetti received 'astronomical fees' for playing at private concerts.⁵² Moscheles recorded fees paid to violinists at Madame Rothschild's 1829 private concert: DeBeriot and Mori received five and seven pounds respectively. Moscheles collected twenty pounds to conduct, perform at and 'manage' the concert.⁵³ It is reasonable to estimate that Puzzi received at least five pounds per engagement for his services as a performer and certainly more if he was providing singers or overseeing the event as well.

Although instrumentalists would not have been able to command fees in the same range as singers, private concerts clearly provided

48. *QMMR*, vol. 6 (1824): 225.

49. *Ibid.*

50. *Ibid.*, p. 232.

51. *QMMR*, vol. 7 (1825): 300; Sachs, ed. Ringer, p. 219.

52. Palmer, p. 103.

53. Charlotte Moscheles, ed., *Life of Moscheles, with Selections from his Diaries and Correspondence*, trans. A.D. Coleridge, vol. 1 (London, 1873), p. 222.

substantial earning potential for the most elite of them. Puzzi's unique alliance with singers and his celebrity as a virtuoso performer served him particularly well. His financial success on the private concert circuit is entertainingly demonstrated in an 1842 letter from Rossini to Costa demanding that Costa help Rossini's clarinettist friend Domenico Liverani find an entrée into the private concert circuit:

Now you have another duty to fulfil, and that is to help him earn some of the *Ghinee*. . . I demand . . . that you impose him upon those Noble Milords in their private musical Entertainments, called Concerts, the sort in which Puzzi and Dragonetti take part . . . Let the money come in.⁵⁴

Whilst the rise of private concerts captured the attention of the musical press, which provided general descriptions of these concerts, their fundamentally private nature means that they were much more hidden from critical and public view than benefit concerts. Therefore, details about specific private concerts is comparatively rare; few accounts were published and only a limited number of concert programmes survives. The most exclusive events generated the smallest amount of tangible evidence.

Direct information about Puzzi's participation in large, organised private concerts is more readily available and is offered by a small number of surviving programmes. Sir Richard and Lady Hunter's concert on 17 May 1839 provides a representative sample of repertoire (see illustration 3.2). Similar programmes were printed in the *QMMR* in an 1823 feature on private concerts to illustrate that 'music is now as highly if not as generally cultivated as literature and design by private individuals' although the level of 'intellectual reach, dignity, and polish' that the

54. Herbert Weinstock, *Rossini: A Biography* (London, 1968), pp. 227-228.

adjoined programmes represent is arguable.⁵⁵

FRIDAY, MAY 17th, 1839.

Prima Parte.

TERZETTINO, "*Angiol di pace*,"
Made ALBERTAZZI, Madlle DE RIVIERE, e
Sig. MARRAS, - (*Beatrice Tenda*) Bellini.

FANTASIA, from "*Lucia di Lammermoor*,"
Corno Obligato, Sig. PUZZI,

ARIA, "*Liete voci*,"
Sig. TAMBURINI, - - (*Briganti*) Mercadante.

DUETTO, "*Da che tornasti*,"
Made ALBERTAZZI e Sig. MARRAS,
(*Roberto D' Ecreux*) Donizetti.

CANZONETTA, "*Nizza*," Madlle DE RIVIERE, Rossini.

BARCAROLA, "*Ah! se tu fossi meco*,"
Sig. MARRAS; Corno Obligato, Sig. PUZZI, Marras.

RONDO, "*Quanti affetti*,"
Made ALBERTAZZI, (*Donna del Lago*) Rossini.

QUARTETTO, "*Ritiamo, cantiamo*,"
Made ALBERTAZZI, Madlle DE RIVIERE,
Sigri MARRAS e TAMBURINI, - - - Rossini.

Seconda Parte.

DUETTO, "*Di capricci*,"
Madlle DE RIVIERE e Sig. TAMBURINI,
(*Corradino*) Rossini.

ROMANZETTA, "*Il caro ben!*"
Made ALBERTAZZI, - - - - Marras.

DUETTO, "*Dove vai*,"
Sigri MARRAS e TAMBURINI, (*William Tell*) Rossini.

DUETTO, "*Deh, con te*,"
Made ALBERTAZZI e Madlle DE RIVIERE,
(*Norma*) Bellini.

IL POSTIGLIONE, Sig. TAMBURINI;
Corno Obligato, Sig. PUZZI, - - - Balfe.

"*Nuit d' Eté à Pausilippe*,"
Madlle DE RIVIERE e Sig. MARRAS, - Donizetti.

Piano-Forte, - - Sig. MARRAS.

Printed by T. Brettell, Rupert Street, Haymarket.

Sir Richard and Lady Hunter entertained at dinner on Friday last, the 17th inst., at their residence in Hill-street, the Earl and Countess of Surrey, Lord Edward Howard, Viscount Combermere, Lord and Lady Sondes, Lord and Lady Marcus Hill, the Right Hon. Sir William Fremantle, Miss Hervey, &c.; and, in the evening her Ladyship had a concert, at which Mesdames Albertazzi and De Riviere, Signori Tamburini, Marras, and Puzzi assisted.

Illustration 3.2

Programme from a private concert given by Sir Richard and Lady Hunter and a review of the concert in an unidentified newspaper clipping that has been preserved with the programme. (Reproduced by kind permission of the Department of Portraits and Performance History, Royal College of Music)

55. QMMR, vol. 5 (1823): 252-253.

Puzzi played a selection of untitled fantasias and accompanied as an obbligato player in concerts on 2 May 1823 (at Devonshire House), 17 April 1823, 9 May 1823 and 29 May 1823 (all at undisclosed locations). Five sample programmes were printed in the *QMMR*. Puzzi's name appears on all but one concert, held in the 'City of London', possibly indicating a preference for more aristocratic hosts and locations. At all these concerts, Puzzi's selection of repertoire is identical to his selections at benefits.

More intimate private concerts often called upon Puzzi's skills as an accompanist on the horn not only for celebrated singers, but also for musically inclined members of the aristocratic audience. At the Marchioness of Normandy's 'grand concert' Puzzi accompanied Lady Williamson, Lady Barrington, Rubini and Lablache in a performance of the *preghiera* 'Dal tuo stellato soglio' from Rossini's *Mosè in Egitto*.⁵⁶ This is a noteworthy departure from the benefit concert or even the more formal private concerts, where rules of decorum prohibited aristocratic amateurs from performing in front of all but the most intimate company. Aristocratic display of musical prowess was not so private that it could not be shared with the public in the *Morning Post* concert reviews, however. The presence of these ensemble works on the programme reflects a highly exclusive setting that allowed for this type of audience participation and accounted for the large amount of obbligato choral accompanying that Puzzi did at private concerts. In some instances, this was his sole function as a performer on the programme.⁵⁷ It is unlikely that Puzzi would have been engaged only to perform in this non-essential capacity, indicating that

56. *Morning Post* (2 June 1840): n.p..

57. The 'Grand Fête' held by the Duke and Duchess of Beaufort in the summer of 1840 is one such example. At this concert Puzzi accompanied Rubini, Mario, Tamburini, Lablache, Grisi and an aristocratic chorus in selections from Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* and *Semiramide* (*Morning Post* [4 July 1840]: n.p.).

he was probably also present as a fixer and overseer for the concert.

Much of the music-making among the aristocracy assumed the form of more intimate and prolonged musical gatherings at patrons' homes. One such example is the musical week hosted by the Duke of Wellington at Strathfieldsaye (see p. 84). The most exclusive engagements were of the type that Lady Shelley records in her diary. Her reminiscences recount that Puzzi and his wife were visitors to her house in 1832: 'Signor and Madame Puzzi are now here, so we talk, and make music all the evening!' (Lady Shelley played the harp).⁵⁸ Of such gatherings, Ella wrote 'There is more got out of a musician in one day in the country than during a whole season of bustle and excitement in London'.⁵⁹

While anecdotal accounts and a limited selection of programmes and newspaper reviews provide specific examples, indicators of Puzzi's place in London's music scene and the nature of his career are far more revealing in illustrating the extent of his involvement in the private concert circuit. It is significant that in summarising his life in an obituary, the *Athenaeum* states that 'Puzzi for years had almost the monopoly of the nobility's private concerts'.⁶⁰

The wide range of concerts examined in this survey of Puzzi's activities as a soloist show that solo playing was a main component of his career. To this end, Puzzi explored nearly all the facets of the upper echelons of London's musical life and was a prominent participant in an array of concerts, providing they were profitable. A logical sequence of

58. Richard Edgecumbe, ed., *The Diary of Frances Lady Shelley 1818 - 1878* (London, 1913), p. 217.

59. Ella, p. 42, cited by Palmer, p. 202.

60. *Athenaeum*, no. 2524 (11 March 1876): 371.

involvement that generally progresses from popular subscription concerts to the elite levels of music-making in aristocratic circles reflects the increase of Puzzi's status and the development of his career to cater for an exclusive clientele. Throughout this progression, his instinctive understanding of musical society is evident in the high degree of enterprise he exercised in marketing himself and his concerts. Despite the suggestions of some accounts, Puzzi did not abandon his activities as a performer when he formally assumed his position as an agent for the King's Theatre in 1827.⁶¹ Instead, he utilised his connections and power as an agent and impresario to bolster his activities as a soloist and concert giver. This was the most vital feature of Puzzi's solo career and the key to his unrivalled success on the concert platform.

61. See Willert Beale [Walter Maynard], *The Light of Other Days Seen Through the Wrong End of an Opera Glass* (London, 1890), p. 75; and Adam Carse, *The Orchestra from Beethoven to Berlioz* (Cambridge, 1948), p. 178.

IV

'Il maestro on the horn':¹ The playing of Giovanni Puzzi

Mr. Puzzi's performance is not less beautiful than popular. It is impossible to conceive any thing more perfect, whether the tone, the execution, or the general expression be considered.²

Distinguishing elements of the horn playing environment during Puzzi's career -- Attributes of Puzzi's playing -- Puzzi's influence on horn playing in England.



Puzzi's technical and musical mastery was clearly as remarkable as the popularity won by his carefully cultivated relationships with the aristocracy, his association with singers and his exploitation of the Italian opera repertoire and was recognised as a phenomenon in its own right. While the names of Puzzi's contemporaries periodically appear in the musical press, no other player consistently garnered such lavish and exultant praise. However, such encomiums leave us to ascertain what was so exceptional about his playing. Through a study of Puzzi's origins and environment as a performer, his choice of instruments, his music and the scant amount of information provided by critical accounts, this chapter will explore the defining elements and hallmarks of Puzzi's 'perfect' playing and any imprint that it left on horn performance in England.³

1. This title was bestowed upon Puzzi by a critic in the following review: *Musical World*, vol. 14 no. 243 (17 September 1840): 173.

2. *Quarterly Review and Musical Magazine*, vol. 5 (1823): 266.

3. Ibid.

DISTINGUISHING ELEMENTS OF THE HORN PLAYING ENVIRONMENT DURING PUZZI'S CAREER

Puzzi's origins as a player

Establishing Puzzi's position in the horn playing continuum and examining his musical environment are vital to understanding how he arrived at his position as the leading exponent of the French school of hand horn playing in England and what his defining traits as a player were. Puzzi lived during an era of change and diverging traditions in the horn playing world and the course of his career brought him into contact with many potential influences and different approaches to the instrument. The first impress on his playing can clearly be traced to the original Austro-Bohemian tradition that gave birth to the horn as a musical instrument. Innovations in horn design and playing technique pioneered by Austro-Bohemian players gradually separated the musical horn from its hunting forbears and made it the most sophisticated and popular brass instrument of the Classical and early Romantic eras. The propagation of hand stopping was the single most important contribution of the Austro-Bohemian school to the musical development of the horn. By placing a hand in the throat of the horn's bell and closing it off to varying degrees, these players discovered that the open notes of the harmonic series could be altered and that a chromatic scale could now be produced from the third harmonic upwards (see illustrations 4.1 and 4.2). This advance greatly extended the possibilities that the horn offered to composers and players, particularly in the middle and lower register of the instrument, where it had previously been largely confined to the notes of the tonic triad. Anton Hampl and Jean-Joseph Rodolphe were the pioneers in applying this technique to the horn in the 1750s.

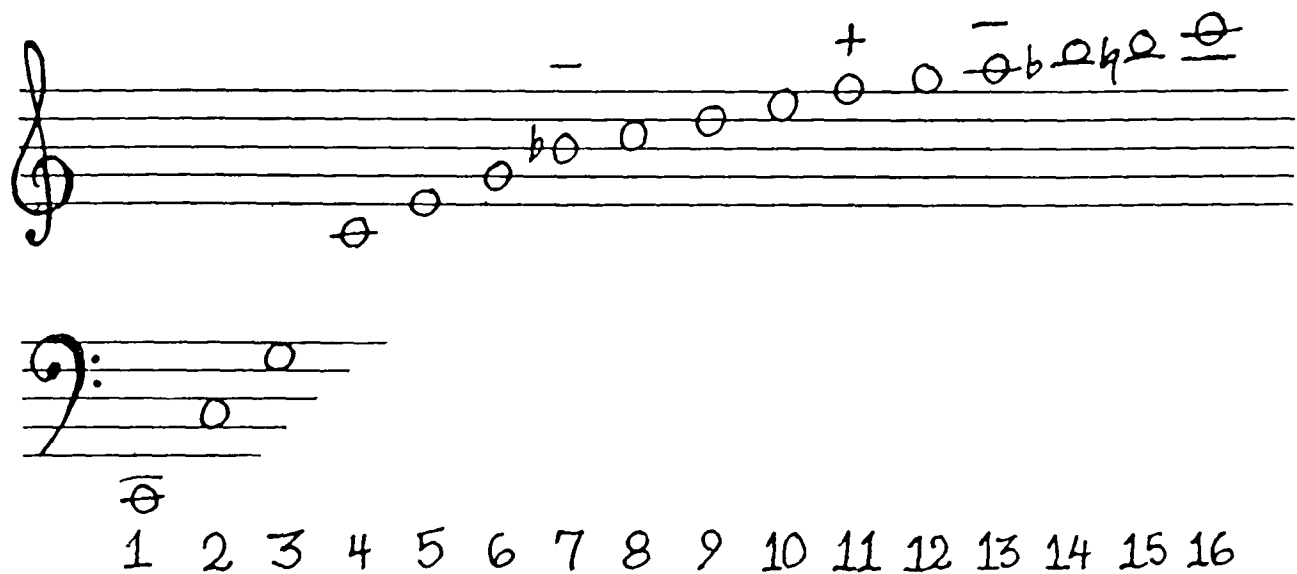


Illustration 4.1

The natural harmonic series. The tendencies of harmonics that are out of tune with accepted temperaments are indicated above the notes.

GAMME ENHARMONIQUE .

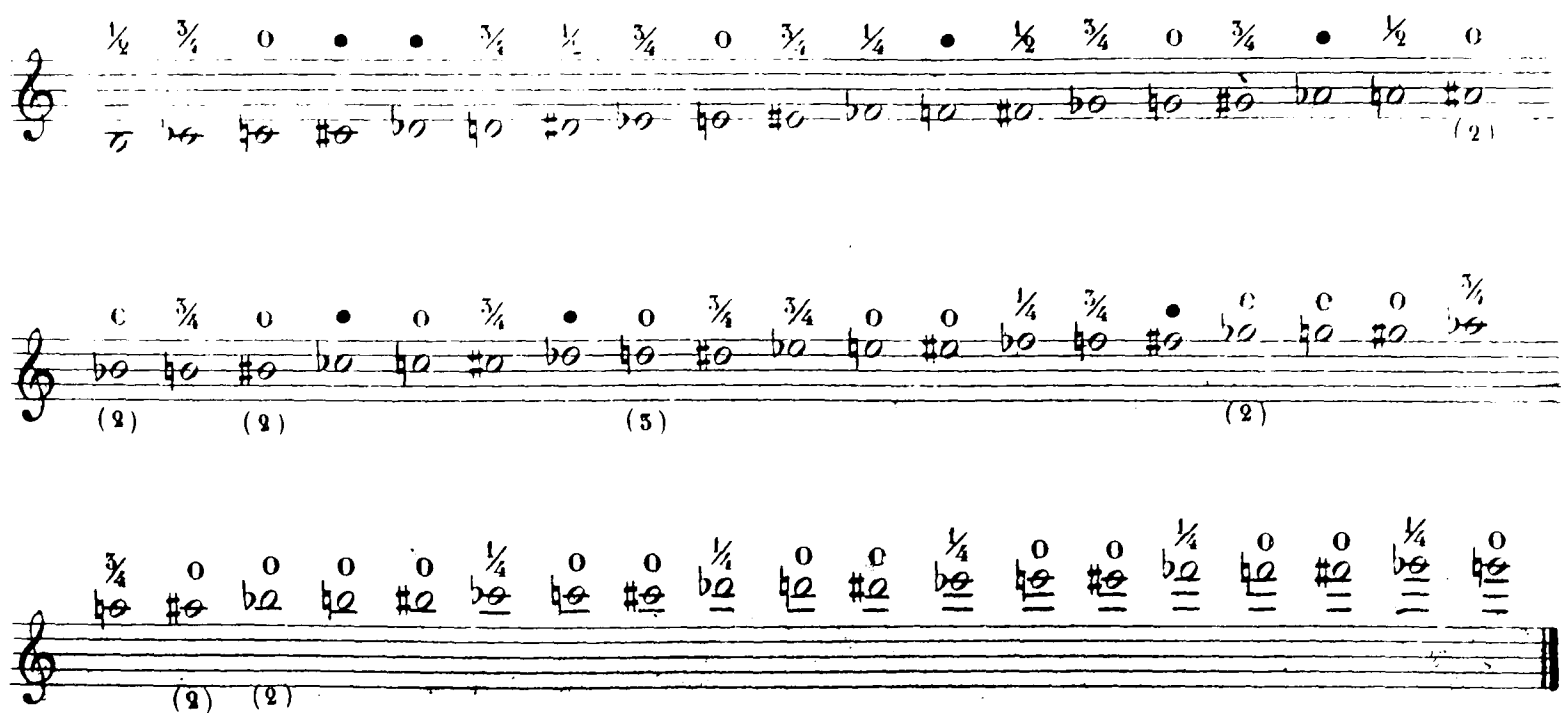


Illustration 4.2

Table of hand positions from Jacques-François Gallay, *Méthode pour le cor* (Paris, n.d. [c.1845]), p. 13. The degrees by which the hand closes off the throat of the bell are indicated by fractions. '•' denotes complete closure and 'o' the normal open hand position.

There is much confusion as to when, or even on what instrument, hand stopping was first implemented.⁴ The zenith of the Austro-Bohemian school of horn playing was reached just prior to Puzzi's birth in 1792. Its leading figures included Giovanni Punto (Jan Václav Stich), the famed duettists Johann Palsa and Carl Türrschmidt, and Ignaz Leutgeb, for whom Mozart wrote his horn concertos. These players and their successors travelled and taught widely, spawning a number of derivative schools.⁵

Political links between the Austro-Bohemian empire and Italy facilitated the spread of Bohemian horn playing in Italy.⁶ Luigi Belloli was 'the first Italian exponent of the Bohemian hand horn tradition' and is widely credited with having been Puzzi's teacher.⁷ Belloli studied with Punto, unquestionably the most famous player of the hand horn, and took up the position of principal horn in the orchestra of the Duke of Parma in 1790. He also played in the orchestra at La Scala and was made Professor of Horn at the Milan Conservatory in 1812. During this period, Puzzi was residing in Parma and rapidly gaining renown as a soloist. He was said to have played in the 'Musica di Camera' or 'Cappella' of the Grand Duchesse Maria Louise of Parma in his 'young days'.⁸ Pougin also records that Puzzi's talents were manifest at an early age and were exhibited on tours of

4. Notions that hand stopping was 'invented' by a single player are erroneous. See Reginald Morley-Pegge, *The French Horn: Some Notes on the Evolution of the Instrument and Its Technique*, 2nd. edn. (London, 1973), p. 87.

5. For an in-depth study of the horn's origins as a musical instrument and the Austro-Bohemian tradition, see Horace Fitzpatrick, *The Horn and Horn-playing and the Austro-Bohemian Tradition 1680 - 1830* (Oxford, 1970).

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 190-191.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 191.

8. Generale Vittorio Elia to Mr. Clifford Smith, 6 September 1926, nominal file 'Elia, Vittorio, Generale', Victoria and Albert Museum.

the principal cities of the continent.⁹ While no primary source material documenting Puzzi's studies with Belloli has been located, the geographical proximity and high profile of both players certainly would have brought them into contact and the juxtaposition of their age and rank would have suggested Belloli as a mentor for Puzzi. In 1823, in his *Méthode de cor-alto et cor-basse*, Dauprat records that Puzzi was one of Belloli's pupils.¹⁰ The grounds for such a relationship are further substantiated by the fact that Puzzi often performed solos written for him by Belloli. Among the various horn studies and solos that Belloli is known to have composed, at least two concertos were dedicated to Puzzi and three concertos were found in Puzzi's music library in 1970. These works are described in the 1979 catalogue of London music dealer Herman Baron.¹¹ The inscriptions of two of these works indicate that they were part of Puzzi's repertoire during the period in which he resided in Paris and was associated with various opera theatre orchestras. He also frequently performed Belloli concertos in London. Through this link with Belloli and his teacher Punto, Puzzi was an immediate heir of hand horn playing's founding school.

Puzzi became associated with hand horn playing's most enduring school when he settled in Paris. The earliest known specific mention of a

9. Arthur Pougin, 'Puzzi, Giovanni', *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens et Biographie Générale de la Musique: Supplément et Complément* (Paris, 1878).

10. Louis-François Dauprat, *Method for Cor Alto and Cor Basse*, tr. and ed. Viola Roth (Bloomington, 1994), p. 362. When referring to this edition, page numbers cited are those given by Roth in square brackets at the bottom of the pages of her translation of Dauprat's *Method*.

11. Works bearing the inscriptions 'Concerto de cor, composé par Belloli, exécuté pour la première fois au grand concert du Theatre Favart l'anne 1814, sous la direction de Madame Catalani, par Giovanni Puzzi' (horn in F) and 'Concerto per corno da caccia del L. Belloli in fa minore' (no date) are recorded as having been purchased by a collector in Berne. A work titled 'Arie con varie ni avec un adagio pour introduction e polacca' (Paris 1813, horn in E) was sold to the Geneva Conservatoire in 1979.

concert places him there in 1812.¹² Anecdotal accounts suggest that he took up residence in the city at a much earlier date:

Puzzi, as quite a lad in Paris, had been brought under the notice of Napoleon Bonaparte by Paen, [Paer] the composer. He was immediately given a post in the Emperor's private band [the *Chapelle Musique*], which he held until Napoleon's fall. He first entered the band whilst Josephine was still Empress, and he used to say that the difference in the feelings of his two consorts towards Napoleon was clearly obvious to the more casual observer, Marie Louise being at no pains to conceal her dislike.¹³

Marie Louise became Napoléon's consort in 1809 when his childless marriage to Josephine was dissolved. Ferdinando Paer was appointed as *Maître de Chapelle* by Napoléon in 1807. It seems logical that Puzzi would have been appointed at some time during the period embraced by Paer's arrival in the court and Josephine's departure.¹⁴ His involvement in prima donna Angelica Catalani's concerts and subsequent appointment as principal horn at the *Théâtre Italien* in 1815 is well documented:

The reputation that the Parmesan Giovanni Puzzi merits has been acquired in Paris by playing in the concerts that the celebrated Catalani gave this past month of August in the *Théâtre Favart*. She has placed him in the first class of artists in that capital. He was therefore named to play solo horn at the new *Théâtre Italien* from 7

12. This takes the form of an inscription written by Puzzi on the cover of his arrangement of Peter von Winter's cavatina 'Paga fui' from *Il ratto di Proserpina*, which states that he performed the aria with Madame Grassini at a 'concerto di corte' held at the Tuileries in 1812. See cat. no. 65.

13. Tina Whitaker, *Sicily and England: Political and Social Reminiscences 1848 - 1870* (London, 1907), pp. 217-218.

14. Other sources also refer to Puzzi's association with Paer. See Gaspare Nello Vetro, *Dizionario della musica e dei musicisti dei territori del ducato di Parma e Piacenza*, <http://www.biblcom.unipr.it/dm/1827.htm>. It is likely that their relationship developed in Parma, where Paer was *Maestro di capella* before he departed for Paris. Paer's father played horn in the Parma court theatre orchestra after 1788, providing another point of possible contact between Puzzi and Paer.

September to the first of the present October.¹⁵

Puzzi's tenure in Paris placed him in the company of an exceptional group of players. His contemporaries included luminaries such as Frédéric Duvernoy, Louis-François Dauprat, and Othon-Joseph Vandebroek at the *Académie Royale de Musique*, and Jean-Baptiste Mengal and P.-L. Colin among others at the Paris theatres.¹⁶ Duvernoy and Heinrich Domnich both played in Napoléon's *Chapelle Musique*.¹⁷ A printed score of Dauprat's Sextour No. 1, in which Puzzi has written the names of the players in a performance of the work bears testimony to the illustrious talent assembled in Paris during Puzzi's residency. The performers were as follows: 1. Mengal, 2. Eduard-Constantin Lewy, 3. Collin *aîné*, 4. Petit, 5. Collin *jeune*, 6. Dauprat.¹⁸ Among these men are the names of those who, through their teaching at the Paris Conservatoire and performances in the city's orchestras, propagated a thriving culture of hand horn playing and building, and sustained France as the longest-lived bastion of the hand

15. La reputazione che il parmigiano Giovanni Puzzi si è meritatamente acquistata a Parigi suonando nei concerti che la celebre Catalani diede nello scorso mese di agosto al Teatro Favart, lo ha posto nella classe dei primi artisti di quella capitale. Egli perciò fu nominato il 7 settembre I corno di caccia per esequire gli a solo nel Nuovo Teatro Italiano, che dovrà aprirsi ai primi del corrente ottobre (*Gazzetta di Milano* [21 October 1815]: n.p., tr. E.B. Strauchen). *Corno di caccia* is the generic Italian term for the natural horn. *Théâtre Italien* refers to the opera productions that took place at *L'Odéon* from 1808 to 1815 and at the *Salle Favart* from 1815 - 1818. From 1812 to 1818 Paer was the musical director of the *Théâtre Italien* -- another link between Paer and Puzzi.

16. These names are all drawn from the *Annuaire dramatique, ou étrennes théâtrales* 1816 (Paris, 1816), pp. 75-90. Orchestral personnel for four major and six minor orchestras are listed in this volume. In contrast to London, the sections of each orchestra are generally made up of different horn players. There was not a fixed group of 'elite players' that travelled from orchestra to orchestra.

17. Morley-Pegge, p. 155-156.

18. Louis-François Dauprat, Sextour no. 1, *Partition des trios, quatuors et sextours pour cors en différens tons* (Paris, n.d.). Score held in the special editions reserve at the University of London Library, Senate House. The performance probably occurred prior to or during 1815. This date is posited because of the presence of Lewy in the ensemble, who departed for Switzerland after 1815 (See Morley-Pegge, p. 163).

horn.

Duvernoy and Dauprat were both teaching at the Conservatoire while Puzzi was in Paris and would have been important sources of influence.¹⁹ As a soloist, Duvernoy refined the *cor-mixte* genre to a high level and enjoyed a great deal of artistic success. His *Méthode pour le cor* focused on the refinements of this genre of playing -- with which Puzzi is often associated -- and was the most innovative tutor for the horn that had been written when it was first published in 1803. Although the hand horn continued to be taught at the Conservatoire for at least fifty years after Dauprat's retirement in 1842, his compositions, teaching and writing represent the pinnacle of the French hand horn school. His *Méthode de cor-alto et cor-basse*, published in 1824, is the most compendious and masterfully written instructional treatise for the hand horn and has yet to be surpassed in breadth by a modern tutor for the horn. It is remarkable for the quality and the insight of both the musical content and the text, which would comprise a significant contribution on its own. The magnitude of Dauprat's *Méthode* places it alongside oeuvres such as Quantz's *Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen* and Leopold Mozart's violin tutor. No evidence thus far has been found to indicate that Puzzi undertook a formal programme of study with any of these players as a pupil at the Conservatoire, although it is possible that he may have received tuition from them on an informal basis.²⁰ In performing beside these players in the *Chapelle Musique* and in theatre orchestras, the conventions and preferences of the French school of horn playing would

19. Biographical information about these players has been drawn from Morley-Pegge, pp. 155-160.

20. In addition to the biographical material cited in the bibliography of the dissertation, the present author has also consulted the tables and records reproduced in Constant Pierre, *Le Conservatoire National de Musique et de Déclamation: documents historiques et administratifs* (Paris, 1900).

have been ingrained in Puzzi's playing.

Although an unbroken French tradition of horn teaching and playing separate from the Austro-Bohemian players who brought musical horn playing to France in the 1750s cannot strictly be said to have commenced until Dauprat's 1817 appointment as senior professor of horn at the Paris Conservatoire, distinctly French elements of horn design that would have also affected playing technique had begun to appear before the end of the eighteenth century.²¹ In determining the origins of the characteristics of Puzzi's playing and in ascertaining his place in the development of horn playing in the nineteenth century, it is important to establish the main traits of the French school of horn playing and also to consider developments that were occurring simultaneously in the Austro-Bohemian school.

The French and Austro-Bohemian schools of horn playing during Puzzi's career.

By the 1770s, the Raoux family, then the leading horn makers in Paris, were building instruments that Fitzpatrick describes as being 'of definitively French design'.²² These differed most markedly from contemporary Austro-Bohemian instruments in the diameter of the horn's bell throat and in the proportions of the bell flare. The overall construction of the bell segment of a typical French natural horn is narrower than that of the Bohemian horn. This is particularly evident in the bell throat. In addition, the bell flare extends outwards to the rim much less abruptly than in typical Bohemian examples, sustaining a gradual widening throughout. These differences are clear to the eye when

21. Fitzpatrick, pp. 189-190.

22. Ibid.

the bell profiles of the two types of instrument are compared (see illustration 4.3).

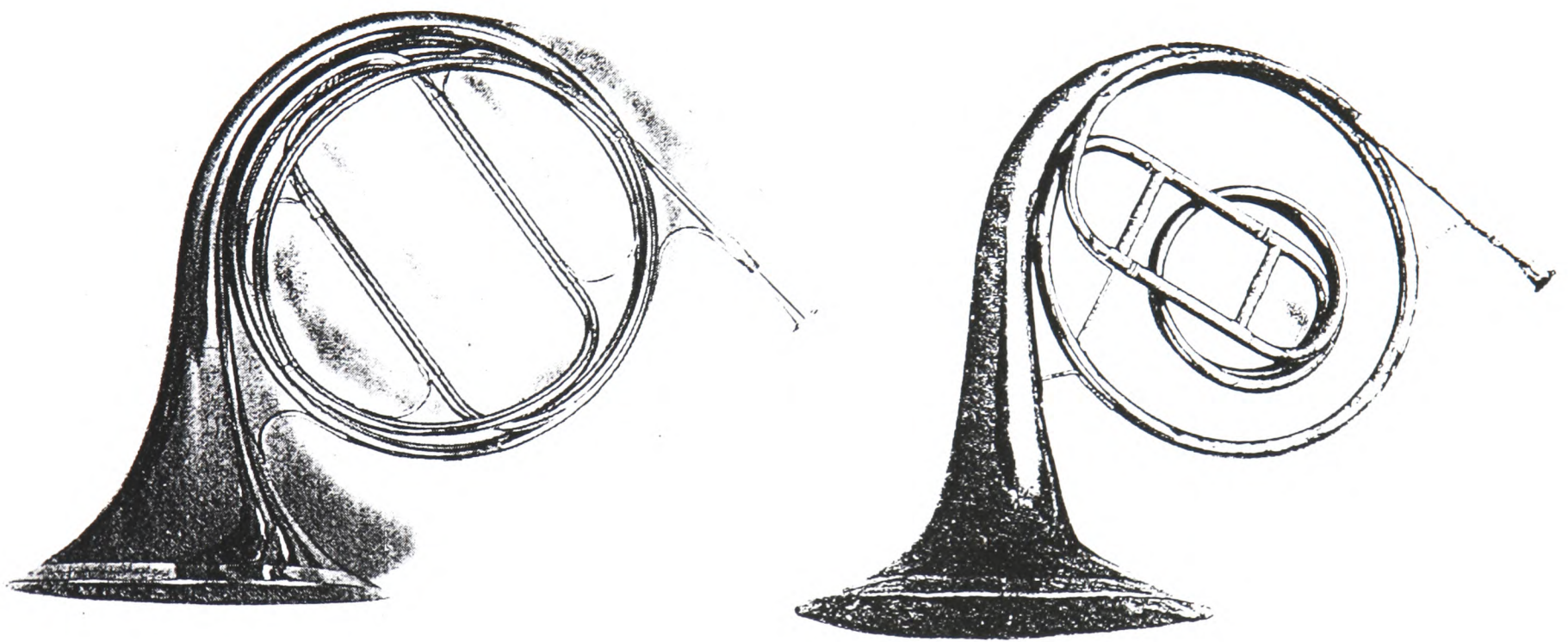


Illustration 4.3

Bell profiles of French and Austro-Bohemian instruments.

left: c. 1826 *cor-solo* built for Puzzi by Marcel-Auguste Raoux, Paris. (Anthony Baines, *European and American Musical Instruments* [London, 1976], pl. 727.)

right: c. 1785 *Inventionshorn*, C. Lobeit, Bohemia. (Anthony Baines, *European and American Musical Instruments* [London, 1976], pl. 723.)

It is by these distinctions that the nationality of a horn by an unknown maker is generally determined. The narrower proportions of the French instrument impart a slightly brighter hue to its general tone colour, but most importantly, the more gradual bell flare of the French instrument provides the hand horn player with a greater effective area for influencing the pitch and tone quality in the production of stopped notes and allows for more subtlety in their execution. This was at the heart of the rather 'closed' hand position that most French teachers of the hand horn advocated and facilitated in the production of a scale where the difference in the tone quality of the stopped and open notes was almost indiscernible. The leadpipe and mouthpiece are also components of the horn that have a critical influence on the instrument's tone. In keeping with the dimensions of the bell throat, the leadpipe of the French instrument is smaller in diameter than its Austro-Bohemian counterpart. The shank and bore of the French mouthpiece are also correspondingly narrow and its overall length generally exceeds that of the Austro-Bohemian mouthpiece by 1.5. to 2 centimetres.²³

Another feature that distinguished the Austro-Bohemian and French schools of horn playing during Puzzi's career was the acceptance and use of the valve. At the same time as the centre of hand horn playing shifted to Paris, where it was sustained and promoted by master performers and pedagogues such as Duvernoy and Dauprat, it was rapidly on the wane in the Austro-Bohemian empire and in the countries that most closely followed the developments of the Austro-Bohemian school of horn playing, notably Germany and Italy. Fitzpatrick writes that the zenith of the Austro-Bohemian school of hand horn playing had already

23. For a more detailed discussion of comparative mouthpiece and leadpipe measurements, see Fitzpatrick, p. 162.

been reached by 1789, when Ernst Ludwig Gerber wrote his article on the horn in the *Historisches-Biographisches Lexicon der Tonkünstler* (Leipzig 1792).²⁴ Gerber's article is widely cited as a summary of the school's greatest players and main characteristics. Michael Herbst, the 'last great teacher and virtuoso of the orchestral hand horn' in Austria, died in 1833.²⁵

The valve was naturally first applied to the horn in the land of its inventors and developers in 1815 and did not appear in France until 1826.²⁶ It was not this lag in time, but the perception of the function of the valve that was to be critical in creating the most substantial juncture between the two schools of horn playing. Unquestionably, one of the objectives of the valve, first patented by Heinrich Stölzel, was to dispense with loose crooks and provide a more convenient way of changing the instrument's key (which would then be played like a hand horn once the new key had been chosen by depressing the valves). However, the following letter by G.P. Biery, which appeared in the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* on 3 May 1815, heralded the effect that valves would soon have on horn playing in the Austro-Bohemian and Germanic world:

Heinrich Stölzel, . . . in order to perfect the Waldhorn, has succeeded in attaching a simple mechanism to the instrument, thanks to which he has obtained all the notes of the chromatic scale in a range of almost three octaves, with a good, strong and pure tone. All the artificial notes . . . which were previously produced by stopping the bell with the right hand . . . can now be produced merely with two levers, controlled by the fingers of the right hand . . . What a new realm of beautiful effects this has opened up to composers!²⁷

24. Fitzpatrick, p. 219.

25. Ibid., 215.

26. Morley-Pegge, p. 105.

27. Bernhard Brüche and Kurt Janetzky, *The Horn*, tr. James Chater (Portland, 1977), p. 73.

It is outside the scope of this dissertation to consider the many phases in the development, use and acceptance of the valve horn, but there are numerous indications that the adoption of the valve horn and its use as a chromatic instrument distinct from the hand horn occurred much more rapidly in Austria, Germany and Italy than in France.²⁸ This is most clearly substantiated by Austro-Bohemian instrument design, in which valve instruments were considered as 'chromatic units in a fixed tonality' at a very early stage in their development.²⁹ Surviving instruments built in the 1830s and 1840s by makers such as Moritz (Berlin), Kersten (Dresden) and various German and Austrian horns by unknown makers demonstrate this.³⁰ In these instruments, the valves are incorporated as an integral part of the horn's design and take the form of a fixed, non-detachable unit. With the notable exception of the so-called 'Vienna horn', most of these instruments were built in a fixed key and thus had no provision for changing crooks, causing the player to use the valves in a truly chromatic manner.

By 1823, audiences in Berlin appear to have been well acquainted with the valve horn, which no longer attracted notice as a novelty in concert reviews.³¹ In Vienna, the brothers Eduard-Constantin and Joseph-Rudolphe Lewy were acknowledged as virtuosi on the valve horn in

28. This issue has been comprehensively treated by writers such as Herbert Heyde in his book *Das Ventilblasinstrument: seine Entwicklung in deutschsprachigen Raum von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart* (Leipzig, 1987). Recent writing on the subject, particularly the overlap of hand and valve horn technique, can be found in the *Historic Brass Society Journal* and *The Horn Call*.

29. Morley-Pegge, p. 35.

30. Herbert Heyde, *Das Ventilblasinstrument*, pls. 27, 29, 31, pp. 129-131; and John Henry van der Meer, *Verzeichnis der europäischen Musikinstrumente im Germanischen Nationalmuseum Nürnberg: Hörner und Trompeten, Membranophone, Idiophone* (Wilhelmshaven, 1979), pl. 77, p. 176.

31. Morley-Pegge, p. 105

various guises by the end of the 1820s.³² A long period ensued during which players used a combination of valve and hand technique and composers wrote interchangeably for both types of instrument, but the valve horn was sufficiently mastered and accepted by 1849 for Schumann to write his *Adagio and Allegro* for horn and piano, the first piece entirely dependent on the chromatic capabilities of the three-valved horn. Morley-Pegge posits that earlier, less well-known works of a similar ilk existed in Germany.³³

Early valve horns were plagued by teething problems such as leaky valves and the introduction of extremely tight bends into the instrument's tubing, both of which adversely effected tone quality and intonation. Naturally, there were numerous stages in the development of both the design and playing technique of valve horns and its acceptance by players and composers was not immediate and was an emotionally charged issue. It is also important to remember that playing techniques overlapped -- performers still applied hand technique to the valved instruments to retain some of the hand horn's more characteristic nuances and aid intonation -- and composers initially viewed the hand horn and the valve horn as two distinct instruments with their own set of tonal characteristics. This is evident in the orchestral writing of composers such as Schumann and Wagner, who often wrote for combinations of *Waldhörner* and *Ventilhörner* in their works.

The valve horn's similar rise to popularity in Italy demonstrates that Puzzi had long ceased to be influenced by horn playing in the country of his birth. While Puzzi and his French contemporaries continued to

32. Ibid., pp. 71, 163-4.

33. Ibid., p. 71. The horn obbligato in Schubert's 'Auf dem Strohm', written in 1828 for Joseph-Rudolph Lewy, is one such example.

champion the hand horn, Italian players embraced the valved instrument. This is reflected in the instrument choices of Livorno virtuoso Antonio Tosaroni. In 1822, he delighted Rudolph Bay, a Danish diplomat and horn player, who wrote that Tosaroni's mastery of the hand horn was akin to the virtuosity of a flute player. Twenty years later he was distraught to find that Tosaroni, who held a post at the Grand Ducal Chapel at Florence, was now playing on a valve instrument: 'it was no longer those soft melting sounds from the past in Livorno; his horn, by God, had become a valve horn'.³⁴ Tosaroni is also credited with having published the first Italian valve horn method, *Metodo per corno a 3 pistoni*, in the 1840s.³⁵ Although natural horns continued to be built in Italy into the second half of the nineteenth century and descriptions of hand horn technique were still to be found in tutors of this period, it is significant that a noted hand horn virtuoso had so readily become a proponent and promoter of the valve horn.

While horn playing and design were being transformed on a fundamental level by the increasingly chromatic use of the valve horn by players of the Austro-Bohemian school, the French used the valve mainly as a crook-changing device. Once the horn had been put into the desired key, it was then played primarily as a natural instrument. Whereas valves were becoming an integral part of Austro-Bohemian horn design during the 1830s and 1840s, they seldom achieved such permanence in their French counterparts and generally took the form of a removable *sauterelle* that could be inserted in place of the natural horn's tuning slide. The full set of crooks was retained, allowing the player to use a combination of

34. Rudolph Bay, *Af Rud. Bays Efterlade Papirer*, vol. 3, *Musicalsk Rejse* (n.pub., 1842-1843), p. 41. Excerpt translated by Kjell Moseng and cited in John Humphries, *The Early Horn: A Practical Guide* (Cambridge, forthcoming June 2000), p. 25.

35. Humphries, *Early Horn*, p. 25.

valve and hand horn technique as required by the technical demands of the music. This would seem to be an ideal solution that would allow players to take advantage of the improvement that valves brought to the execution of non-harmonic notes that were difficult to produce with the hand -- particularly those of the low register -- while retaining the musically desirable idiosyncrasies of the hand horn, such as the effect of stopped leading tones resolving to open notes. Pierre-Joseph-Emile Meifred, the first advocate of valve horn playing, was quick to realise this potential. He established a valve horn class at the Paris Conservatoire in 1833 and published his *Méthode pour le cor chromatique ou à pistons*, a pioneering tutor that combined hand and valve technique, in 1841.³⁶ After studying the horn parts of Félicien David's *Nonetto en ut mineur*, Chris Larkin has concluded that

Meifred's inhibitions concerning the third valve [Meifred advocated the use of a two valve mechanism] and his recommendations concerning the use of the hand with the new valved horn had been abandoned even before his *Méthode* went into print . . . The most up-to-date players of the *cornet-à-pistons* and the *cor-à-pistons* were already using their valves in the same way we use them today.³⁷

This may have been true of the young virtuoso players in Philippe Musard's orchestra, but the majority of prominent performers, who were established hand horn virtuosos, were highly resistant to any development that might supplant even the less effective elements of hand horn technique and did not adopt valves. The large number of attempts by French and Belgian makers to design a successful omnitonic horn as late

36. For a detailed analysis of the techniques in Meifred's *Méthode*, see Birchard Coar, *A Critical Study of the Nineteenth Century Horn Virtuosi in France* (DeKalb, 1952), pp. 114-122.

37. Chris Larkin, 'Félicien David's "Nonetto en ut mineur": A New Discovery and New Light on the Early Use of Valved Instruments in France', *Historic Brass Society Journal*, 5 (1993): 192-202.

as 1845 -- well past the advent of effective valve systems -- indicates the esteem in which the hand horn was held by players, music critics and audiences.³⁸ The fate of Meifred's horn class at the Conservatoire is a clear statement of the official status of the valve horn in France: the class was disbanded upon his retirement in 1863. The hand horn was then taught exclusively until 1897, when a valve horn class was reinstated by François Brémond and taught and examined in combination with the hand horn. It was not until 1903 that only the valve horn was taught at the Conservatoire.³⁹

ATTRIBUTES OF PUZZI'S PLAYING

General aspects of Puzzi's technique

With regard to how Puzzi played, three sources are invaluable in revealing information about both the general characteristics of the school of playing of which he was a part and about the individual qualities that distinguished him as a player: Puzzi's instruments, his music and various written accounts of his playing. As we have begun to see from the summary of playing schools and types of horns extant during Puzzi's career, a player's choice of instrument can influence and in some cases determine playing style and aspects of technique such as tone quality and the use and position of the hand in the bell. It is also indicative of any affinity for a national style and reflects the performer's attitude towards the evolution of playing technique during a period when the instrument was undergoing radical transformation.

Three of Puzzi's instruments survive to provide us with such information. He unquestionably owned many more horns during the

38. Morley-Pegge, p. 56.

39. Ibid., pp. 3-4.

course of his career, but brass instruments -- owing to the deterioration, such as corrosion and denting that they incur in the course of normal use - - are generally short-lived in comparison with string and keyboard instruments and do not respond as well to attempts to repair them or prolong their lives. A large percentage of horns with desirable playing characteristics were probably 'used up' during the player's lifetime. Still, it is possible that more than three of Puzzi's horns survive. It is often difficult or impossible to trace an instrument's early owners; thus there is a chance that some of the horns with an unknown provenance in collections today might have been in the possession of Puzzi.

All of the known surviving instruments owned by Puzzi were made by the Raoux family (see appendix 3 for a full description of these instruments). The earliest of these is a standard right-hand wrap *cor-solo* built by Lucien-Joseph Raoux that is dated 1814 and is part of the Carse Collection at the Horniman Museum. The second instrument, a right-hand wrap *cor d'orchestre* built in 1821 by L.-J. Raoux, was in the possession of the Borsdorf and Bradley families for many years and was donated to the Royal Academy of Music in 1999. It was Adolf Borsdorf's principal instrument during the period at the turn of the twentieth century when he was the leading orchestral player in England and was passed on to his son Francis Bradley, also a professional horn player. The third and best-known of Puzzi's horns is a left-hand wrap *cor-solo* by Marcel-Auguste Raoux that is held in the National Collection of Musical Instruments at the Victoria and Albert Museum. It appears to have been made in 1826 or 1827 and was presented to Puzzi as a gift from 'the King of France' -- most probably Charles X (see appendix 3, for full details about the dating and provenance of these instruments). The horn was donated to the museum in 1926 by Puzzi's grandson, General Vittorio Elia. Because it

remained in Puzzi's family until this point and was never in the possession of any other horn players, this instrument is of particular value as a tool for deciphering how Puzzi played.

The solo repertoire that Puzzi composed and arranged to display his abilities as a performer provides an important window of insight into his use of these instruments. Eighty-six surviving manuscripts from Puzzi's library quickly establish an outline of his technical capacity as a player with regard to factors such as range, endurance and stylistic preferences. These works can also be used to decipher and reconstruct the more specific and subtle elements of technique that would have been necessary to play them effectively and in a manner that corresponds with the comments elicited by Puzzi's performances.

Accounts of Puzzi's playing appear in the musical press and in daily newspapers. These reports are generally far removed from a modern reader's concept of a concert review in their tendency often to provide more information about the listeners at the concert than about the players. The phrases that they do employ to describe performers are often ambiguous and repetitive, but in the context of Puzzi's instruments and music these words acquire a more specific meaning that can be understood to be indicative of particular performance qualities. Anecdotal accounts appearing in memoirs also provide similar information.

These materials define Puzzi as a consummate example of a nineteenth-century virtuoso hand horn soloist in the French tradition. The most visible proof of this is manifested by Puzzi's choice of instruments. While residing in London, where Puzzi spent the bulk of his professional life, he would have been able to choose from the products of at least half a dozen horn makers working in England. A large number of makers were also active in Paris, including the long-established Courtois

family and Halary-Antoine, both of whom produced high quality instruments judging from examples that have survived.⁴⁰ But Raoux enjoyed a position of special prestige among horn soloists that would have been a natural inducement to Puzzi. In part, this was based on the firm's invention of the *cor-solo* in 1781. This refinement of the Austro-Bohemian *Inventionshorn* strengthened the overall structure of the instrument and rearranged its tubing into a configuration that supposedly made it more free-blowing. Unlike previous instruments that made use of a series of terminal crooks and couplers placed between the body of the horn and the mouthpiece, the crooks of the *cor-solo* were inserted into the body of the horn. This made the instrument much more stable to hold and meant that the relationship and distance between the horn and the body remained unchanged regardless of the key in which the horn was crooked, allowing the optimum position for good hand technique to be constantly maintained. Most notably, the *cor-solo* was only equipped with crooks for the five most common keys for solo works and chamber music with horn (G, F, E, E-flat, and D) instead of the ten that were standard with the *cor d'orchestre*. Clearly, the limited usefulness of this instrument would have made it an economically feasible option only for the player who knew that the majority of his engagements would constitute solo or chamber music performances, since the limited selection of crooks would not have been adequate to perform much of the contemporary orchestral repertoire. This small selection of crooks meant that the *cor-solo* could be optimally proportioned to produce the best effect in this narrow range of keys instead of having to function as an instrument of compromise that was required to function in keys from B-flat basso to B-flat alto. The *cor-solo* offered the

40. See Morley-Pegge, p. 175-182 for a comprehensive list of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century horn makers.

soloist a highly refined, responsive and sensitive medium and represented the pinnacle of horn building in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The success of the design prompted other makers, such as Courtois, to build *cor-solo* instruments, although none of them acquired the cachet of the Raoux *cor-solo*, which gained fame in the hands of Türrschmidt, Palsa, Punto, Dauprat and Gallay.⁴¹ Puzzi's preference for this instrument and the success he achieved with it placed him at the end of a progression of the early Austro-Bohemian and French tradition's most distinguished players.

Puzzi's music and choice of mouthpiece also reveal that in his approach to playing the horn he shared another common characteristic with most distinguished hand horn soloists. Throughout the era of the natural horn, players have, with few exceptions, been either high or low register specialists (see illustration 4.4 for their ranges).⁴² Horn methods included separate exercises for each type of player and recommended that the player choose his specialism early in his training. The two types of horn were generally referred to as first and second in contemporary methods and tutors. Dauprat argued for the more descriptive and less

41. See Morley-Pegge, pp. 21-22 and Fitzpatrick, p. 228 for a more extensive description of the Raoux *cor-solo* and its physical properties.

42. Whilst the division of the two ranges of the horn was standard and was clearly advocated in many contemporary tutors including those of Domnich and Jacqmin as well as Dauprat's, a few players were tempted by the monetary rewards they envisaged the combining of the two registers would bring. This was no mean task, considering that this would require a command of the four and a half octaves covered by the ten to eleven standard crooks of the orchestral horn from B-flat basso to C alto. These attempts were largely unsuccessful, even deleterious. A few examples of such cases as presented by Dauprat in his method warned horn players considering such a move: 'Beneux the elder, who, in order to be admitted to [the orchestra of the] Opéra, wanted to become a *cor-alto* without losing the advantages the other "genre" could have given him for solos -- an excessive labor that brought on the consumption to which he succumbed. . . it was Rodolphe's ambition to bring together the whole compass of the horn and to make a unique "genre" of it. [To accomplish this using a *cor-basse* mouthpiece] one would have to exert efforts that could cause serious accidents, such as the incurable hernia that Rodolphe incurred from this practice' (Louis-François Dauprat, tr. and ed. Roth, pp. 14-15).

hierarchical labels of *cor-alto* and *cor-basse* in his 1824 *Méthode*:

These somewhat vague titles [first and second horn] have always carried an ambiguity which has been to the detriment of the 'second horn', making people believe that this title, rather than designating a particular 'genre', implies a degree of inferiority in the player's talent. . . .It should be known, however, that even in orchestras where there are only two horns, each player is 'first' on his part, and that neither of them could successfully undertake that of the other because they are equally valuable in the performance of music. It is not the same with the horns as it is with the violins, flutes, oboes . . . which can play either of the two parts written for the instrument equally well. The horns . . . could not in most cases switch parts without each being hindered by the insufficiency of their abilities.⁴³



Illustration 4.4

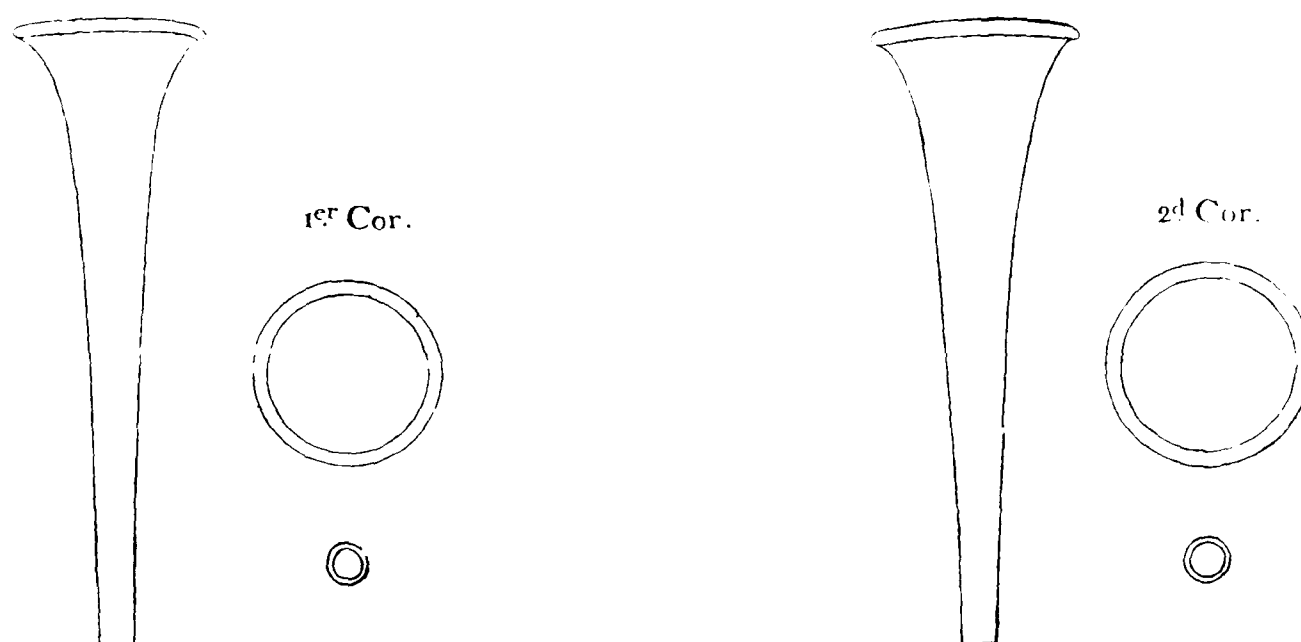
Ranges for *cor-alto* (1er) and *cor-basse* (2d). Heinrich Domnich, *Méthode de premier et de second cor* (Paris, n.d. [1808]), p. 9.

43. Dauprat, tr. and ed. Roth, pp. 14 - 15.

This passage illuminates how clearly the duties of *cor-basse* and *cor-alto* differed. The *cor-alto*, a hold-over from the clarino traditions of the Baroque, was a high register specialist with an extremely strong embouchure that allowed him to play in this upper register with great accuracy despite the closeness of the harmonics. The *cor-basse* was noted for his richer tone quality and was most often entrusted with melodic solos. He always possessed excellent hand technique, which allowed him to execute chromatic passages in the middle and lower registers of the horn. Because of these abilities, nearly all of the noted Classical and early-Romantic horn soloists were players of the *cor-basse* genre, including Punto, Leutgeb and Dauprat. *Cor-alto* players were generally famed as part of a duet team, such as Palsa (*cor-alto*) and Türirschmidt. They did not generally achieve renown as soloists because they were not as well suited for the techniques and sound production that flattered the hand horn as a solo instrument and clarino-style writing had largely passed out of fashion. *Cor-basse* players often occupied the solo horn post in orchestras and theatres and were featured as chamber music players.

These two roles were so clearly defined that different mouthpieces and mouthpiece placement were required for each (see illustration 4.5). The *cor-basse* player used a mouthpiece with a wider bore and rim diameter and placed this mouthpiece two-thirds on the upper lip and one-third on the bottom. This combination gave the second hornist a full, rich tone and facility in the lowest register of the instrument as well as in the middle range. The high horn player used a mouthpiece with a much shallower cup and thinner rim measurement and placed the mouthpiece one-third on the upper lip and two-thirds on the lower lip. This method of playing most closely resembled the typical modern trumpet embouchure and helped to give the *cor-alto* a bright, shrill tone.

Les modèles ci-dessous représentent ces deux embouchures dans leurs vraies dimensions.



Domnich's *cor-basse* mouthpiece:
length: 7 cm
outer rim diameter: 23.5 mm
inner rim diameter: 20 mm

Puzzi's mouthpiece:
7 cm
26 mm
20.5 mm

Illustration 4.5

Cor-alto and *cor-basse* mouthpieces as illustrated in Domnich's *Méthode de premier et de second cor* (Paris, n.d. [1808]), p. 8. The corresponding measurements given for Puzzi's mouthpiece were taken by the present author at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Puzzi was clearly a player of the *cor-basse* genre. This is evident in his choice of mouthpiece and by the music that he arranged and wrote for himself. Mouthpieces can be problematic items to study, not least because they are difficult to identify in terms of date and maker and because they often become separated from the instruments with which they were originally used. As noted earlier, Puzzi's *cor-solo* at the Victoria and Albert is exceptional because its history and the path it followed to the museum eliminate many of the vagaries that are introduced when an instrument is owned by more than one player and its provenance cannot be clearly

traced. Furthermore, because the mouthpiece matches the description of it that Blandford recorded after examining the instrument shortly after its accession, and because the Victoria and Albert has no other horns in its collections with which the mouthpiece could have been inadvertently exchanged, it is certainly the one that Puzzi used with this *cor-solo*.⁴⁴ It is a large, funnel shaped mouthpiece of rolled silver sheet metal with a medium width, moderately rounded rim that exhibits all the typical characteristics of *cor-basse* mouthpieces as given in contemporary tutors. Morley-Pegge notes that it is 'practically identical in measurements with Domnich's model for second horn' (see illustration 4.5).⁴⁵

During his 1927 inspection of Puzzi's horn and mouthpiece at the Victoria and Albert, Blandford had an opportunity to play the instrument with its mouthpiece. He writes

I . . . could get the low notes only, which were very different from the low notes got with a small modern mouthpiece, being full soft and organ-like, of a quality that has been lost to music.⁴⁶

This observation perhaps provides a very general indication of the character of the sound that Puzzi might have produced and reflects the changes that had occurred over the last one hundred years in the design of

44. W.F.H. Blandford to Reginald Morley-Pegge, 25 October 1927, VII, pp. 241-244, Morley-Pegge Archive, Bate Collection of Musical Instruments, Oxford.

45. Morley-Pegge, p. 161.

46. W.F.H. Blandford to Morley-Pegge, p. 244. Blandford was by all accounts a capable amateur horn player, although he acknowledges earlier in this letter that his playing abilities had been compromised by dental problems and age. The observations made when playing a musical instrument are by definition of a highly subjective nature and are bound to the player's abilities, range of experience and preconceptions as a performer. Practical knowledge of the instrument and the opportunity to play examples of it are nonetheless an invaluable asset when studying performance practice and instrument history and can be particularly relevant and valuable when they are combined with other approaches such as study of contemporary music, tutors and anecdotal accounts of playing.

the mouthpiece, the most critical part of the horn in determining tone.⁴⁷ A general understanding of the internal profile of a modern mouthpiece and a *cor-basse* mouthpiece of the type that Puzzi used will help to establish some of the basic elements of his sound and how this part of the horn determined them.

Unlike a modern horn mouthpiece, Puzzi's mouthpiece, which is typical in design, has a shape that has been classified as 'cuspid (a curved profile monotonically increasing in curvature as the rim is approached, only used in mouthpieces for French horns)'.⁴⁸ The interior of the mouthpiece has gently arching sides and the bore becomes narrower throughout the cup and stem until it reaches its termination. By contrast, the stem of a modern mouthpiece generally incorporates a flared back-bore so that its narrowest diameter is reached at a point between the cup and the stem before it enters the instrument. This lack of a back-bore moves the smallest point of resistance away from the player's lips and into the instrument, resulting in a softer, less edgy tone, gentler articulations, and smoother slurs. It also gives the player much more flexibility in adjusting individual pitches with the embouchure. The thin sheet metal of which the mouthpiece is made also contributed to its softer sound, giving it less carrying power than heavier mouthpieces turned out of a block of metal.⁴⁹

Puzzi's music as preserved in his collection of manuscripts also clearly

47. It is vital that players who wish to perform on historic horns as a means to gaining any sort of historical perspective or of producing a more 'historically aware/informed' sound also use historic mouthpieces or at least modern adaptations that incorporate their most salient features.

48. Arnold Myers ed., *Historic Musical Instruments in the Edinburgh University Collection*, vol. 2, pt. H, fasc. iv: 'Small Mouthpieces for Brass Instruments' (Edinburgh, 1996), p. 9.

49. Richard Seraphinoff, 'Early Horn Mouthpieces', *Historic Brass Society Journal*, 1 (1989): 93-100.

defines him as a player of the *cor-basse* genre. Most of his arrangements and compositions rarely exceed the thirteenth harmonic (*a''* in horn notation of whatever key in which the piece is written). Occasionally, Puzzi's arrangements do venture higher in the staff, although this is generally to preserve the original line of the melody that he is transposing and is limited to climactic cadences. As a rule, Puzzi avoids writing arrangements that lie primarily in the upper register of the horn. His original compositions also embody stylistic features that are typical of *cor-basse* writing. These include use of 'falset' notes produced by pitch-bending in the low register of the horn and extensive use of large, rapidly executed disjunct intervals.⁵⁰ Both of these techniques are featured extensively in pedagogical material composed by Puzzi (see musical examples nos. 1, 2). Falset notes are also illustrated in the opening of Puzzi's *Studio in treneta esercizi progressivi per il corno concertante* (see musical example no. 3). The present author has encountered no other contemporary method that illustrates falset notes below G in its table of hand positions. While the *Studio* provides hand positions for notes up to the sixteenth harmonic, all of the exercises that follow are clearly intended for the intermediate *cor-basse* student and do not exceed the thirteenth harmonic.⁵¹ Puzzi's *Concerto di corno*, his only entirely original solo known to survive, is a consummate *cor-basse* work. The arpeggios featured after the horn cadenza are signatures of *cor-basse* style as popularised by Punto and are similar in function and style to those written by Beethoven in his *Sonata*

50. Pitch bending allowed the performer to play non-harmonic notes below the second harmonic by small movements of the embouchure rather than of the hand; in theory this should not be possible, but it is a technique easily within the grasp of a competent *cor-basse* player.

51. This is the only method by Puzzi that survives. It does not contain any explanatory text or appear to have been published. There is no indication that a companion set of exercises for *cor-alto* existed.

for Piano and Horn Op. 17, composed for Punto (see musical example nos. 4 and 5). Morley-Pegge refers to such figures as 'batteries de cor-basse'.

Puzzi is often categorised as a player of the *cor-mixte* genre.⁵² This designated a player who concentrated his efforts exclusively on the horn's two middle octaves: the third to the twelfth harmonic or from written *g* to *g''*. The tone of the horn was at its best in this range and the disparity between open and stopped notes could be most skilfully concealed. These players also limited the selection of keys in which they would play to those that could be accommodated by the central crooks of E, E-flat and especially F, dispensing with the higher and lower crooks entirely and therefore depriving the horn of much of its tonal variety. Depending upon the author, the *cor-mixte* genre was often looked upon with disdain in contemporary tutors (particularly by Domnich) and when the term is used by modern writers on the horn, it is generally in a pejorative sense. Morley-Pegge writes the following on the status of the perception and function of the *cor-mixte* genre:

The best early 19th-century teachers rightly condemned the *cor-mixte* for students on the ground that a superficial efficiency in its limited range could be too easily acquired without the labour of mastering either the 'first' or 'second' category, indispensable background to good playing. The great players who, like Duvernoy, came to specialise in the *cor-mixte* range, were consummate artists and, without exception, thorough masters of whichever category they were best fitted for by nature before they wrote, or had written for them, solos whose range was confined to that part of the compass . . . where they could most effectively disguise the tonal differences between open and stopped notes.⁵³

In concentrating on the horn's most desirable attributes in terms of tone and range, nineteenth-century solo horn music, by definition, is

52. Morley-Pegge, p. 103.

53. Ibid., p. 96.

bound to make extensive use of the *cor-mixte* range, although as has been demonstrated above, Puzzi's repertoire features the low register of the horn and traditional *cor-basse* attributes too extensively to be considered exclusively as *cor-mixte* music. *Cor-mixte* players generally preferred the 'brighter tone colour of the F crook as against the more sombre but perhaps nobler timbre of the E-flat and D crooks'.⁵⁴ A review of Puzzi's surviving music shows that the majority of it is written for horn in E-flat or E, with compositions in F in the minority.⁵⁵ One strong *cor-mixte* feature typical of the last phase of the hand horn tradition that Puzzi's solo music does display is a demand for incredibly intricate and virtuosic chromatic hand technique far in excess of that required by any of the Classical horn concertos. Puzzi exploits this element to its full potential, and possibly even beyond its effective limit at times. Perhaps the appellation *cor-mixte* is best used as a term to describe loosely a type of writing for the horn as opposed to being employed as a rigid label for the soloist himself.

The most obvious feature of Puzzi's playing that places him among the ranks of the great hand horn virtuosos and defines him as a legatee of the French school of horn playing is his staunch adherence to the natural instrument long after feasible valves had been introduced in England and had gained a degree of general acceptance in Germany, Austria and Italy. The Marcel-Auguste Raoux *cor-solo* at the Victoria and Albert Museum and its accompanying documentation provide the strongest source of material evidence that Puzzi did not adopt valves. The instrument and its accessories (crooks and mouthpiece) have been so carefully preserved by

54. Ibid.

55. Keys of compositions will be found in the works catalogue in the second volume of this dissertation.

the family that if a set of valves had been built to go with this horn -- an instrument that Puzzi obviously used extensively as is evident by heavy wear within the bell -- they surely would have been retained. In the letter that Generale Elia presented to the museum with the horn, he writes that Puzzi, 'gifted by great musical talent, became very soon excellent with the horn (keyless -- it was played, as you know) . . .'. He then offers a lengthy, if somewhat confused, explanation of hand technique and concludes the letter by remarking that 'I think my grandfather was the last (or one of the last) player upon that kind of instrument'.⁵⁶

The Luçien-Joseph Raoux *cor-solo* at the Horniman museum is fitted with a pair of Périnet-style valves. These were clearly a later addition to the horn, since the legs of the tuning slide have been cut to accept them. The key-top of the second valve has been crudely clipped-off to enable it to clear the body of the horn when it is depressed, further indicating that the valves were not an original feature of the instrument or even built specifically for it. The valves bear no date or maker's mark, although Morley-Pegge estimates that they were made in the late 1840s.⁵⁷ Unfortunately, no information about when this *cor-solo* left Puzzi's possession exists. This instrument and the horn at the Royal Academy of Music have had too many successive owners to offer any further insight into this matter.

Although it is possible that Puzzi may have had the valves added to his L.-J. Raoux *cor-solo*, particularly if he owned several instruments and wished to experiment with valves on one of them, his surviving music presents no conclusive evidence suggesting that he used valves. It is

56. Generale Vittorio Elia to Mr. Clifford Smith, 6 September 1926. This letter was presented with the horn when it was given to the museum.

57. Reginald Morley-Pegge to W.A. Thorpe, 29 December 1948, nominal file 'Elia, Vittorio, Generale', Victoria and Albert Museum.

devoid of chromatic passages between the second and third harmonics (although admittedly this is not the instrument's most desirable solo register) and is clearly constructed around the open notes of the harmonic series, as can be seen in all of the musical examples included in this dissertation. There is no intrinsically or independently chromatic writing in these pieces, although this lack may be interpreted as a basic trait of the type of music that Puzzi was playing as opposed to any limitations imposed by the horn itself. It is more revealing that Puzzi's music never modulates from its initial basic key (crook). Listeners were quick to note this as one of the drawbacks of horn solos during Puzzi's era:

Puzzi's concerto was perfection itself as to execution, but the sameness of key in all three movements, and the want of harmonic variety, rendered it tedious, though it was not in fact very long.⁵⁸

If Puzzi had been playing a valved instrument, he could have made changes to the basic key of the instrument quickly and subtly, without the distraction that changing crooks would have created in a solo performance. Even in light of these observations, whether music would or would not have been played with valves during a transitional era is a nebulous issue, since players may have indeed used them to enhance passages that would have been possible, but perhaps less effective, on the hand horn. Puzzi's music does present some such passages, but Puzzi was a formidable hand horn player who could have played them with ease. Ultimately, such a decision would have been dictated by personal preference and local practice.

General writings about the horn in England during the first half of the nineteenth century and more specific accounts of Puzzi's performances provide no evidence that he used the valve horn in concerts. An

58. *Harmonicon*, vol. 7 (1829): 59.

explanatory article about the horn published in the *Harmonicon* in 1830 clearly presents Puzzi as an exponent of the hand horn:

Puzzi is an excellent performer on the horn: he executes very rapid and difficult passages, with the assistance of the hand, which is pushed forward or drawn backwards as the *artificial* notes are required.⁵⁹

The article does note that 'Pace of Westminster' and 'Percival of St. James Street' had devised a two-valved system that could be added to the horn to improve upon the scale produced by the hand, although the remainder of the article is devoted to a discussion of the qualities of the horn's various crooks and contains an orchestration primer for would-be composers that in no way acknowledges the existence of valves. Seven years later, it appeared that the valve had gained no noticeable foothold in orchestral or solo playing, since a similar article published in the *Musical World* in 1837 does not even mention valves. Instead, it expresses concern over the indiscriminate use of hand technique by composers and soloists:

Not only are difficult and even chromatic solo passages given to the horns, but they are often obliged to dwell upon the worst notes of the scale . . . which cannot be produced except by stopping the instrument with the hand. Composers have been led to this by the great dexterity of modern performers; but we are inclined to think they carry their disregard of the mechanical imperfections of the instrument much too far, and force upon it notes and passages which no performer can render smooth or agreeable.⁶⁰

One valve horn performance in 1837 did attract the attention of the *Musical World*: Mr. Perry, a player whose name does not appear among the ranks of London's top orchestral players and soloists, performed a solo on a valved horn at the Mary-le-bone Literary and Scientific Institution. The venue reveals the nature of the concert and Carse records that it was

59. *Harmonicon*, vol. 8 (1830): 320.

60. *The Musical World*, vol. 4 no. 46 (27 January 1837): 84.

'hailed as a complete novelty, and it is obvious that the horn with valves was then quite unfamiliar to most players in London'.⁶¹

Although technology (frequently through commercial sponsorship) was a force that was often prominently linked to virtuosity during the nineteenth century -- Bochsá was featured playing works on a harp with 'Sympathetic Metallic Bases' and Liszt was advertised as performing on 'Erard's New Grand Patent Piano-Fortes' at benefit concerts with Puzzi -- established hand horn soloists had little interest in taking up the valve horn. Although the above comments indicate that the judicious use of valves could have solved many of the horn's weaknesses as perceived by its critics and although feasible valve systems existed in England during the 1830s, nascent valve technology was competing with a long-established and highly refined tradition of hand horn playing. While the use of valves in playing chromatically would have doubtless seemed odd and awkward at first, the basic technique would have required no more thought than the modern horn player devotes to it today. However it must be remembered that there was as yet no widely agreed method of utilising the valves and this in itself was to be the subject of many tutors and resulted in a period of trial and error before a unified technique evolved. Performers, such as Puzzi, who had built their reputation upon their exceptional abilities as hand horn players and represented the pinnacle of horn performance naturally had little interest in advancing the new instrument at concerts or through their teaching. It is therefore not surprising that there is no discernible evidence that Puzzi performed on the valve horn and very little reason to believe that he would have had any significant interest in this instrument.

61. Carse, p. 417. The original article appeared in the *Musical World*, vol. 5 no. 53 (17 March 1837): 8.

Specific aspects of Puzzi's technique

One critic writing about the solo horn player of the Paris *Opéra Comique* held Puzzi up as an international measure of horn-playing excellence: 'the first horn player has an exquisite tone, and as much command of his instrument as Puzzi himself; can praise go higher?'⁶² The author of the quote at the beginning of this chapter has conveniently provided a summary of the three most frequently commented upon aspects of what could be construed as Puzzi's command of his instrument: tone, execution and general expression. Puzzi's music, instruments, and the comments elicited by his playing can lead us to a more intimate understanding of these elements of command both in terms of how they were perceived and how they were achieved. Puzzi's tone was the most common focus of reviews of his performances. Words frequently used to describe it include 'mellow' and 'mellifluous'.⁶³ These somewhat ambiguous terms take on more significance when they are considered in conjunction with Tina Whitaker's assertion that

No living player had ever brought such soft and exquisite sounds of melody from a horn; he seemed to achieve the impossible, and was unique as a soloist on that ungrateful instrument.⁶⁴

It is clear from these descriptions that the horn in Puzzi's hands was an instrument that had been entirely tamed for the drawing room and was far removed from critics' perception of the sound of his contemporary, Henry Platt:

Mr. Platt has yet to learn how to perform on his obstreperous instrument in a concert room; there is no necessity to puff out one's cheeks, or blow until the hearer feels a sympathetic

62. *Harmonicon*, vol. 8 (1830): 455.

63. *Musical World*, vol. 17 no. 35 (1 September 1842): 276.

64. Whitaker, p. 218.

sense of pity for the performer.⁶⁵

Words such as 'power', 'force' and 'loudness' do not enter into accounts of Puzzi's playing.

The other aspect of his performances that consistently garnered praise was Puzzi's 'usual taste and delicacy of execution'.⁶⁶ This was referred to by other critics as his 'finished manner'.⁶⁷ These comments were often interspersed with astonishment that Puzzi could achieve such a degree of refinement on an instrument that was already judged to be notoriously difficult, partially because of its state of development, which was perceived to be imperfect and not quite finished -- clearly referring to the hand horn. Critics remarked that 'It is always a treat to hear Signor Puzzi; his execution upon his difficult instrument borders on the marvellous' and that in a performance of Rode's Air and Variations, a virtuoso show-piece originally written for violin, 'he accomplished wonders on his unmanageable instrument'.⁶⁸ This remarkable technical finesse -- like his refinement of tone as has been noted earlier -- was a hallmark that distinguished Puzzi from his horn playing colleagues. It is important to view these comments about tone and technique in tandem because the attributes for which Puzzi was noted for on both counts springs from one source: Puzzi's approach to the use of the hand in the bell of the horn.

The hand technique that enabled Puzzi to play his virtuosic arrangements and compositions in a way which elicited praise for mellifluousness and refinement would have of necessity required a basic

65. *Musical World*, vol. 8 no. 104 (8 March 1838): 163.

66. *Morning Post* (29 June 1839) n.p..

67. *Harmonicon*, vol. 8 (1830): 320.

68. *Brighton Gazette* (1 Sept. 1842): n.p.; *Musical World*, vol. 2 no. 15 (24 June 1836): 23.

hand position that was rather closed and that situated the hand quite deeply in the throat of the horn's bell. It was with this hand position that players of the French school, as taught by its leading exponents such as Duvernoy and Dauprat, were able to produce a chromatic scale of almost even tone quality between the fourth and twelfth harmonics.⁶⁹ This parity of tone between open harmonics and hand-stopped notes, referred to by Dauprat as 'factitious' notes, was a basic tenet of refined hand horn playing:⁷⁰

It is necessary, indeed, to achieve evenness in quality between the sounds, and to play the intervals between them with such good intonation as to leave nothing to be desired. . .⁷¹

To accomplish this, Dauprat writes that 'the hand must not open the bell on the natural notes so much that they sound too bright, but enough that they are in tune'.⁷² The contrast between stopped notes of various degrees and open harmonics was to be minimised as much as possible, except in instances where a contrast was musically desirable and a composer deliberately wrote to feature the horn's capacity for producing an extra dimension of tonal colour.⁷³ Factitious notes were to be produced 'without

69. Gallay, who wrote the last noteworthy hand horn method (published c.1845), advocated a rather more open basic hand position and a less closed position for the stopped notes, thus producing a much brighter sound over the whole range of the instrument. This modification of technique was perhaps perpetuated by an attempt to enable the hand horn to match the greater volume that valved instruments were capable of producing.

70. Dauprat, tr. and ed. Roth, p. 29.

71. Ibid.

72. Ibid, pp. 28-29.

73. It is obvious that musical context dictated how a hand horn player should approach stopped (factitious) notes. In some instances they were passing tones that were meant to be subtly incorporated into the musical line without emphasis. In other cases, the composer clearly intended the player to use this feature of his instrument's technique to heighten the desired musical effect. For an interesting discussion of covered tones in hand horn technique and their musical implications, see William Rogan, 'Stopped Notes on the Horn: Some Aesthetic Considerations', *Historic Brass Society Journal*, 8(1996): 53-68.

ever forcing them, which would give them an unpleasant quality'.⁷⁴ This covered hand position and the desire for tonal parity meant that out of necessity, the hand horn was played at a very moderate dynamic level, particularly in passages containing many stopped notes. It would have accounted for much of the mellowness and softness ascribed to Puzzi's playing. The directions that Puzzi gives for the lowest notes in the 'Scala semitonata' table at the beginning of his *Studio in trenta esercizi progressivi per il corno concertante* are indicative of Puzzi's concept of tone (see musical example no. 3). From B downwards, these falset notes would have been produced by pitch bending with the embouchure alone. The influence on pitch that the hand in the bell has in this extreme register of the instrument is negligible. Through the use of fractions, Puzzi indicates that these notes should be partially stopped. This is clearly a measure to temper and subdue the tone of these notes, which is generally quite ringing, so that they will conform to the gentle and subtle tone produced over the rest of the range of the instrument.

Puzzi's solo repertoire also reveals that this very covered hand position would have been the one that he usually employed. It was the only hand position that would have been feasible for the performance of most of his repertoire, particularly for the arrangements of virtuosic arias that would have required a high degree of flexibility, speed and lightness of technique. In pieces such as Puzzi's arrangement of Maria's entrance aria 'O nube che lieve' from Donizetti's opera *Maria Stuarda*, hand technique that was invisible and did not detract from the prolonged melodic lines that were the foundation of so much of the operatic repertoire that Puzzi arranged was essential (see musical example no. 6). This facility would have been a large part of the secret of Puzzi's success in

74. Dauprat, tr. and ed. Roth, p. 29.

being able to sing on the horn and play this repertoire without turning it into laborious horn etudes. Some indication of the ease and efficiency of Puzzi's technique is provided by the fact that he was still active as a player at the age of sixty-three and that these performances were capable of drawing warm praise:

that experienced artist proved that he had not lost the feeling, tone, and manner of pleasing for which he was renowned of old. . .⁷⁵

A deliberate and ponderous opening and closing of the hand, such as would be necessitated by a more open basic hand position, for each note in the many scalar and sequential passages in this arrangement would completely disrupt any sense of melodic continuity by ruining the parity of tone throughout the scale and drawing attention to individual notes. A closed hand position, in conjunction with a flexible embouchure, would have allowed Puzzi to pass between the notes with as little change to the opening of his hand as possible. When such a hand position is used, very little or no movement of the hand is needed to play the notes of the diatonic scale between the sixth and eleventh harmonics, particularly at a rapid tempo. Large stretches of 'O nube' can be played with virtually no movement of the hand (e.g. bars 12 to 24, the demi-semi quaver figure in bar 26). This approach is the only one that would have yielded a musical result in such a piece. It is obviously the technique that was intended to be developed in Puzzi's *Studio per suonare legato* (see musical example no. 7) and was one that was discussed at length in Dauprat's *Méthode*.⁷⁶

Other aspects of Puzzi's hand technique also would have contributed to establishing his reputation for finished and refined

75. *Musical World*, vol. 33 no. 21 (26 May 1855): 333.

76. Dauprat, tr. and ed. Roth, p. 206.

performances. They illustrate the high state of evolution that hand horn playing had reached by the height of Puzzi's career and demonstrate why the valve horn and the vagaries surrounding its use would have made it seem primitive to virtuosos such as Puzzi and the composers and audiences who knew these players. The attention that such performers gave to the production of enharmonic notes is one element of hand technique that illustrates these sensitivities. While variations in hand size, shape of the instrument's bell throat and physical attributes of individual players account for some of the differences in hand positions suggested by various horn tutors, there are many non-harmonic notes that can be produced with more than one hand position. Each possible hand position would lend a slightly different pitch and tone colour shading to the note. Many of the horn tutors published by the Paris Conservatoire suggest alternate hand positions for the same note depending upon the tempo of the music and the function of the note in the harmonic and melodic structure of the piece.⁷⁷ One well-known example is G-sharp/A-flat. This note can either be produced by stopping the bell as tightly as possible, creating a very muffled or buzzy tone depending on dynamic level, or by opening the hand further than usual for the natural third harmonic (g) and causing this note to rise in pitch to G-sharp. Most tutors would advocate using the open position in a slow tempo (allowing time for the large change in hand position and adjustment with embouchure) or if the note were to serve as a pedal tone. If the note is a passing tone in a quicker piece or if it functions as a leading tone, the closed position would be used. Puzzi suggests several enharmonic variations in the 'Scala semitonata' at the beginning of his

77. The considerations governing choices of enharmonic hand positions are discussed extensively in Dauprat tr. and ed. Roth, pp. 124-126, 145. For a comparative table of hand positions (including those for enharmonic notes) as indicated in the major nineteenth-century hand horn tutors, see Morley-Pegge, p. 99.

Studio in treneta esercizi progressivi per il corno concertante (See musical example no. 3).

Despite these critical and musical indications of Puzzi's refined technique and gentle sound, it is difficult to imagine exactly how far into the bell Puzzi would have placed his hand and to what extent it would have affected the basic sound he produced. Players today can gain some practical understanding of the position employed by French hand horn players by experimenting with Reginald Morley-Pegge's method for determining correct hand placement, as transmitted through Jeremy Montagu, who had the opportunity to listen to Morley-Pegge demonstrate this technique. Although he studied both hand horn and valve horn at the Paris Conservatoire with François Brémond, Morley-Pegge writes of his teacher 'At heart he was a true hand horn player'.⁷⁸

Morley-Pegge instructed players to place their hand in the bell as they would for modern valve horn playing (i.e. comparatively open) and tune the seventh harmonic of the horn to the piano. The seventh harmonic is exceptionally flat, thus requiring the player to push in the horn's tuning slide significantly. With the modern valve horn hand position, the instrument will then be much too sharp on the rest of the open harmonics. When the player closes the hand so that these harmonics are in tune, he will have found the basic position for hand horn playing. The hand will of course need to be opened slightly for the fifth and tenth harmonics. The non-harmonic pitches will require only a very slight further closing of the hand. With this hand position, Morley-Pegge was able to play a diatonic scale (i.e. a written C major scale) from the fourth partial upwards with no perceptible tonal differences.⁷⁹

78. Morley-Pegge, p. 165.

79. Personal correspondence from Jeremy Montagu, 13 December 1999.

Even this guidance and the extensive experience that many players have today as performers on the hand horn does not enable us to assume that we have arrived at a reproduction of horn sound as Puzzi's audiences were likely to have known it, however. Because these players would have had their formative experiences of tone production and hand placement on the modern horn -- most probably a wide-bore German style instrument -- and its mouthpiece, our innate understanding of horn tone is dominated by the desire for a large, open and robust sound. In helping to overcome these preconceptions and in serving to confirm the very different nature of horn sound as suggested by Puzzi's listeners and music, his instruments again provide a vital link.

The M.-A. Raoux *cor-solo* at the Victoria and Albert Museum is in a unique position to reveal information about critical aspects of Puzzi's playing technique. This horn is distinguished by a particularly fine enamelled bell interior (see appendix 3, section C for a full description). Not only is this beautiful decoration aesthetically pleasing and indicative of the importance of the horn's giver and recipient, but the enamel has served as an effective medium for preserving a record of Puzzi's hand position within the bell. Four points where the enamel has been worn through and the underlying metal has also worn indicate the places where the knuckles and joints of Puzzi's index finger and thumb and the sides of the tips of his thumb and index and middle fingers would have been in more or less constant contact with the metal, illustrating his basic hand position (the following discussion of Puzzi's hand position should be read in conjunction with illustration app. 3. 1 in appendix 3, section C, and its accompanying description under the heading of 'distinguishing features' in appendix 3 section C).

These marks and their distance from the edge of the bell rim

indicate that Puzzi's basic hand position was well into the constricted area of the bell throat. The points of wear made by the backs and tips of the fingers extend into the bore beyond the enamel. It would be physically impossible to insert the average-sized hand into the bell much further beyond this point and still have the room necessary for the hand to form the full range of open and stopped notes. The nine centimetres between the marks made by the upper knuckle of Puzzi's thumb and the middle joint of his index finger (as measured along the curved surface of the bell interior) suggests that Puzzi had a reasonably large hand, or that he may have placed the hand in the bell with the thumb opened out from the hand. Inserting the hand this far into the bell immediately imbues the open harmonics with a very veiled tone and makes the tuning of the flat seventh and eleventh harmonics a simple matter of opening the hand from its usual gently curved position so that the back of the hand lies flat against the wall of the bell.

Beyond demonstrating the location of Puzzi's basic hand position and the extent to which it would have had a subduing effect on the instrument's tone in comparison with typical modern hand placement, even this exceptional record of wear is too indistinct to be conclusive about the subtleties of Puzzi's hand technique, such as positions for individual notes or his approach in dealing with some of the more notorious vagaries of hand horn technique like the production of half-tone trills. The marks do suggest some interesting possibilities, however. Mark number five may have been created by the fingertips, which could have been used in addition to or in lieu of the body and heel of the hand in the formation of covered notes by curling them inwards to touch the opposite side of the bore. This technique is described by some nineteenth-century tutors and used by some modern hand horn players, particularly to fine-tune

problematic notes or to produce subtle variations of tone colour.

Unfortunately Puzzi has not left us with any conclusive guidance on such points, although experimentation with advanced hand techniques such as this may be a starting point for explaining the few inscrutable notations in the hand position table of Puzzi's *Studio* and for gaining insight into the finer skills he cultivated in order to deal with the extreme demands on hand technique made by his music.

This highly sophisticated hand technique and the deep placement of the hand in the bell that it required were unquestionably at the foundation of Puzzi's lauded tone and refined technique. His music reveals that his technical ability as a hand horn player was virtually unlimited, although comments in the contemporary press show that the appeal of extreme virtuosity -- cultivated at the expense of the horn's lyrical attributes -- was limited and could not have entirely accounted for the praise lavished upon Puzzi's attributes as a performer:

The great skill of several of our modern players, has brought the horn into some degree of favour as a solo instrument . . . but the ambition of the performer generally prompts him to disregard the limited powers of his instrument. In a horn solo . . . we are generally entertained with a set of variations... Such passages, let the player be ever so skilful or eminent, are necessarily scrambled through in a manner that would not be tolerated on any other instrument; but he gains some applause from those who wonder that such things can be done at all, while the more judicious heartily 'wish they were impossible'.⁸⁰

Puzzi himself was not exempt from eliciting such comments:

Having read in the different newspaper criticisms extraordinary accounts of the 'celebrated horn player Mr. Puzzi (who is generally termed unrivalled) may I ask what are his principal qualities? . . . I really could not find out anything but a continued jumble of noise, as I thought, quite unconnected with music. I have never heard any other

80. *Musical World*, vol. 4 no. 46 (27 January 1837): 85.

performer (but the above gentleman) play on the French horn, and indeed if that is a specimen of the capabilities of what I have always heard called that fine instrument, I hope never to be in the way of such a 'treat' again.⁸¹

In response to this criticism, Morley-Pegge writes that

the vast number of laudatory notices of Puzzi's playing, however, puts this uninformed criticism where it belongs and amply justifies his international reputation. It is nevertheless true that the intrinsic qualities of the horn show up to much greater advantage in movements of moderate tempo than in efforts to compete with the clarinet in a prestissimo.⁸²

Stylistic aspects of Puzzi's playing

As is evident by these comments, technical virtuosity as an end in itself -- particularly when it fails to take into account the basic character of the instrument -- was musically ungratifying. While impressive as a spectacle, it was only a subsidiary ingredient of Puzzi's fame. The distinction that elevated him to the status of acclaimed artist was his command of style. His innate understanding of this intangible aspect of musicianship was the third element that critics constantly noted in their assessments of Puzzi's playing. Their praise was expressed in comments about his 'irreproachable taste', 'manner of pleasing', 'feeling' and 'expression'.⁸³ While it has been possible to evaluate objectively the technical aspects of Puzzi's playing through a study of his instruments and music, little specific material remains to quantify the nuances of taste and expression that were the hallmarks of his mastery. However, a more general exploration of Puzzi's musical environment combined with the knowledge we have gleaned

81. *Musical World*, vol. 18 no. 31 (3 August 1843): 264, cited by Morley-Pegge, p. 117.

82. Morley-Pegge, p. 72.

83. *Musical World*, vol. 32 no.22 (3 June 1854): 376; *Ibid*, vol. 33 no. 21 (26 May 1855): 333; *QMMR*, vol. 5 (1823): 266.

about his instrument and repertoire provides a vital key for gaining insight into Puzzi's vaunted style and leads us again to the voice.

Most obviously, it has been noted that Puzzi's activities as a performer, arranger, agent and impresario centred around singing. Not only would this have shaped his career and determined his selection of repertoire, as has been discussed in the first part of this dissertation, but the highly defined stylistic hallmarks of early-Romantic Italian vocal technique would have been naturally adopted by a horn player whose primary source of music was the Italian opera and, more importantly, who spent a substantial amount of time performing with and listening to the opera's leading singers. The period from 1820 to 1840, when the Rossinian ideal of *bel canto* style was the exemplar of vocal technique, has been described as 'a Golden Age for vocal art'.⁸⁴ These twenty years also coincide with the height of Puzzi's activities as a soloist. During this time, vocal expression and taste were epitomised by singers such as Alboni, Sontag, Pasta, Velluti, Donizelli, Tamburini, Lablache and Galli, who sang in a manner characterised by lightness, purity of tone and exceptional agility. Puzzi performed with all of these singers as an obbligato accompanist and even recruited some of them to sing at the King's Theatre. The sensitive ensemble playing for which Puzzi was noted when he was performing with these singers as an obbligato accompanist would have demanded an acute awareness of their approach to tone, phrasing, dynamics and other interpretive nuances. A further degree of discernment would have been required when Puzzi was performing one of his arrangements of a multiple voice piece in which the horn was substituted for a singer, such as his adaptation of 'Dolce conforto', a soprano and alto duet from Mercadante's *Il giuramento*, in which Puzzi played the alto line (see

84. Rodolfo Celletti, *A History of Bel Canto*, tr. Frederick Fuller (Oxford, 1991), p. 135.

musical example no. 8). On an even more fundamental level, Puzzi's intrinsic understanding of good *bel canto* style, as is demonstrated by his acknowledged expertise in judging singers as an agent, would have shaped and informed performances of his solo repertoire.

It is clear that audiences and critics alike during the 'Golden Age' of the voice held up the conventions of *bel canto* style as a yardstick for judging the merits of all singers and that this would have extended to a soloist such as Puzzi, who performed on a particularly 'vocal' instrument and culled most of his repertoire from the Italian opera. Among readers and critics whose musical perception was grounded in contemporary Italian opera, grace, taste and correct expression served as bywords that would have been understood to acknowledge Puzzi's mastery of and adherence to the rules of interpretation as practised in the Rossinian tradition of *bel canto*.

In addition to Puzzi's close contact with the style that was the paragon of expression in its time, the hand horn -- particularly when played in the French-derived manner espoused by Puzzi -- served as an optimal vehicle for Rossinian *bel canto* expression. Rossini's ideal of *bel canto* singing is said to have been constructed around three main premises: the possession of a naturally beautiful voice with an even tone throughout the range, the ability to sing coloratura passages in an effortless manner, and mastery of an expressive style 'that could not be taught but was assimilated from listening to the best Italian exponents'.⁸⁵ Examination of these criteria and of the methods employed by composers and performers to achieve them reveals that the goals and techniques of *bel canto* singing and virtuoso hand horn playing were very similar.

85. Owen Jander, 'Bel canto', *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, ed. Stanley Sadie, vol. 1 (London: 1992), p. 381.

Pureness and warmth of tone was the foundation of superior singing and horn playing during Puzzi's era. Equally essential was the ability to sustain an even quality of tone throughout the range of the voice. It will be remembered that achieving parity between open and hand stopped notes in the horn's solo register was one of the primary precepts of the French school of hand horn playing and dictated the positioning of the hand within the horn bell in its relatively covered position. The capacity to produce a large spectrum of tone colours and shadings, however, was also a fundamental requirement of the *bel canto* singer. According to singing pedagogue and composer Reynaldo Hahn, he should be able to produce

not three, four, or five sonorities but in fact ten, twenty or thirty. The voice had to be moulded in an infinite degree, passing through all the colours of the sound prism.⁸⁶

Not only could the horn perfectly execute the *messa di voce* that was the singer's starting point for tonal inflection, but it also had access to the rich tonal palette that could be obtained through variations in hand position and breath control. While a player generally strove to produce an even scale, the hand in the bell could be used to create a number of striking effects for heightened expression, such as producing a brassy, buzzing sound (like the *gestopft* effects called for by Richard Strauss and Mahler in their orchestral works) or to veil the tone to increase the intensity of a pianissimo or create the illusion of an echo. The hand could also be removed from the bell to produce a ringing *fortissimo* or conjure up the images and emotions represented by the horn of the hunt. In the previous discussion of enharmonic notes and hand positions, it has been demonstrated that a horn player could sometimes choose to play notes

⁸⁶. Celletti, pp. 5-6.

open or covered, in much the same way that string players could select an open string or various stopped alternatives. Hand technique made the horn unique among wind instruments in the possession of this tonal palette and made it especially suitable for *bel canto* interpretation.

While they were sometimes perceived primarily as showcases for virtuoso display, elaborate coloratura passages and *fioriture* in early nineteenth-century Italian opera, both as improvised by the performer and written out by the composer, were intended to transmit emotional impact and nuances that words could not convey.⁸⁷ For this reason, agility, lightness and ease of technique were of paramount importance in focusing the listener's attention on the emotional subtleties of the music and not on the physical feat of virtuosity itself. Naturally for Puzzi, who had no recourse to lyrics, technical mastery would have been especially crucial, as it was the only conduit for the emotional expression of the arias he performed.

To facilitate this ease of technique, *bel canto* repertoire was constructed and performed within a limited tessitura and dynamic range. A Rossinian aria seldom exceeded an overall span of two octaves and the most demanding emotional and technical passages were written in the middle of the voice's range, where the singer would have been able to exercise utmost control over every aspect of execution.⁸⁸ These parameters read like a primer for horn composition in the *cor-mixte* style. In both instances, emphasis is placed on an intense amount of highly refined virtuosity within the comparatively small space of the voice or horn's most tractable registers. Although Rossini advocated a full-bodied tone for

87. For an extensive discussion of Rossini's use of ornamentation as an expressive device, see Celletti pp. 140-142.

88. Celletti, pp. 148-149.

the performance of slow, lyrical *cantabile* sections of an aria, he felt that ornate coloratura singing called for 'a lighter type of emission and less emotional form of expression'; the use of too much volume 'ends in forced, strident sounds, and agility passages are not executed cleanly'.⁸⁹ It has already been noted that Dauprat's horn method gave similar warnings about the production of 'forced' sound and clumsy execution as the result of playing too loudly in florid passages.⁹⁰ In summarising the essential elements of hand horn technique and tone production, Anthony Baines wrote that

the differences in quality between open and stopped sounds were minimised almost to the vanishing point by . . . particularly. . . not forcing the stopped notes (except in the occasional *sf*). Thus, the hand horn was played at a modern dynamic level when passages contained stopped notes.⁹¹

Because of these strong links between *bel canto* singing and horn playing, and owing to Puzzi's close association to the style's leading vocal exponents, the conventions of contemporary vocal practice can serve as a framework for constructing hypotheses about some of the less documented and elusive aspects of Puzzi's performance technique. Vibrato is one such issue. Fitzpatrick posits that vibrato was a regular part of Bohemian hand horn playing in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and cites a contemporary testimonial of the horn's adeptness at producing vibrato, although he does not discuss whether it would have been constant, as the term is generally understood to imply in modern usage, or

89. Celletti, p. 149

90. Dauprat, tr. and ed. Roth, p. 29.

91. Anthony Baines, *Brass Instruments: Their History and Development* (New York, 1993), p. 168.

if it was used more selectively in the manner of an ornament.⁹² He concludes that because the French school of horn playing was a derivative of the Bohemian tradition, these players would have also used vibrato, although it 'was less rampant there [in France] before the Second World War than at present [1970]'.⁹³ Following on from Fitzpatrick's assertions, one could suggest that vibrato was part of early nineteenth-century French hand horn playing and as such, would have most likely been present in Puzzi's playing.

However, when the vocal practice of the Italian singers who monopolised the stage in both Paris and London during the first forty years of the 1800s is considered, a conflicting scenario emerges. While absolute information about the origins and emergence of vibrato remains elusive, scholars have posited that it was not a regular part of *bel canto* style and that good singing technique in the nineteenth century 'ruled out uncontrolled or very pronounced vibrato'.⁹⁴ With regard to singing in England during Puzzi's career, Thurston Dart writes that

The incessant vibrato which has so regrettably infected nine out of ten singers of the present day [1954] could not be obtained with the methods of breath control taught by the finest eighteenth- and nineteenth-century singing teachers. The evidence of early recording shows that even fifty years ago it was used with the utmost care.⁹⁵

It is noteworthy that a survey of horn methods from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries has yielded no reference to vibrato and that

92. Fitzpatrick, 180-181. With reference to vibrato, Fitzpatrick cites the article on the horn in the *Jahrbuch der Tonkunst von Wien und Prag* (1796), p. 193 (Fitzpatrick provides no further publication details for his source).

93. Fitzpatrick, p. 180.

94. Greta Moens-Haenen, 'Vibrato', *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, ed. Stanley Sadie, vol. 4 (London, 1992), p. 938.

95. Thurston Dart, *The Interpretation of Music*, 4th ed. (London, 1975), p. 50, n.1, cited by Peter Giles, *The History and Technique of the Counter-tenor* (Aldershot, 1994), p. 327.

the technique is not commented upon in reviews of Puzzi's performances. In response to this lack of information about vibrato in Bohemian horn playing and, by extension, its derivative schools, Fitzpatrick concludes that

The vibrato seems to have been so intrinsically a part of the vocal tone quality and delivery of the great horn-players that it did not call forth separate comment from the critics: obviously if a player sang upon his horn, he sang with a natural vibrato.⁹⁶

Greta Moens-Haenen interprets this lack of information as proof that 'Continuous vibrato was neither discussed nor taught'.⁹⁷ She also posits that 'naturally' occurring vibrato only began to appear as a result of the tone production techniques that singers and instrumentalists developed to cope with the larger orchestras and concert venues of the later nineteenth century.⁹⁸ In light of the above evidence, it seems most unlikely that a regular vibrato, such as the canary-like warble of modern Russian horn players that Fitzpatrick attributes to these players' Bohemian origins, would have been part of Puzzi's playing.⁹⁹

A thorough assessment of how Puzzi might have used vibrato would not be complete without consideration of another approach to singing that was emerging towards the later part of his career and of the unique attributes of the famed tenor Giovanni Rubini, a singer with whom Puzzi frequently performed. While Rubini was capable of Rossinian *bel canto* coloratura flexibility and virtuosity, he was an innovator of many of the techniques that

⁹⁶. Fitzpatrick, p. 180.

⁹⁷. Greta Moens-Haenen, p. 938.

⁹⁸. Ibid.

⁹⁹. Fitzpatrick, p. 180, n. 2.

would shape the new style and role of the Romantic tenor as it was beginning to appear in the operas of Donizetti and Bellini in the 1830s. The style of this writing was 'studiously plain' and melismatic figures were decreasingly used, particularly as singers trained in the *bel canto* tradition retired.¹⁰⁰ More volume was demanded from the voice and greater emphasis was placed on realism (tenors, instead of castrati or contraltos appearing *en travesti*, were now the lovers) and a more histrionic type of drama; traits that would reach their full realisation in the *verismo* operas of Verdi. The 'operatic sob' was one of Rubini's contributions to this new form of expression.¹⁰¹ He is also often attributed with having introduced a constant vibrato that was 'conspicuous and fast' to Romantic opera singing.¹⁰² As the result of this aspect of his technique, 'at one period he was derided as a goat!'¹⁰³

Chapter two of this dissertation noted Puzzi's frequent performances with Rubini. Their collaboration took on many forms, from the performance of large ensemble pieces for voices and horn such as the preghiera 'Dal tuo stellato soglio' from Rossini's *Mosè in Egitto* to numerous arrangements where Puzzi would have accompanied Rubini as an obbligato player. The writing of some of these pieces called for an interaction between horn and voice that was more typical of a duet than a solo with a secondary obbligato line. The canzonet 'La potenza d'amore', written for Rubini by Tadolini with a horn obbligato composed by Puzzi, is one such example. On many occasions, the horn and voice must navigate

100. Celletti, p. 194.

101. Giles, *History and Technique of the Counter-Tenor*, p. 266.

102. *Ibid.*, pp. 326-327.

103. *Ibid.*, p. 266.

florid lines in rhythmic unison and sustain longer notes together (see musical example no. 9, bars 33-36). Such writing would have required Puzzi to mirror Rubini's expressive and stylistic nuances, including the use of vibrato.

Puzzi's emulation of singers' most distinguishing traits may have extended to his solo performances. Handbills often advertised that Puzzi would play arias 'as sung by' the performer who 'created' the operatic role. No doubt, this slogan was an advertising device intended to exploit the excitement and recognition that the names of the season's most popular singers would have generated and may have had no further meaning than this. However, instrumental renditions of arias in the style of various singers were commonplace.¹⁰⁴ Thus, it may well have also implied that Puzzi would have incorporated signature attributes associated with the performer in question into his interpretation, such as particular patterns of ornamentation.

Through his association with Rubini, Puzzi would have known the beginnings of our modern notion of constant vibrato and he may well have affected it when emulating Rubini in a solo arrangement or when performing in concert with him. However, Rubini's entry into Puzzi's musical world in 1839 does not occur until comparatively late in Puzzi's career and the majority of the singers with whom he performed and had contact were exponents of the Rossinian *bel canto* tradition. Therefore, Puzzi's general use of vibrato most likely adhered to traditional vocal guidelines for its

104. One such example is Moscheles's *Gems à la Malibran*, described as 'a light pot-pourri of her most popular songs, written in the closest possible imitation of her original "fioriture", which Moscheles had committed to memory' (Charlotte Moscheles, *Life of Moscheles, with Selections from his Diaries and Correspondence, by his Wife*, tr. A.D. Coleridge, vol. 1 [London, 1873], p. 243).

usage, which instructed that it should be reserved for 'special effects of decoration and . . . passages or moments of heightened emotion'.¹⁰⁵

These ventures into the world of contemporary vocal performance practice are journeys into the heart of Puzzi's musical milieu. As such, they offer an invaluable key to deciphering the nebulous attributes of taste, style, grace and feeling that were the intangible essence of his renown. This line of inquiry is also an extremely practical tool. Further investigation of the interpretive practices of the Rossinian *bel canto* tradition and of specific singers would no doubt continue to provide a window of insight for ascertaining further specifics about Puzzi's music and establishing suggestions for a performing edition in cases where his manuscripts offer little written information about the particulars of style.

PUZZI'S INFLUENCE ON HORN PLAYING IN ENGLAND

Puzzi's position as the Royal Academy of Music's first professor of horn
One of the leading ways in which national ideas about sound, technique and choice of instrument are established and solidified is through teaching. This has been effectively demonstrated in Paris by the Conservatoire. The formidable phalanx of hand horn virtuosi who taught at this institution and the information disseminated through the regular publication of Conservatoire tutors was unquestionably the backbone of the hand horn's lengthy reign in France. England's first national institution of musical instruction came into existence in 1823 when the

¹⁰⁵ Giles, *History and Technique of the Counter-Tenor*, p. 327.

Royal Academy of Music opened its doors under the auspices of Lord Burghersh (John Fane). Although it has been suggested that Puzzi did not teach, his name appears in both contemporary and later accounts of the Royal Academy of Music as this institution's first professor of horn.¹⁰⁶ Unfortunately, records of the Academy's early years are incomplete but a selection of programmes, committee minutes, student records and various ephemera confirm that Puzzi was active as a teacher and performer at the Academy until at least 1838 and possibly longer (see illustration 4.6). Various instructive works, including the aforementioned *Studio in treneta esercizi progressivi per il corno* and several pedagogical solos provide evidence that Puzzi taught.¹⁰⁷

Puzzi's appointment at the Academy was almost undoubtedly a result of his membership of the Philharmonic Society, which had its own plans for the foundation of a national music school. Puzzi's name is present in the Society's list of professors in its 1822 proposal to establish a 'Royal Academy of Music'.¹⁰⁸ Although the Academy was eventually established by London's musical aristocracy later in 1822 with King George IV as patron, the list of professors teaching at the Academy upon its opening varies remarkably little from the personnel proposed by the Philharmonic in the above-mentioned roster. This reflects the stature and influence of the Philharmonic Society as a concentration of London's most prominent professional musicians and illustrates how Puzzi's initial involvement with the Society continued to further his professional

106. Morley-Pegge, p. 161. For records of the RAM's early professors, see W.W. Cazalet, *The History of the Royal Academy of Music* (London, 1854), p. 23; and Frederick Corder, *A History of the Royal Academy of Music from 1822 to 1922* (London, 1922).

107. See works catalogue nos. 68-72. The writing of the *Studio in treneta esercizi* was clearly prompted by Puzzi's appointment at the Academy. It bears an 1817 watermark and lists a 'Mr. Puzzi' as the author, indicating that it was intended for use in England.

108. Smart Papers, vol. 1, Add. MS 41771, fol. 44r., British Library.

interests throughout his career.

24

MUSICAL DEPARTMENT.

Principal, Mr. CIPRIANI POTTER.

Leader & Director, Mr. F. CRAMER. Conductor, Mr. C. LUCAS.

Harmony and Composition.	Piano-forte.	Double Bass.
BISHOP, H. R.	ANDERSON, Mrs.	HOWELL, J.
POTTER, C.	CRAMER, J. B.	Clarinet.
Goss, J.	MOSCHELES, J.	WILLMAN, T. L.
LUCAS, C.	POTTER, C.	Flute.
DEVAUX, A.	HOLMES, W. H.	CARD, W.
MUDIE, T. M.	DORRELL, Miss	RICHARDSON, J.
MACFARREN, G. A.	FOSTER, Miss	
	SEGUIN, Mrs. W.	
	BENNETT, W. S.	
	DEVAUX, A.	Oboe.
Italian Singing.	DORRELL, W.	COOKE, G.
CRIVELLI, Signor	MUDIE, T. M.	KEATING, J.
CARRARA, Signor		
BENEDICT, M.	Harp.	Horn.
NEGRI, Signor	CHATTERTON, J. B.	PUZZI, Signor
	LORD, W.	PLATT, H.
English Singing.	NEILSON, E. J.	
		Bassoon.
SMART Sir G.	Violin.	TULLY, J.
KNYVETT, W.	CRAMER, F.	
ELLIOTT, J.	MORI, N.	Trombone.
BENNETT, J.	SEYMOUR, C. A.	SMITHIES, J.
BURNETT, Mrs.	BLAGROVE, H. G.	
	PATEY, C. A. \	Trumpet.
		HARPER, T.
Sight Singing, and Concerted Music.	Violoncello.	
ELLIOTT, J.	LINDLEY, R.	Italian Language.
	LUCAS, C.	BARRACCO, Signor

Librarian, Mr. GOODWIN. Secretary, Mr. W. P. SMITH.

Bankers, Messrs. COUTTS & Co.

Illustration 4.6

Royal Academy of Music prospectus, 1838. (Reproduced by kind permission of the Royal Academy of Music)

Puzzi would appear to have been the only horn teacher among the eighteen professors employed when the Academy opened to students on 24 March 1823. While a note appears in the Academy's 1822 minutes 'To write to Mr. Ferrari naming him one of the Professors of Singing to the Academy -- the likes to Messrs. Petrides for the Horn' and the brothers' names appear alongside Puzzi's in an early manuscript listing of all the 'Bodies of the Academy', they do not seem to have taken up a teaching post.¹⁰⁹ No subsequent mention of the Petrides brothers' names occurs, providing no evidence that they had any association with the Academy in the short time between the opening of the institution and their departure from England after the 1825 concert season.

Puzzi had one pupil among the twenty-six original resident students aged ten to fourteen: a W.M. Daniel who was recorded as being enrolled at the Academy from March 1823 to February 1831 and noted as a 'very talented player, [who] settled in America'.¹¹⁰ It is difficult to imagine what Daniel's horn studies would have been like. A timetable drawn up for the male students in 1823 indicates that 'lessons on the Horn' were held from 11.00 to 12.00 on Mondays and Thursdays, suggesting that Daniel received tuition twice a week. While examination of this timetable reveals it to contain many impracticalities, and therefore unlikely to have been followed, it does provide some indication of the amount of instruction provided and how much time students were expected to practise.

The four hours of daily practice scheduled were undertaken communally, a situation which aroused incredulity from outside observers:

109. Committee Minutes 1822 - 1828, p. 5, Royal Academy of Music Archives; Centenary Scrapbook, fol. 1r., Royal Academy of Music Archives.

110. R.A.M. 1838: Book of Professors and Subscribers, p. 24, Royal Academy of Music Archives.

The Committee alludes to that of several of the pupils practising their lessons in the same room at the same time. . . and have to state that in all the Conservatoires of Italy, from whence the most able professors have sprung, this is the uniform custom; and so far from being prejudicial, it is universally allowed to be highly beneficial; it forces attention, it prevents the pupil from trusting to his ear (!) and obliges him to attend to his notes.¹¹¹

During a visit to the Academy, Gardiner observed that ‘The horns were in a double closet, the oboes and flutes in the garret, and the trumpets in a cockloft under the skylight’.¹¹²

Aside from Daniel, only five other horn students are recorded in the Academy’s register during Puzzi’s period of association with the institution: J.F. Hopgood, H. Banks, W. Bull, and Henry and W. Distin. Unfortunately, these records do not indicate their teacher. How involved Puzzi would have been in the teaching of these students is unknown. By 1826, Puzzi’s orchestral colleague Henry Platt is noted in Academy concert programmes as a ‘professor employed in the Academy’ and Daniel is marked as being a ‘sub professor and student’.¹¹³ While Puzzi’s name lacks any such distinctions in these programmes, it continues to appear above those of Platt and Daniel in the listing of the ‘Musical Department’ that prefaces the annual list of Academy subscribers. Clearly, Daniel assumed most of the responsibility of teaching elementary and second-study students, while Platt would appear to have taken on most of the senior teaching responsibilities. In his description of musical life in London in the 1820s, Fétis records that Platt was the Academy’s primary horn teacher:

The horn is not cultivated with as much success, although

111. Frederick Corder, *A History of the Royal Academy of Music* (London, 1922), p. 12.

112. William Gardiner, *Music and Friends; or, Pleasant Recollections of a Dilettante* (London, 1853), pp. 806-807.

113. ‘Royal Academic Concerts’ (London, 6 March 1826, King’s Antient Concert Rooms), unnumbered concert programme, Royal Academy of Music Archives.

one finds in London a man with much aptitude for this instrument. This artist, named Mr. Puzzi, . . . does not teach at all. Mr. Platt, who teaches at the Academy, appears to me little suited for this employment.¹¹⁴

At this time, as is reflected by his decision to relinquish his orchestral posts in 1826, it seems that Puzzi was interested in reducing the limitations imposed by regular commitments. Yet Puzzi's name continued to head the list of horn tutors at the Academy. In light of the comparatively small number of horn students and the questionable extent to which Puzzi would have had contact with them, his general affiliation with the Academy and his visibility as principal horn at its concerts was his primary value to the institution. Surviving programmes clearly indicate that Puzzi was prominently featured as a performer in Academy concerts. His participation in the 1826 Royal Academic Concerts is well documented. This series of six concerts, advertised as offering a selection of music provided by neither the Concert of Antient Music nor the Philharmonic Society, represented the Academy's most earnest plans to date to raise support and income from the public, who could purchase a season subscription for the sum of four guineas (see illustration 4.7). The repertoire of these concerts, 'without any limit as to style, age, or description of Music . . . both of Vocal and Instrumental', met its advertised claim and presented a potpourri of composers and works that was more similar in content to a benefit concert than the programmes being produced by the two groups mentioned above.¹¹⁵

114. Le cor n'est pas cultivé avec autant de succès, quoiqu'on trouve à Londres un homme de beaucoup de talent pour cet instrument. Cet artiste, nommé M. Puzzi, . . . ne donne point de leçons. M. Platt, qui enseigne dans l'Académie, me paraît peu propre à cet emploi (F.J. Fétis, *Curiosités historiques de la musique* [Paris, 1830], p. 220, tr. E.B. Strauchen).

115. Prospectus, 'Royal Academic Concerts 1826', Royal Academy of Music Archives.

BAND.

VIOLINS.	DOUBLE BASSES.
• CRAMER	Dragonetti
• SPAGNOLETTI	• Anfossi
• KIESEWETTER	• Taylor
• MORI	† • Harrington
Watts	Bond
Wagstaff	Wilson
Moralt	FLUTES.
Mountain	• Nicholson
• Oury	† Price
† • Ella	OBOES.
• Watkins	Whitton
Bellon	† • Cook
Griesbach	CLARIONETS.
Wodarch	• Willman
Anderson	Powell
Simonet	BASSOONS.
Litolf	• Mackintosh
Nicks	Tully
Nadaud	† Smith
Collard	HORNS.
† • Seymour	Puzzi
† • Mawkes	• Platt
† Patey	Shuncke
† Blagrove	Kienback
† Baker	• Daniels
VIOLAS.	TRUMPETS.
Ashley	Harper
Daniels	• Norton
Ware	Signori Gambati
Dance	TRUMPETS.
† Goodwin (<i>Librarian</i>)	Mariotti
† • Phipps	• Smithers
† • J. B. Taylor	• Shoengen
VIOLONCELLOS.	DRUMS.
• R. Lindley	† Pye
Crouch	PICCOLO.
† • Lucas	Card
W. Lindley, jun.	
C. Lindley	
Brooks	

☞ The Choruses will be composed of the PUPILS of the ROYAL ACADEMY of MUSIC, and a select number from the ANTIENT CONCERT and ITALIAN OPERA.

• Professors employed in the Academy.
† • Sub-Professors and Students.
† Students.

SYNOPSIS OF THE CONCERT.

PART I.

Symphony in G minor. *Mozart.*
Duetto, Signora BONINI and Miss BACON,
"Parto ti lascio." *Mayer.*
Cavatina, Signor VELLUTI, "La tua diletta." . . *Pavesi.*
Septuor—Violin, Mr. KIESEWETTER—Tenor,
Mr. MORALT—Violoncello, Mr. LINDLEY—
Double Bass, Mr. DRAGONETTI—Clarinet,
Mr. WILLMAN—Horn, Mr. PUZZI—and
Bassoon, Mr. MACKINTOSH. *Beethoven.*
Terzetto, Signora BONINI, Signor VELLUTI,
and Signor PELLEGRINI, "Oh ciel del cui." . *Pacini.*
Aria, Madame PASTA, "Ah che forse."
Corno Obligato, Signor PUZZI. *Pacini.*

PART II.

Overture. (*Euryanthe.*) *Weber.*
Duetto, Madame PASTA and Signor CURIONI,
"E deserto il bosco." *Mayer.*
Cavatina, Signora BONINI, e Coro, "Dell' arpe." . *Pavesi.*
Terzetto, Misses MARINONI and GRANT, and
Mr. A. SAPIO, (Pupils of the Royal Academy
of Music,) "In quel soggiorno." . (*Tebaldo.*) . *Morlachi.*
Cavatina, Miss BACON, "Frenar vorrei."
Terzetto, Madame PASTA, Signor PELLEGRINI,
& Signor DE BEGNIS, "Ah taci ingiusto core." *Mozart.*
Finale, Signora BONINI, Misses MARINONI & GRANT,
Signori CURIONI, DE BEGNIS, PELLEGRINI, and
A. SAPIO, "Viva, viva." (*L'Italiane in Algeri*) *Rossini.*

Illustration 4.7

Programme from the sixth Royal Academic Concert given on 5 June 1826 in support of the Royal Academy of Music. Note Puzzi's appearance as an obbligato player. (Reproduced by kind permission of the Royal Academy of Music)

None of the players would have realised any significant earnings from these concerts, least of all those who were associated with the Academy and were expected to donate their services to aid the institution's perennially struggling finances. It is also quite doubtful that Puzzi would have drawn much money for the little teaching that he did do. Professors'

salaries were constantly being trimmed. Potter's £34.13s for half a year of piano tuition to multiple pupils in 1827 was comparatively generous by Academy standards but could hardly compete with the one guinea per lesson fee that teachers such as Smart and Ries charged their private students.¹¹⁶ While such lucrative private teaching options would not have presented themselves to a brass player, the question of the impetus for Puzzi's association with the Academy remains.

Despite the lack of strong financial incentives, Puzzi's presence at the Academy was prudent professionally. It certainly would have maintained his favourable relationship with Lord Burghersh, an important patron and prominent figure amongst London's musical aristocracy. In much the same way, it would have helped to ensure Puzzi's standing with Smart, Potter, and other influential colleagues who were an integral part of London's musical hierarchy. Doubtless, England's first music academy, with its list of society subscribers and royal patrons, was also a prominent place to be seen. As Puzzi's affiliation with the Academy was of value to the institution, the relationship was also beneficial to him.

So far, no records have been discovered that reveal any information regarding when Puzzi's association with the Academy may have ended. The existence of a set of harmony lessons written by Puzzi, entitled *Studi d'armonia* and bearing the inscription 'a Londra 1852', indicates that Puzzi was still engaged in teaching even at this point in his career.¹¹⁷ The contents of the sketchbook consist of a series of hastily penned exercises in basic harmonic theory with formal explanatory notes in Italian. The date clearly rules out the possibility that the sketch book was a repository for Puzzi's notes as a student of harmony, but instead suggests that it was an

116. Committee Minutes 1822 - 1828, p. 215, Royal Academy of Music Archives.

117. See works catalogue no. 72.

instructional tutor. This may indicate that Puzzi taught harmony at the Academy, although it is far more probable that its use was closer to home where it would have served as an aid in teaching his three daughters, or where his wife would have used it in the instruction of her singing pupils.

It is difficult to know if Puzzi undertook any horn teaching outside the Academy. While correspondence and compositions discussed in chapters one and five (see pp. 26, 202-204) suggest that Puzzi was peddling himself as a singing master in London while he worked to establish himself among the aristocracy, it is highly improbable that his private teaching activities would have involved the horn to any extent. While countless examples abound for the violin, voice, piano, and harp, the present author has located no significant examples of dilettante amateur horn players in nineteenth-century London.¹¹⁸ No records have yet been found to indicate if Puzzi might have taught any of his younger colleagues such as Henry Jarrett, Henry Platt or James Rae.

It is unfortunate but not surprising that Puzzi did not establish a legacy of students or leave a testimonial of horn playing in England during his era in the form of a major pedagogical treatise such as those written by his Paris contemporaries. While the fledgling Academy struggled for financial viability and effective and organised leadership, Dauprat, Gallay and the other Conservatoire professors enjoyed the rich environment of an established and well supported institution of musical instruction. Such a setting naturally created an environment of influence from which a clearly defined national school of playing could evolve. A strong tradition of horn teaching did not emerge in England until the turn of the century with Adolf Borsdorf. Puzzi's influence on horn playing in England was

118. Barham Livius, a later owner of Puzzi's 1814 *cor-solo* now housed at the Horniman Museum, is the only potential amateur horn student of whom the present author is aware. See appendix 3, section A for Livius's biographical details.

one of example, not of instruction.

Puzzi's position as nineteenth-century England's most visible horn player

The lack of a firmly established national school of music and legacy of students makes it difficult to discern easily if Puzzi's prominence and celebrity as a player wielded any significant influence over horn playing in England during the first half of the nineteenth century. Thus, the horn playing landscape in England must be examined for more general clues and trends during the period embraced by, and surrounding, Puzzi's London career.

Throughout the eighteenth century, the dominant influence in horn playing and design in England can clearly be traced to the Austro-Bohemian school. Although the horn is generally believed to have been introduced into England from the hunt of Louis XIV when the Royal Buckhounds were reestablished by Charles II in 1661, by the eighteenth century, the German aristocracy boasted the most impressive hunt. Touring English aristocrats who sought to recreate an element of this grandeur naturally turned to Germany and Austria for a supply of instruments and players.¹¹⁹ Little is known about the lives of the horn makers working in England during this period, but names such as Hofmaster, Rodenbostel and Winkings suggest teutonic origins. Austro-Bohemian dominance continued as the horn evolved into a refined musical instrument. Fitzpatrick cites the wave of German musicians who immigrated to England during Handel's lifetime and concludes that 'there is no reason to doubt that his horn-players were products of the parent

119. Jonathan Harris, 'The French Horn in England 1660 - c. 1809: The Instrument and its Makers', M.St. diss. (University of Oxford, 1996), p. 2. This thesis provides a summary of horn makers working in England during the eighteenth century and a detailed survey of their surviving instruments.

Austrian school as well'.¹²⁰ Punto visited London on at least two occasions in 1771 and 1777.

When Puzzi settled in London in 1817, Austro-Bohemians were still the most noted and prevalent horn players in England. Shortly after his arrival, Puzzi was announced to be the finest horn player to be heard in England 'since the celebrated horn player Zunka, of Berlin'.¹²¹ A study of orchestral rosters from the 1820s reveals that players of Austro-Bohemian origin made up the majority of the elite group that played in London's top ensembles when Puzzi took up orchestral playing (see appendix 1.2). Most notable among these performers were Peter and Joseph Petrides, Bohemian brothers who enjoyed celebrity status throughout Europe as a duet pair and who were resident in England for the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The Bohemian presence was manifested not only by such celebrity players, but extended throughout the entire section. G. Kellner continued to play in the Philharmonic Society after the departure of the Petrides brothers in 1825. Keilbach and various members of the Schunke family filled out the sections of these orchestras in the 1820s and 1830s and appeared at provincial festivals as well.

The Austro-Bohemian presence is also exhibited by the horns available in England during the early nineteenth century. Many instruments of Germanic origin survive in English collections, although their provenance is not usually complete enough to establish how or when they arrived in this country. A more reliable indicator is provided by horns made by English builders and by the type of instruments that English dealers were importing. While a conclusive survey of these horns

120. Fitzpatrick, p. 77.

121. *Morning Post* (14 April 1817): n.p.. 'Zunka' is a phonetic spelling of Schunke, a family that produced two generations of horn players that were active in London during Puzzi's life.

is beyond the scope of this dissertation, the number that are distinctively Austro-Bohemian in style or origin exceeds isolated examples. Horns by Smith of Wolverhampton and London makers Pace, Sandbach, Köhler and Key all exhibit the wide bell throat and abrupt bell flare profile that is a defining characteristic in distinguishing the Austro-Bohemian and French schools of hand horn building.¹²² London maker J. Goodison also responded to the desire for such instruments, as is evident by the exceptionally large dimensions of the bell throat of the instrument in the Bate Collection, Oxford, that bears his name.¹²³ The London music dealer Clementi is known to have imported many wind instruments from Germany in the early nineteenth century, including wide-bore horns.¹²⁴ Morley-Pegge identifies seven horn makers who were active in London during the first thirty-five years of the nineteenth century. The cursory survey above demonstrates that at least five of them were producing examples of distinctly Austro-Bohemian style horns during the period when the narrow-bored Parisian instruments favoured by Puzzi flourished in France.

Throughout much of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, the most distinguishing feature of horn playing in England was its strong preference for French-style narrow bore instruments and a light, buoyant tone colour. While Austro-Bohemian and German players quickly adopted rotary valved horns built in a fixed key and the German double horn had become standard in their orchestras

122. Examples of horns built by Sandbach and Smith can be found in Morley-Pegge, pls. III, VI. The Thomas Key horn referred to is Bate Collection no. 62.

123. Bate Collection, no. 60. Morley-Pegge posits that, because of its construction and features such as a water key, this instrument was probably made by Charles Sax of Brussels and imported and sold by Goodison, who added his mark to it (Morley-Pegge, pl. IV).

124. Morley-Pegge, pl. III.

by 1910, English players adhered steadfastly to piston valve single horns with crooks built by or patterned after Raoux instruments. The German horn was viewed with much animosity by these players, who referred to them as 'cow horns'. The distinctive tone produced by English players using French instruments was epitomised by Dennis Brain, who used a Raoux-Millereau horn as his principal instrument into the 1950s, changing to a horn manufactured by the famous German maker Gebrüder Alexander only shortly before his untimely death in 1957.¹²⁵

Puzzi was the first horn virtuoso to settle in England who was a proponent of the French school of hand horn playing and who used French instruments. Various indicators suggest that his highly visible and lengthy career was the beginning of England's affinity for French horn playing in the truest sense of the word. Puzzi's choice of instruments appears first to have influenced the Petrides brothers, who are said to have switched to Raoux horns after Puzzi made them popular in England.¹²⁶ This would presumably have been at some point prior to their 1825 departure, implying that Puzzi had a relatively rapid impact on horn playing in England. Puzzi's preeminence as a hand horn player surely must have stalled the advance of valve horn playing and would have established the hand horn as the instrument of top rank performers in England.

One of the more interesting and visible testimonies to the sustained popularity of the hand horn in England was the appearance of John Callcott's 'Radius French Horn', which was featured at the 1851 Exhibition at the Crystal Palace in London. Typical French and Belgian omnitonic

125. Jeremy Montagu posits that Dennis Brain deliberately delayed his adoption of the Alexander horn until after the death of his father Aubrey, who had a strong preference for French instruments and was Dennis's principal teacher.

126. Fitzpatrick, p. 191.

horns incorporated up to ten independent lengths of fixed tubing in an attempt to produce an instrument without loose crooks that was capable of playing in all the orchestral keys. These instruments were plagued by excessive weight and unwieldiness. Callcott's ingenious omnitonic horn was based on a compensating system that required only one continuous length of tubing that was as long as the lowest crook (see illustration 4.8). Unlike the valve, the key-changing mechanism of an omnitonic horn did not provide any potential chromatic capacity. These horns still required the player to produce all of the non-harmonic notes with the hand. Callcott's instrument was given glowing endorsements by a long list of London's leading orchestral players including Puzzi¹²⁷

Although Callcott's horn could not compete commercially with valved instruments at such a late date, it is significant that Callcott felt that there was enough of a demand in England in 1851 to devise a better hand horn and that his solution involved an omnitonic system and not valves. Appreciation of this was expressed in the many testimonials that emphasise that the tone of the horn is not altered in any keys -- a common criticism of the valve horn. Charles Harper wrote that he was 'likewise glad to find that the invention does not injure the natural tone of the instrument', illustrating that the fundamental characteristics of the hand horn were still held in high esteem by English players.¹²⁸

127. Puzzi writes 'regarding the French Horn of Mr. Callcott . . . which I have tried, and which I have found a good invention for dispensing with the loose Crooks, and at the same time it does not alter the Tone of the Instrument at all, and I found it in the high Keys more easy to play than any other Horn that I have played' (Excerpt from 1851 Crystal Palace Exhibition catalogue, Morley-Pegge Archive, Bate Collection of Musical Instruments, Oxford, V, 9, f. 2v). Other players whose names appear on the sheet of testimonials are Henry P. Hardy (H.M. Private Band), Charles Harper (Royal Italian Opera, Philharmonic Society, R.A.M.), H. Steglich (H.M.T.), Charles Schroeder (H.M. Private Band), T. Mann (H.M.T., Scott's Fusilier Guards), A. Kielback (R.I.O.), T. Addey (1st Life Guards), Messrs. James Catchpole Sen. and Jun [Jr.]. All names are given as they are printed (H.M.T. - Her Majesty's Theatre, R.I.O. - Royal Italian Opera at Covent Garden).

128. Ibid.

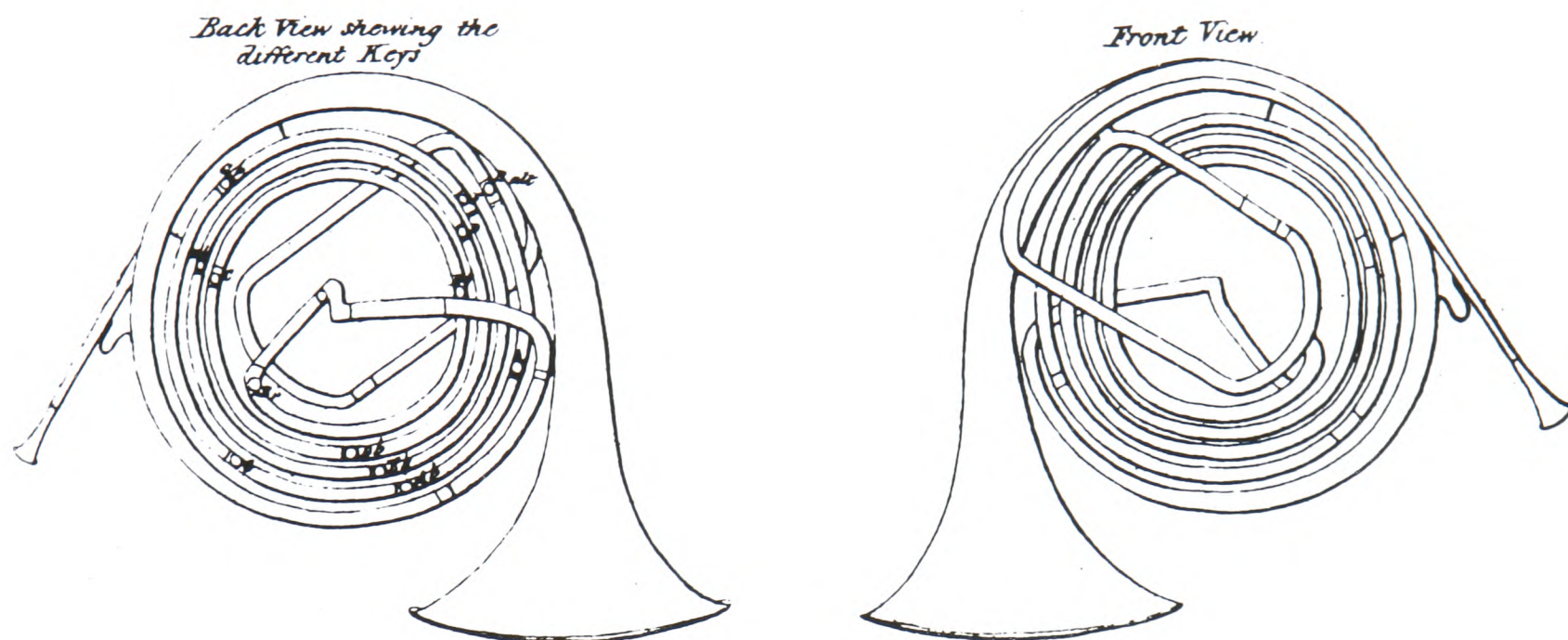


Illustration 4.8

Drawing of Callcott's 'Radius French Horn' from the catalogue of the 1851 Exhibition at the Crystal Palace. Morley-Pegge Archive, Bate Collection of Musical Instruments, Oxford, V, 9, f. 1r.-2v. (Reproduced by kind permission of the Bate Collection of Musical Instruments)

Another noteworthy feature of Callcott's horn are the dimensions of its bell flare. The bore and the throat of the instrument are strikingly narrow. Morley-Pegge writes that while the instrument was invented by Callcott, it was 'almost certainly made by Thomas Key'.¹²⁹ If this is the case, the shape of the instrument is even more significant because it marks a departure from the Germanic profile of Key's earlier horns and embraces the slender dimensions of French hand horns, implying that a clear preference for this type of instrument had developed among players in England (see illustration 4.9).

¹²⁹ . Morley-Pegge, p. 61.

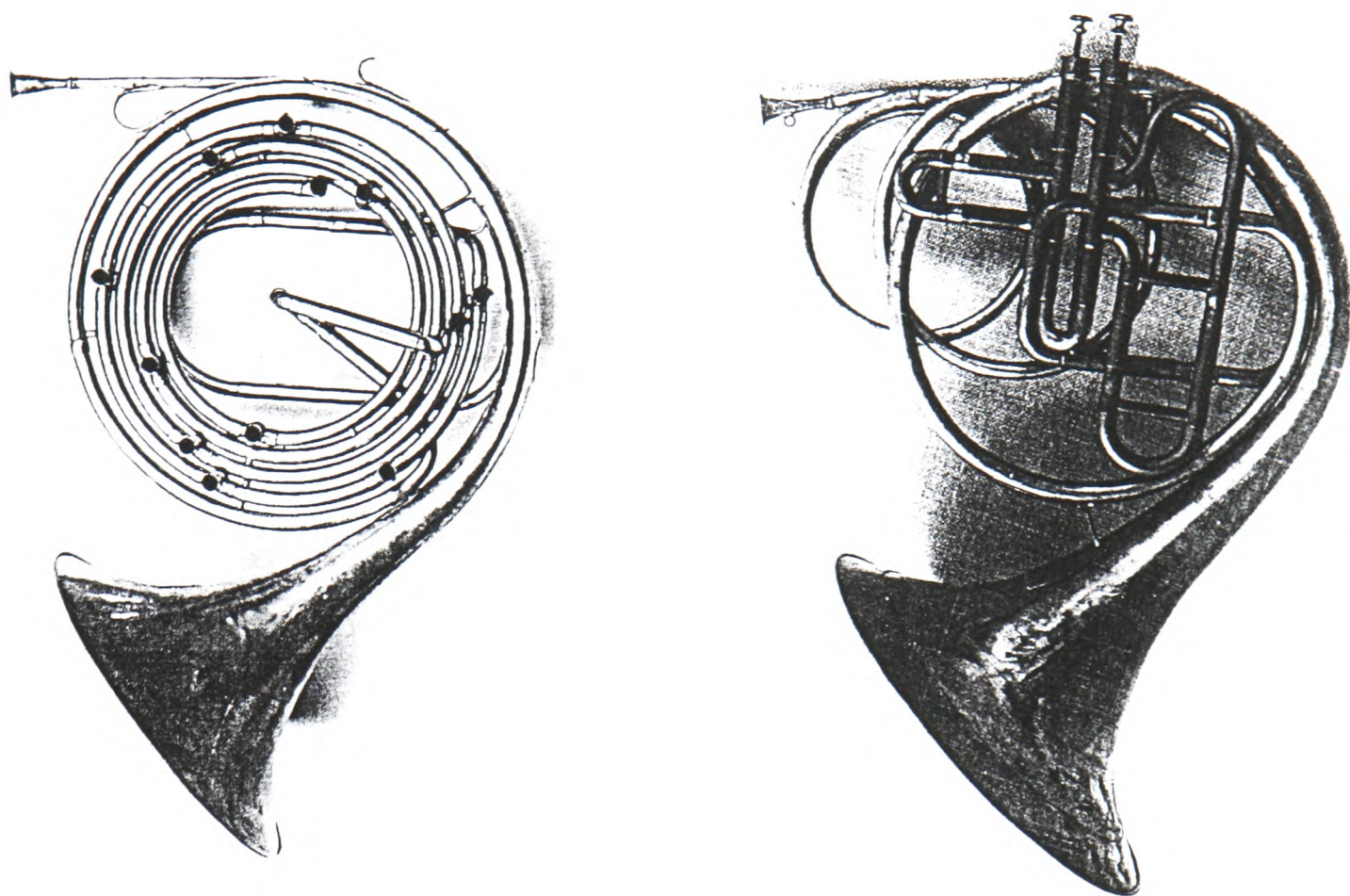


Illustration 4.9

Callcott's 1851 'Radius French Horn' (Bate Collection, 68) and a horn made by Key (Bate Collection, 62) c. 1840. Note the dramatic difference in bell flare and bore profiles. (Jeremy Montagu, *The French Horn* [Prince's Risborough, 1990], pp. 17, 19.)

The desire for French-style instruments by English players continued unabated. A commercially organised expression of this appears in a price list and collection of testimonials gathered by Hanson in 1864, who appears to have been working as an English agent for Labbaye-Raoux. Endorsements were again supplied by most of the leading London players of the time, including noted performer and former Dauprat pupil A.-V.

Paquis, who also served as an English agent for Raoux.¹³⁰ When the German players Friedrich Adolf Borsdorf and Franz Paersch arrived in England in the 1880s, they were obliged to switch to French instruments. Adolf Borsdorf acquired the above-mentioned 1821 L.-J. Raoux *cor d'orchestre* that was first owned by Puzzi. He played this horn throughout most of his career as principal horn in London's orchestras and as a highly influential teacher of over seventy students at the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music (see illustration 4.10).¹³¹

The development of the preference for French instruments in British horn playing and the unique English sound that this spawned is a substantial area of study in its own right that is ripe for further research. A comprehensive and conclusive analysis would have to take into account a much larger group of players and industrial, social and economic conditions as they relate to the expanding commercialisation of music and the music instrument industry in the nineteenth century. Bearing these considerations in mind, it is impossible to appraise the exact extent of Puzzi's influence in establishing the long-lived preference for French instruments and the lighter tone that dominated English horn playing until the Second World War. However, Puzzi's prominence as a player has been clearly established and was such that his technique and choice of instruments was held up as a paragon to be emulated by his contemporaries and their successors.

130. W.F.H. Blandford to Reginald Morley-Pegge, 13 October 1927, Morley-Pegge Archive, VII, pp. 236-237. Testimonials were given by Charles Harper (R.I.O), F. Garthwaite (Coldstream Guards Band, Theatre Royal Drury Lane), J. Handley (H.M.T.), A. Stock (Crystal Palace Orchestra), Henry Probin (Birmingham), T. Taylor (Adelphi Theatre), Catchpole (R.I.O), Mann (R.I.O), Standen (R.I.O), Paquis (H.M.T.), Keevil (H.M.T.), Waterson (H.M.T.), and Morgan (Coldstream Guards Band).

131. Morley-Pegge, p. 167.



Illustration 4.10

Adolf Borsdorf with Puzzi's 1821 Lucien-Joseph Raoux *cor d'orchestre*.
(Reproduced by kind permission of the Royal Academy of Music)

Puzzi arrived in England at a particularly critical and malleable time for British horn playing. When he settled in London, the country was poised to follow either the new Austro-Bohemian or French school of horn playing with regard to instrument preference and attitude towards the adoption of valves. It was ripe for the influence of a prominent player. Horn playing in England would have undoubtedly assumed a much

different shape if a burgeoning valve horn virtuoso such as one of the Lewy brothers had settled here at this time instead of Puzzi. It would indeed have been interesting to witness the results if both had made their careers in London. It is far from coincidental that Adolf Borsdorf left his mark on English horn playing as the first horn of 'God's own Quartet' -- that incomparable London Symphony Orchestra section that included van der Meerschen, T.R. Busby and A.E. Brain -- playing one of the Raoux instruments with which Puzzi made his impress on English horn playing. The culmination of this tradition was reached in the peerless playing of A.E. Brain's grandson Dennis, the first performer to restore to the horn in England the celebrity and artistry as a solo instrument that it enjoyed in the hands of Puzzi and to extend its appeal to new heights through broadcasting and international touring. Although Puzzi left no legacy of students, enduring repertoire or pedagogical materials for the horn, the influence that he projected onto British horn playing for some 125 years is most impressive and is the kernel of the fabled sound and tradition for which Britain's most celebrated players are remembered today.

V

Puzzi's music: The repertoire of a 'primo corno'

It must have been remarked that the horn is coming into vogue, and that it was particularly fashionable at the private metropolitan concerts last season. It owes much of its late celebrity to the beautiful execution of Signor Puzzi.¹

Works in Puzzi's repertoire not composed or arranged by Puzzi --
Puzzi's music -- The sources of Puzzi's repertoire (vocal, instrumental) --
Puzzi the composer.



Puzzi's skill as a performer clearly impressed his listeners, but the use of the words 'vogue' and 'fashionable', particularly when associated with the exclusive institution of the London private concert, allude to the unnamed foundation of his popularity: his carefully selected repertoire. The critic of the *Harmonicon* is not willing entirely to attribute Puzzi's success in securing the approbation of these elite auditors to his 'beautiful execution', no doubt tacitly acknowledging Puzzi's exploitation of a body of works that was ingeniously designed to ally himself with the musical and social tastes and desires of the *beau monde*. At first glance, it is easy and even tempting to dismiss Puzzi's music -- and with it much of the virtuoso repertoire that enjoyed widespread popularity in England during the first half of the nineteenth century -- from serious musicological inquiry. In doing so, however, a large and important body of music and the attendant interests and environment that sustained it would be excluded from consideration. The resulting picture would be as

1. *Harmonicon*, vol. 1 (1823): 533.

incomplete as a contemporary study of music and society that failed to take 'popular' music into account.

Puzzi's compositions, and the works written for him, are largely unknown to the present generation of horn players, who work in a musical environment that generally requires them to concentrate their efforts on conservative interpretations of the instrument's 'staple' repertoire of solo literature. Yet as more players become involved in the 'early music' movement, and as historical performance groups become increasingly interested in the music of the nineteenth century, the importance of studying the music of performers such as Puzzi becomes manifest. As a record of the most active, acclaimed and influential horn soloist in nineteenth-century Britain, the music of Puzzi is important. It is a key to understanding musical taste, style and performance practice and offers a window of insight into the mechanism of Puzzi's success.

A basic understanding of the musical environment in which Puzzi existed and his place within it is vital in overcoming *a priori* value judgments about his music. Schumann stated that the decade between 1820 and 1830 was a time 'when half of the musical world pondered over Beethoven while the other half lived for the moment'.² The musicologist Raphael George Kiesewetter has billed this period aptly as the 'era of Beethoven and Rossini'. This notion is developed by Carl Dahlhaus, who refers to the dual factions of musical culture in the nineteenth century as the 'the twin styles'.³ These opposing forces shaped the way people played and listened to music.

The temporal and 'event-oriented' musical world epitomised by

2. Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, tr. J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley, 1989), pp. 317-318.

3. Dahlhaus, p. 8. The 'era of Beethoven and Rossini' was first used by Kiesewetter in his *Geschichte der europäisch-abendländischen oder unserer heutigen Musik* of 1834.

Rossini, Donizetti, Bellini and their lesser-celebrated contemporaries was Puzzi's natural environment. Much has been written about its defining features. The following is a summary of those germane to Puzzi. The activities of most composers up to 1800 and of many opera composers (generally Italian and French) in the first half of the nineteenth century were structured on the premise that the 'creation of a piece of music was focused on the performance' and that the act of performance was an integral part of the creation of a musical work.⁴ Composers and audiences alike expected instrumentalists and particularly singers to embellish the framework provided by the composer's score, which was viewed as a 'mere recipe for a performance'.⁵ The singer, not a venerated composer, was the focus of these performances in much the same way as today's screen stars, rather than the writer or director, are the main attraction of most films. Each season demanded new vehicles for their talent, accounting for the transient nature of Italian opera, and thus the musical world in which Puzzi circulated. This ephemeral climate held sway at the King's/Her Majesty's Theatre and also reigned at private, benefit and subscription concerts where Italian opera was the featured attraction.

Dahlhaus posits that Beethoven's music represented the pinnacle of a different approach to music that began to emerge around 1800 and constitutes the contrasting half of the 'twin styles'. He writes that Beethoven 'claimed for music the strong concept of art'.⁶ At the foundation of music's claim to the status of 'art' as opposed to that of evanescent non-art entertainment was the notion

4. Jennifer Lee Hall, 'The Re-fashioning of Fashionable Society: Opera-Going and Sociability in Britain, 1821 - 1861', Ph.D. diss. (Yale, 1996), p. 261.

5. Dahlhaus, p. 9.

6. Ibid.

that a musical text, like a literary or philosophical text, harbors a meaning which is made manifest but not entirely subsumed in its acoustic presentation -- that a musical creation can exist as an 'artwork of ideas' transcending its various interpretations.⁷

A work written by a composer operating under these premises was complete when it left his hands and relied upon performers only to put it into an audible format, not to contribute to its composition through improvisation. The emphasis had shifted to the composer as the creator of the work and was no longer centred on performer and 'event' of the work's performance. The composer ascended to the status of inspired genius, performers were expected faithfully to interpret musical works in strict accordance with the score, and listeners assumed a stance of attentive and reverent veneration. Reviews of audience reactions at Puzzi's 'Classical Concerts for Wind Instruments' reflect this change of attitude (see p. 100-101). Dahlhaus argues that the emphasis on the interpretation of fixed musical 'texts' gradually overshadowed the evanescent and improvisatory performance environment embodied by Italian opera during Puzzi's career and became the basis for canon formation, the development of the 'work-concept' and the construction of 'museums of musical works', tenets that have shaped our current habits of performing, listening to and consuming music and, indeed, have determined our modern musical climate at large.⁸ While Puzzi occasionally and very consciously enters into the half of the 'twin styles' represented by Beethoven's music and reception, he existed primarily in the transitory world embodied by Italian opera. In its musical preferences and mores lie

7. Dahlhaus, p. 10.

8. For the origins of these terms and an in-depth discussion of how they relate to and affected Italian opera during the period spanned by Puzzi's career, see Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford, 1992) and Hall, pp. 255-268.

the foundations of his approach to the music business. The main part of this chapter will examine how this determined Puzzi's choice of music and the manner in which he arranged and performed it. Before exploring Puzzi's arrangements and compositions, this chapter will consider the horn works of other composers that Puzzi occasionally performed and the reasons for their scarcity in his repertoire.

WORKS IN PUZZI'S REPERTOIRE NOT ARRANGED OR COMPOSED BY PUZZI

Original works including horn by other composers do occasionally appear in Puzzi's surviving library and in programmes and reviews of his performances. Music for horn and voice is represented most heavily in both instances and includes pieces such as 'Le Postillon' by Balfe which Puzzi performed with Tamburini. Much of the horn and voice repertoire selected by Puzzi comes from the body of songs composed for Eduard and Joseph Rudolph Lewy. These horn-playing brothers provided a Vienna-based impetus for Franz Lachner, Heinrich Proch, Otto Nicolai, Conradin Kreutzer, Friedrich Kücken and Schubert, all of whom produced short works for voice with horn accompaniment.⁹ Puzzi may have adopted these songs because they were the repertoire favoured by and perhaps brought over by the German opera and *Lieder* singers who were gaining popularity in London the 1840s and with whom Puzzi would have naturally sought to ally himself. Proch's exceptionally popular 'Das Alpenhorn' provided a showcase for Staudigl and Puzzi on several occasions.¹⁰ Puzzi may have also been competing with Henry Jarrett, who

9. John Humphries, liner notes, *Romantic Trios for Soprano, Horn and Piano*, DECCA 421 552-2, 1990.

10. The CPM shows twenty-one printed versions of 'Das Alpenhorn', both in its original form for horn and voice and in various arrangements.

was popularising this repertoire during the 1840s. In 1845, many of these works were published in London by Wessel, who issued a series of 'the approved German Songs for voice, piano and horn obbligato, sung by the greatest vocalists, the horn accompanied and partly adapted by Mr H[enr]y Jarrett'.¹¹

Works composed expressly for solo horn are scantily represented in Puzzi's repertoire, both among his own compositions and those of others. The most prominent are those of his teacher Luigi Belloli, which have been discussed in the previous chapter (see p. 120). Most of the performances of Belloli's concertos occur early on in Puzzi's career, before he had compiled his own repertoire and established his niche as a performer of operatic arrangements. His decision to perform Belloli's works might also have been a result of programme restrictions such as those at the Philharmonic Society that prohibited him from playing his own fantasias and may also reflect his weakness as a composer of original solos. Belloli's concertos are typical virtuoso display pieces and have found no significant place in today's horn repertoire.

Some of Puzzi's London contemporaries dedicated works to him. Pianist and Royal Academy of Music principal Cipriani Potter wrote a Sonata di bravura concertante pour pianoforte e corno which prompted Horace Fitzpatrick to comment that 'the difficulty of the horn part is enough to baffle the modern valve-horn-player'.¹² Whether or not one is

11. The catalogue on the title page of these pieces indicates that there were twenty-one songs, published under the series name 'Concerts de Société'. Wessel and Jarrett were doubtless hoping to profit from the emerging interest in chamber music (all of the pieces also appear with obbligato parts for violin and cello -- more suited to amateur music making at home) and German song during the 1840s. While Jarrett's promotion of this repertoire in London was a new development, Puzzi's popularisation of the horn as a fashionable instrument among aristocratic listeners and the great success that his collaboration with singers brought him probably encouraged Jarrett.

12. Horace Fitzpatrick, *The Horn and Horn-Playing and the Austro-Bohemian Tradition 1680-1830* (London, 1970), p. 216.

inclined to agree with this statement, it may explain why the piano score of the printed copy of the sonata held in the British Library shows the solo part transcribed for bassoon.¹³ Perhaps Potter felt that with regard to selling printed copies of the sonata, more bassoonists would have been able to deal with technical difficulties such as rapid scalar passages and demanding chromatic notes to better avail than contemporary horn players.¹⁴ The editorial comments at the bottom of the second page of the solo part clearly indicate that the work was originally conceived for horn:

The author, who has composed this Sonata for the famous horn player Mr. Puzzi, knows that these modulations are extremely difficult to execute well on the horn and advises those who find them too difficult to go immediately to [the passage marked] B.¹⁵

The popularity achieved by Michael Balfe's English operas prompted Puzzi to arrange favourite arias and include them in his performing repertoire. Balfe also composed three works expressly for Puzzi: a *Fantasia per corno da caccia* probably written in the 1830s, a 'Pot-pourri per corno' dated London 1855 and a 'Fantasia introducing the popular ballad "The Peace of the Valley" and the "Echo Rondo" from the opera *Falstaff*' dated London 1841.¹⁶ All of these pieces were scored with full orchestral accompaniment. Baron's catalogue also reveals that

13. Philip Cipriani Hambly Potter, *Sonata di bravura concertante pour pianoforte e corno*, Op. 13 (Bonn, n.d. [c. 1825]). The solo part included with the set is for horn in E-flat.

14. Such provisions for alternate instrumentation were common among composers originally writing for the horn. Beethoven also wrote a solo cello part for his *Sonata for Piano and Horn*, Op. 17, and Brahms provided an alternate viola part for his *Trio for Horn, Violin and Piano*, Op. 40.

15. L'auteur qui a composé cette Sonate pour le fameux Cor, Monsieur Puzzi, sait que ces modulations sont extrêmement difficiles à bien exécuter sur le cor et conseille à ceux qui les trouvent trop difficiles d'aller tout de suite à B (Potter, horn part, p. 2, tr. E.B. Strauchen)

16. All information regarding these pieces was supplied by Christel Wallbaum of H. Baron, London. The works were sold to a private collector in Europe in 1979.

Francesco Shira composed a set of theme and variations based on 'Rule Britannia' and 'God Save the Queen' for solo horn, flute, oboe clarinet, bassoon and two horns that was performed by Puzzi at a private concert given by the Duke of Bedford. While these works are interesting in illuminating the extent of Puzzi's relationship with his colleagues and their estimation of his skills as a player and prominence as a soloist, all can be classified as showpieces that made no substantial contribution to the horn's permanent repertoire.

The Classical and early-Romantic works for solo horn that would be considered essential parts of the instrument's literature today do not appear in Puzzi's surviving library and did not make up any discernible portion of his performing repertoire.¹⁷ His appearance at a soirée concert by Moscheles where he played Beethoven's Sonata for Piano and Horn, Op. 17 is the only instance of a performance of this type that has been found at present and it is clearly exceptional, as has been discussed in chapter three (see pp. 99-100). Moscheles's soirées were a departure from Puzzi's usual circuit of benefit and private concert appearances and it was only in the context of such concerts that he began to explore literature for his instrument that lay outside of the 'Rossinian' half of the 'twin styles'.¹⁸

There is little doubt that Puzzi would have been aware of at least some of the solo horn works by major composers that were available during his career. The most notable omissions in his repertoire are the works of the Austro-Bohemian Classical composers. W.A. Mozart's four concertos are unquestionably the paragon of Classical horn writing. Ignaz Leutgeb (c. 1745 - 1811), the Austrian horn virtuoso for whom the

17. The Baroque repertoire does not bear consideration here. Its absence can be partially explained by the changes in instruments and playing technique that separate Baroque and Classical horn playing into distinct schools.

18. Dahlhaus, p. 8.

concertos were composed, performed them throughout Europe to critical acclaim.¹⁹ Their popularity is marked by the publication of three of the concertos by André of Offenbach in 1801 and 1802.²⁰ It seems unlikely that Puzzi, perhaps through his teachers and older colleagues, would have been completely unaware of the concertos and the legacy of Leutgeb's fame. Other works written and published during Puzzi's career that have become part of today's standard horn repertoire include numerous concertos by Rosetti, two sonatas by Luigi Cherubini, a concertante for two horns by Romberg, Weber's Concertino, and concertos by Franz Joseph and Michael Haydn.²¹ The exceptionally strong horn playing environment that surrounded Puzzi during his tenure in Paris might have provided a link to such music as well. The examination system at the Paris Conservatoire with its strictly prescribed *morceaux de concours*, written by the institution's professors, also gave birth to a large body of published horn repertoire from which Puzzi might have drawn, although one must concur with Fitzpatrick's assessment that 'it produced no distinguished music for the instrument'.²²

The criticism levelled at the programming of the Belloli horn concerto that Puzzi played at the Philharmonic Society in 1823 seems to warrant the inclusion of repertoire such as the Mozart concertos. Although Puzzi's playing was extolled, the Belloli was described as being 'quite unfit for a concert which was established for the purpose of

19 Hans Pizka, *Das Horn bei Mozart* (Munich, 1980), p. 7.

20. The Mozart concertos were published by André as follows: the 'first' (K. 447, now referred to as the third) in 1801, and the 'second' (K.417) and 'third' (K. 495, now referred to as the fourth) in 1802.

21. For publication dates of these works, see the extensive bibliography of horn repertoire in Robin Gregory, *The Horn: A Comprehensive Guide to the Modern Instrument and its Music*, 2nd ed. (London, 1969).

22. Fitzpatrick, p. 190.

upholding the highest species of music'.²³ While Puzzi clearly would have had access to quality repertoire for the horn, it would have been completely incongruous for him to perform 'masterpieces', even in a setting such as the Philharmonic Society, but particularly at the private and benefit concerts where he did the bulk of his solo playing. Although Puzzi lived and worked into the Victorian era, he was firmly entrenched in the music and socio-musical mores of the Georgian period. Contemporary convention in Puzzi's environment demanded that virtuoso performers never strayed far from playing bravura pieces, particularly those of their own composition. The performance of 'masterpieces' was seen as the pursuit of women and child prodigies.²⁴ Puzzi's seeming 'neglect' of the Classical horn repertoire was indicative of his role as a purveyor of high status popular music to the aristocracy.

PUZZI'S MUSIC

Puzzi's surviving manuscripts

Puzzi's surviving works form the foundation for the examination of his music that follows. All known collections of his music at the time of writing were consulted.²⁵ These consist of the manuscripts and the printed music held in the British Library and the manuscripts in the Covert Collection, a body of music gathered together by John Covert, Professor Emeritus of Horn at Ithaca College, New York, and now in the possession

23. *Harmonicon*, vol. 1 (1823): 41.

24. Joel Sachs, 'London: The Professionalization of Music', *Music and Society: The Early Romantic Era*, ed. Alexander Ringer (London, 1990), p. 207.

25. Performers, collectors and music dealers throughout Europe and the United States were contacted and the catalogues of conservatory libraries in Europe likely to hold Puzzi's works (Milan, Parma, Paris) were searched.

of the present author.²⁶ The holdings of the British Library can be divided into two categories: twenty-seven printed works listed in the *Catalogue of Printed Music* and a collection of seven manuscript works donated to the Library by W.F.H. Blandford in the 1940s.²⁷ The published works in the British Library are primarily songs that Puzzi arranged and printed for his patrons. The manuscripts given by Blandford are arrangements for solo horn and orchestra or horn and string quartet.

The seventy-eight individual manuscripts held in the Covert Collection make up the single largest known collection of Puzzi's works and music belonging to Puzzi (the collection includes a small number of works by other composers that were part of Puzzi's library as well as those that he arranged or composed himself). Nearly all of the arrangements are for horn or horn and voice with piano accompaniment, with dates of composition ranging from 1812 to c. 1855. The collection also contains two printed editions. It was sold to Covert in the 1980s by the London rare books and music dealer Hermann Baron. Christel Wallbaum, Baron's successor, was able to recall some brief details about the provenance of these manuscripts.²⁸ Baron acquired the manuscripts in 1970 when a furniture dealer alerted him to their presence in a villa that Wallbaum described as being one hour outside of Turin, perhaps to the Southeast. This location identifies the property as the estate of Monferrato, Puzzi's

26. See the music catalogue appended in volume two of this dissertation for a full listing of the works in these collections.

27. British Library Add. MS 46396 and *Catalogue of Printed Music in the British Library to 1980*, vol. 46 (London, 1985), p.359. Blandford was one of the first serious English scholars of the horn's history. An entomologist by profession, he was an amateur horn player and an avid collector of instruments. He wrote multiple articles for the *Musical Times* and corresponded with performers and organologists. The Reginald Morley-Pegge Archive, Bate Collection of Musical Instruments, Oxford, is the repository for his many letters to Reginald Morley-Pegge. Unfortunately, the letters do not reveal from where Blandford obtained these manuscripts.

28. Christel Wallbaum, interview by the author, London, 28 October 1996.

retirement home in Piedmont.²⁹ The villa, which was being emptied of its possessions in preparation for its donation to a religious order, had been owned by the Elia family, Puzzi's grandchildren and great grandchildren. It was described as being 'grand but on a very small scale' with a purpose-built music room that had a domed ceiling decorated with musical mosaics. The manuscripts and printed editions in the Covert Collection were part of a large music library that contained numerous operatic vocal scores that Wallbaum thought might have belonged to Giacinta Toso, a collection of dance music and a selection of 'popular' music begun in the 1880s and added to until the 1920s.³⁰ The status of the music library upon the visit of Baron and Wallbaum was reported as being 'disorganised but intact' and it appeared that the contents of the library had not been disturbed for quite some time.

While it is clear that Puzzi's surviving music is a representative sample of the works that he arranged and performed, it is impossible to ascertain what portion of his total library these manuscripts comprised. Study of over 200 concerts in which Puzzi performed has yielded performance dates for only fourteen of the seventy-two works for solo horn or voice and horn arranged or composed by Puzzi.³¹ This indicates that Puzzi produced an extensive body of works of which only a fraction appear to be held in the British Library and the Covert Collection. The present author has been unable to locate further works or information that would explain their absence from the library at Monferrato. Lack of

29. Whitaker, p. 221.

30. It seems possible that Giovanni's musician daughter Fanny, who died in 1926, may have been responsible for the upkeep of the music collection.

31. For specific details of performances of surviving works, see the works catalogue. See chapter three p. 96, n. 10 for an explanation of methods used to gather information on Puzzi's performances was gathered.

performance information should not be construed to mean that Puzzi's surviving music was not used. The manuscripts in the British Library and the Covert Collection bear signs of frequent use such as page corners that have been thumbled away, pencil markings, corrections and alterations.

While the above information suggests that a much larger body of manuscripts existed at one point, a similar case cannot be made for Puzzi's printed horn compositions. For a number of reasons, very little of his solo repertoire would have been published in the first instance. Such pieces were at the heart of his livelihood and popularity as a soloist, so it is reasonable to assume that Puzzi would not have been interested in sharing them with competitors. Moreover, so much of Puzzi's appeal depended upon the subtle nuances, unique virtuosity and interpretational flair that lived only in his performances that a copy of his arrangements would have been of minimal value to a player trying to replicate these elements. In the case of pieces for voice with horn obbligato, their appeal relied heavily upon the celebrity singers with whom Puzzi performed. A player such as Puzzi's orchestral colleague Henry Platt probably possessed the technical ability to perform some of this music but did not have the access to singers such as Rubini, Tamburini, Pasta, Grisi and Persiani that Puzzi's status granted him. In the highly specialised and idiosyncratic niche that Puzzi carved out for himself, there was room for only one. As has been previously discussed, the horn did not enjoy a status that would have created a strong amateur market for horn music in England. Indeed, only a small amount of music for the horn was published during the first half of the nineteenth century and most of it took the form of methods for military band players and outdoorsmen. Thus, the small number of printed compositions for horn by Puzzi that are known today probably comprise a fairly complete inventory of his published music.

These works were published early in Puzzi's career and fit into clearly definable patterns. The Covert Collection contains one piece for horn and harp or piano from a set of six solos published in Paris by Pacini (cat. no. 32). The holdings of the British Library include three works (cat. nos. 67, 30, 44): a nocturno for two voices with horn obbligato (published in Paris), a fantasia for horn and piano (Paris), and a trio for harp, piano and horn or flute (London). In contrast to Puzzi's pieces for voice, which were generally published in London, the majority of these works were published during the same period in Paris. This may have been an attempt to produce the works in the country of their perceived market. The horn playing tradition at the Paris Conservatoire ensured that there was a strong crop of players in the city and Puzzi's tenure in the *Théâtre Italien* and *Chapelle Musique* might have created a sufficient interest in his music among horn players in Paris.

It is also possible that Puzzi may have printed some of his works for horn so that he could distribute copies to aristocratic patrons who wished to participate in music making in their homes with Puzzi. This is suggested by arrangements that include voice, flute and harp parts, instruments that Puzzi's patrons are known to have played. Puzzi is known to have performed with his patrons (see p. 113) and such instances were probably more frequent than the few known examples imply, although there is no evidence that this activity would have produced a large body of printed works.

One of Puzzi's more entrepreneurial plans to attract patrons and gain entry into the musical world of the aristocracy did support a sustained campaign of publication of canzonets, songs and solo piano pieces. These simple compositions, none of which includes horn, comprise the vast majority of his printed works and form the largest body of original

compositions by Puzzi that survives today. The *Catalogue of Printed Music in the British Library* includes nineteen such works by Puzzi published from 1811 to 1826, with the majority dating from the early 1820s.³² All of these pieces bear dedications to various members of the aristocracy. Names appearing on the cover pages include the Duke of Wellington, the Countess St. Antonio, Lady Shelley, Lady Charlotte Seymour, Count Flahault, Lady Flint, Lady Burke, and Madame Parnter (see illustration 5.1).³³ The dedications, the choice of instrumentation, the vocal ranges and the relatively simple piano parts all indicate that these works were intended for the dedicatee and family to perform in an intimate setting at home.

These compositions are a key to ascertaining Puzzi's strategies for developing relationships with patrons and provide a glimpse of the emphasis of his early activities in London. Most striking is the way in which Puzzi's use of the canzonet mirrors that of the singing master. The high demand for vocal instruction within the aristocratic home provided a point of entry for musicians striving to establish themselves in fashionable musical society. Styling oneself as a singing master was a particularly effective means of gaining entry into the musical life of aristocratic families. These simple songs, which were copiously produced by singing masters and dedicated to their pupils and patrons, served as calling cards and inducements for further custom. That Puzzi promoted himself in this manner is evident from compositions such as his 'Ton nom chéri de ma première enfance, couplets adressés à maman le jour de

32. One composition bears an 1811 watermark and two compositions are dated as '1815?' in the CPM. The ambiguity of these dates means that they do not necessarily indicate that these works were printed prior to Puzzi's arrival in London in 1816.

33. For a full list of works and dedications, see the works catalogue in the second volume of this dissertation.

sa fête'. This short song for alto and piano bears the inscription 'Mis en musique et respectueusement dedicee à son scolière Eleanor de Blaquiere par Giovanni Puzzi'.³⁴

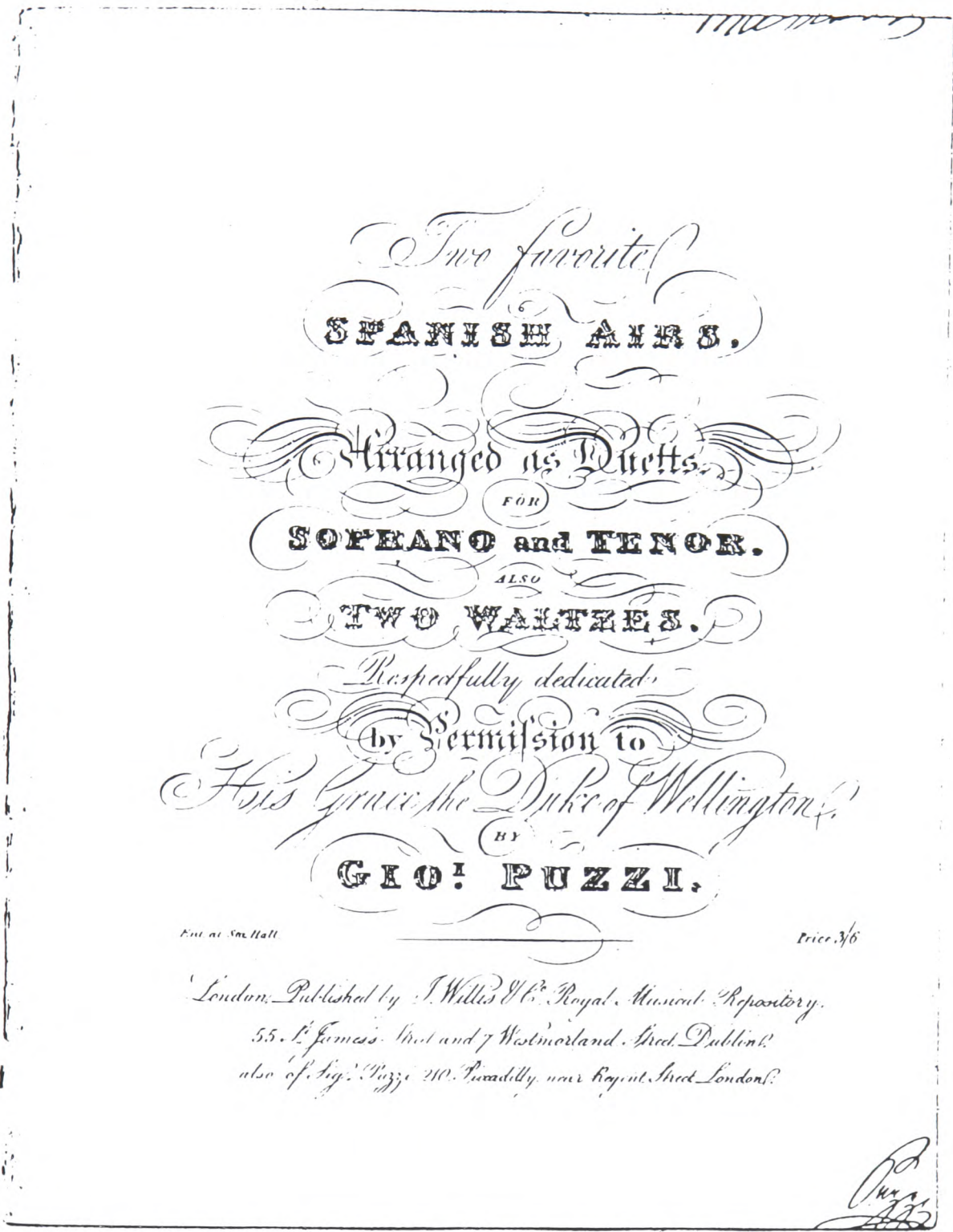


Illustration 5.1

Title page of a set of published pieces by Puzzi dedicated to the Duke of Wellington. (Reproduced by kind permission of the Department of Portraits and Performance History, Royal College of Music)

34. BL H.1654bb.(19). See works catalogue no. 82 for further details of this composition.

In light of the status of the horn during Puzzi's life, offering singing instruction to members of the aristocracy would have been his most lucrative teaching engagement. It was also an ideal opportunity for him to foster a musical relationship with the family. Once he had established such a rapport, it is easy to envisage how other related activities, such as organising and overseeing the family's private concerts, would have developed. This type of activity may well have been important in sustaining Puzzi during the period from 1816 to 1823, when he appears to have been largely resident in London but had not yet assumed any orchestral posts.

Puzzi's dedications were almost certainly gratuitous gifts to his patrons. However, the existence of these works in print and the fact that most of them bear a price on the cover indicates that Puzzi also intended them to fulfil a commercial role. It is unclear who would have paid the average 1s.6d. price for one of the arrangements or how extensively they were sold. Most of them were produced by various London publishers and bear mottoes such as 'printed and sold (for the author)' and were available directly from the publisher or 'to be had also of Signor Puzzi'.³⁵ One of the works bears the stamp of F.W. Chanot, 'practical violin maker and repairer 179, Wardour Street' on its cover, indicating that Puzzi's sheet music did make its way into the stock of music shops.³⁶

In some cases, these works seem to have been an attempt to profit on the success of popular public performances or of performers with whom Puzzi was connected who were of particular interest to his patrons.

35. Compositions bearing an address for Puzzi were printed in 1822, 1823, 1825, and 1826. During this period, the addresses given are 210 Piccadilly and 19 Piccadilly. Sometimes different addresses are given on music printed during the same year, perhaps indicating that he occupied two locations simultaneously.

36. BL H.2835.(31). See works catalogue in volume two of this dissertation for further details.

The canzonet 'Doglianze amorose', composed and dedicated to Miss Crampton by Puzzi, proclaims on the cover that it was 'sung with unbounded applause by Mlle. Annette De Lihu, at the Rotunda Concerts, Dublin'.³⁷ Note of performances by the fashionable DeLihu sisters also graces the cover of 'Il buon pastor', a duet composed for them by Puzzi that he later printed with a dedication to Countess Flahault.³⁸

Perhaps some of the works are adapted versions of what Puzzi was performing at benefit concerts and would have appealed to this audience. Potential customers also might have been attracted to the status conferred on the pieces by their dedications in much the same way that a royal endorsement added to the prestige and popularity of a product. Purchasing works dedicated to and presumably performed by patrons such as Lady Shelley, the Duke of Wellington and the Countess St. Antonio offered the chance for buyers to mimic London's most elite and musically influential aristocracy and to take a small step towards entering the world of the fashionable. ³⁹

The instrumentation of Puzzi's music

The accompaniments of Puzzi's surviving solo repertoire exist in three different instrumentation formats: solo horn (or horn and voice solo) and piano, solo horn and chamber group and solo horn and orchestra. The majority have been written with piano accompaniment. This does not

37. BL H.1654 bb.(15) and BL H.1654 bb.(61).

38. BL H.2831.a.(43).

39. Study of works such as *The Book of Fashion: Being a Digest of the Axioms of the Celebrated Joseph Brummel, Esq. and Intended for the Use of All the Ladies and Gentlemen Throughout the United Kingdom, by one of the Exclusives* (London, 1835) and Ellen Moers, *The Dandy: Brummel to Beerbohm* (New York, 1960) illustrate that adopting the habits of the fashionable was as important as lineage in gaining entry into elite culture and offered an avenue for socially ambitious members of the middle class to enter the *beau monde*. For a summary of this phenomenon, see Hall, pp. 162-164.

necessarily indicate that this was Puzzi's most frequent mode of performance or that these particular pieces were usually heard with piano accompaniment. Many of the piano scores contain orchestral cues, indicating that these works were often played by large ensembles and that at some point, sets of parts existed.⁴⁰ It is difficult to ascertain who might have used the piano scores and what their original purpose in the full set would have been. Some of them contain markings and amendments to the horn part in Puzzi's hand and many of them bear piano fingerings. Unfortunately, the separate horn parts that would have existed with these sets have only survived in a few instances. It is quite possible that these piano parts were director's scores, since 'conducting' from the keyboard, particularly in works involving singers (and by extension, horn soloists, who were effectively assuming the role of a singer) was quite widespread during Puzzi's career. Piano scores would have also served as a good contingency, allowing the pieces to be performed with a bare minimum of forces. Nearly all of the manuscripts in the Covert Collection assume this form while most of the manuscripts in the Blandford Gift at the British Library have orchestral or chamber ensemble accompaniments and generally include a full set of parts and an orchestral score. This would appear to indicate that these works came from two separate parts of Puzzi's library and were collected from it at different times.

Surviving arrangements with orchestral accompaniments are comparatively rare, but enough exist to provide some information about the form they took and the forces that Puzzi would have had access to at larger benefit and private concerts. Puzzi's arrangement of the aria 'Ah! Si per voi gia sento' (cat. no. 35) existed with an orchestral as well as piano accompaniment. The instrumentation, listed in the order that appears in

40. Scores containing orchestral cues are noted in the works catalogue.

the score, consists of solo horn, violin 1 and 2, viola 1 and 2, flute 1 and 2, clarinet 1 and 2, horn 1 and 2 (in F), trumpet 1 and 2, bassoon 1 and 2, and bass.⁴¹ The instrumentation of the accompaniment of Puzzi's *Concerto di corno* (catalogue no. 2) is identical, except for the absence of trumpets and the addition of a separate 'cello part. Puzzi's most lavish orchestration is found in the fantasia entitled 'Le Petit Tambour de la Garde Nationale', which expands upon the instrumentation of the *Concerto* by adding a pair of trumpets and oboes. The orchestrations are simple and adhere to the instrumentation of the typical Classical orchestra. Percussion is the one notable omission in this respect. A guitar part is included in the set of parts for an arrangement of a capriccio by Shira (catalogue no. 3). This isolated incident suggests participation in the orchestra by an amateur patron.

Smaller chamber ensembles also appear to have been a popular form of accompaniment. Four of the seven manuscripts in the British Library are arranged for horn with violin, viola, and 'cello or double bass. Despite the possibility presented by the instrumentation for a chamber music ensemble, the strings function largely as a simple accompaniment for the florid solo horn parts. The scaled-down size of the ensemble would have been ideal for intimate private concerts and also for performances outside of London, where the availability of local players was uncertain and the number of players with whom one could travel was limited. Some of Puzzi's works exist in multiple incarnations. His trio sonata arrangement titled 'Corelli's No. 9', which has both a piano and a string quartet accompaniment, illustrates that choice of accompaniment was motivated more by performance situation than by compositional concerns

41. The score and parts are currently in the possession of a private collector. C MS 45.1 (cat. no. 35), notated for horn in F, is contemporary with this score and may have been the piano reduction that originally belonged with this set.

or considerations.⁴²

THE SOURCES OF PUZZI'S REPERTOIRE

Nearly all of Puzzi's repertoire, even works bearing only his name on the cover page or in concert programmes, is derived from preexisting sources. His main activity as a composer was that of arranging, as is illustrated by tables 5.1 and 5.2. This was a common practice among all instrumental virtuosi during Puzzi's career. Concert programmes and sources such as the *Catalogue of Printed Music* turn up numerous examples of this approach to repertoire among colleagues such as Bottesini, Nicholson, Mori, and Bochsa. The practice of arranging was deeply ingrained in Puzzi's musical environment and extended to composers as well as performers. Rearranging and borrowing from their own compositions to form marginally new works was a procedure that had long been in place among opera composers and extended into Puzzi's era with operas such as Rossini's *Zora* (based on his *Mosè in Egitto*). The defining features of Puzzi's musical world -- a fixation with novelty and celebrity performers -- encouraged and necessitated techniques such as mass-production style formulaic composition, arranging and transcribing.

During Puzzi's career, 'the practice of "arrangement" scarcely left a single work untouched'.⁴³ Any music popular with Puzzi's audience was subject to this widespread treatment. The main sources for Puzzi's arrangements -- opera, Italian song, German song, folk song and popular instrumental pieces -- and the frequency with which they appear in his repertoire quite accurately reflect the listening preferences of his aristocratic audience and the trends that dictated them.

42. See p. 239 for a discussion of the various performances and settings of 'Corelli's No. 9'.

43. Dahlhaus, p. 138.

All of the music that Puzzi was arranging would have been familiar to his listeners. Novelty was an important factor in so much as the works that he was presenting to his audience included a generous selection of what was new, fresh and popular in the fashionable musical world as defined by the Italian opera, the grandest private concerts and any trends that captivated the season, such as the rage for chamber music of the late 1830s or the popularity of German singers in the 1840s. Puzzi's offerings to his audience were seldom 'novel' in the strict definition of the word, however, as he depended on audience familiarity and interest for the success and profitability of his repertoire. His listeners would have generally known the pieces he performed. All of the pieces that he chose to arrange existed in some printed version. The true element of novelty was Puzzi's performance of this music on the horn and his use of it to display his virtuosity on an instrument that was, until his arrival in London, a rarity in aristocratic music rooms and fashionable concert halls.

TABLE 5.1

Types of solo compositions (including horn and voice/ voices and double 'concertos' for two instruments) performed by Puzzi at a representative selection of 85 concerts from 1818 to 1855.

SOURCE	NUMBER	PER CENT
Unidentifiable	22	14.9 %
Instrumental	5	3.8 %
Vocal - Opera		
Italian opera	69	46.6 %
French opera	3	2.0 %
Vocal - Non opera		
Italian song/ canzonet	28	18.9 %
German song	5	3.4 %
French song	7	4.7 %
English song	2	1.4 %
British folk song	1	0.7 %
Original works by other composers	6	4.1 %
TOTAL WORKS	148	100 %
Total, opera-derived works:	72	48.6 %
Total, vocal non opera-derived works:	43	29.1 %
Total, all Italian vocal works (inc. Opera)	97	65.5 %
Total, all vocally derived works:	115	77.7 %

Percentages have been rounded to the nearest tenth (.1). Includes benefit, private, subscription, touring and orchestral concerts. Multiple repetitions of touring programmes have only been counted once. 'Unidentifiable' includes all works for which a clear source could not be identified.

TABLE 5.2

Sources for existing works composed or arranged by Puzzi. Includes all Covert MSS, BL MSS and printed items that include horn.

SOURCE	NUMBER	PER CENT
Original composition	2	2.9 %
Unidentifiable but possibly original	1	1.5 %
Instrumental	7	10.3 %
Vocal - Opera		
Italian opera	22	32.4 %
French opera	1	1.5 %
English opera	2	2.9 %
Vocal - Non opera		
German song	3	4.4 %
Italian song/ canzonet	11	16.2 %
French song	3	4.4 %
English song	2	2.9 %
British folk song	6	8.8 %
Vocal - uncertain identity		
Italian song/ opera	2	2.9 %
Patriotic	3	4.4 %
Unidentifiable	3	4.4 %
TOTAL WORKS	68	100 %
Total, opera-derived works:	25	36.8 %
Total, vocal non-opera-derived works:	25 - 27	36.8 - 39.7 %
Total, all Italian vocal works (inc. Opera)	35	51.5 %

Total, all vocally derived works:	52	76.5 %
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Only complete works are included in the works tally. This excludes short sketches. Pedagogical works have also been excluded. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest tenth (.1)

VOCAL SOURCES

OPERA

Arrangements for solo horn

The Italian opera not only dominated Puzzi's career, but was also the cornerstone of his performing repertoire. A survey of a representative selection of concerts in which he performed (see table 5.1) indicates that 48.6 % of the pieces Puzzi played were operatic arrangements for solo horn or horn and voice/ voices. Many of the 14.9 % of the pieces classified in this survey as 'unidentifiable' were probably also derived from opera. Works falling under this heading were generally titled 'melodia', 'concerto' and 'solo'. It is possible that a small number of these works may have been original compositions by Puzzi, but the pattern established by his surviving works suggests that these titles did not refer to specific pieces but instead were generic appellations for fantasia-type pieces based on opera excerpts. When the nature of the pieces tallied as 'instrumental works by other composers' is examined, the percentage of Italian opera-derived material that Puzzi was performing rises further still. Of the six works that fell under this heading, two were original concertos by Belloli but four were instrumental fantasias based on Italian opera arias, such as Bochsa's 'Vouz et moi', a double fantasia for harp and horn constructed on popular melodies by Bellini. Conservative interpretation of these figures reveals that at least 60% of these works were opera-derived.

The financial and socio-musical reasons for Puzzi's attraction to Italian opera have been considered throughout this dissertation. It was also the ideal medium to fulfil Puzzi's needs as both a virtuoso and a horn player. The following discussion will focus on this affinity and the music that resulted from Puzzi's adaptation of opera repertoire. The 'Rossinian' style embraced by Italian opera at large during Puzzi's career provided a natural and fecund environment for virtuoso instrumentalists as performer-composers. Dahlhaus asserts that 'the virtuosity of Paganini and Liszt were nourished on Rossini's notion of music'.⁴⁴ The design and performance ethos of Italian opera, which placed the main emphasis on singers and expected compositional input from them in the form of improvisation, extended naturally to instrumental virtuosity. A fixation on melody was one of the main features of Romantic opera and created a perfect environment for virtuoso improvisation and arranging. The 'monodic cantabile' of this *melodie lunghe* 'permitted, indeed provoked, assimilation and adaptation by virtuoso instrumentalists'.⁴⁵

The horn lent itself particularly well to the performance of arias. The parallels between *bel canto* singing and the French school of horn playing that made this such a natural pairing and accounted for the acclaim that Puzzi received for the 'vocal rendering'⁴⁶ of his repertoire has been examined in the previous chapter. The same compositional features of the 'double' aria form popular with Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti and Verdi in his early works that were designed to exhibit the gamut of a singer's abilities in an aria were also ideally suited to flatter a virtuoso horn player. A typical aria opened with a recitative, progressed to a slow

44. Dahlhaus, p. 8.

45. Ibid., 134.

46. *Musical World*, vol. 17 no. 38 (22 September 1842): 299.

cantabile that generally ended with a cadenza passage, effected a change of mood in the brief *tempo di mezzo*, and finished with a fast *cabaletta* that usually featured coloratura passages.⁴⁷

The contrasting *cantabile* and *cabaletta* sections provided the best array of opportunities to display the horn's most characteristic attributes. Its slow tempo and fluid legato style made the *cantabile* a showcase for Puzzi's renowned tone, understanding of the conventions of *bel canto* expression and command of seamless legato playing. One critic summed-up Puzzi's command of this mode of playing by commenting that 'Puzzi's phrasing of cantabile on the horn can never be forgotten'.⁴⁸ The florid coloratura passages that were characteristic of the *cabaletta* section of a double aria provided a wide range of scales, arpeggios and intricate ornamentation that allowed Puzzi to demonstrate the faster-paced aspects of his virtuosity. The harmonic simplicity of most *cabaletti* meant that they seldom strayed far from the tonic, providing the horn player with an easy point of reference in the open notes of the tonic triad. This was particularly helpful for the execution of arpeggiated figures. Scales were generally diatonic, with more adventurous excursions saved for the cadenzas, where the performer could exercise liberty over the speed of their execution.

The natural manner in which vocal music suited the horn demonstrates how close the virtuosity of these two mediums were. This is borne out by the remarkable similarity between contemporary purpose-written horn music and the operatic repertoire that Puzzi was arranging. It is not surprising that this would be demonstrated in Rossini's Prelude,

47. Charlotte Greenspan, 'Aria', *Harvard Dictionary of Music*, ed. Don Randel (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 49-50.

48. *Athenaeum*, no. 2524 (11 March 1876): 371.

Theme and Variations (1857), but it is also true of the large body of repertoire produced by composer-players associated with the Paris Conservatoire and is evident in works such as Gallay's Preludes, Op. 27 and Dauprat's concertos.⁴⁹

Owing to the similar demands and idiosyncrasies of horn and vocal virtuosity, a large amount of opera repertoire is 'horn-ready' once it is transposed into a suitable key and Puzzi's input as a composer was minimal in most of his opera-based arrangements. Naturally, the *cantabile* and *cavatina* sections of arias were the most attractive to Puzzi. The arrangement titled 'Fantasie, Ah! Si per voi gia sento' (Rossini, *Otello*) is a direct transcription of the *cavatina* sung by Otello (see musical example 10). Some of the most famous *cantabili* and *cavatine* took the form of quartets, but still lent themselves well to transcription. Puzzi had only to consolidate the melody, which passes from voice to voice, into one line and place it in a desirable key for the horn as he has done in his arrangement of 'A te o cara' from Bellini's *I puritani*.

Puzzi often combined many popular aria segments in one arrangement. The majority of his surviving opera-derived pieces take the form of potpourris. A wide variety of aria segments were combined with little unifying theme other than their popularity at the moment. Puzzi did select and assemble the ingredients of his potpourris with some consideration for musical balance, generally juxtaposing slow and fast selections as in his coupling of the *cantabile* 'A te o cara' with the lively *cabaletta* 'Son vergin'. Puzzi frequently paired *cavatina* and *cabaletta* sections from different operas and even paired aria extracts with non-operatic material, as is the case in his arrangement featuring Rossini's 'Ah! Si per voi gia sento' and Rode's Air Varie, Op. 10 for violin (see musical

49. This work was written for the French horn virtuoso Eugène Vivier.

example no. 10). Although these selections could be performed independently, two elaborate cadenzas have been provided to link the solos (see last page of musical example 10). This was Puzzi's general method of making a segue from one section of an arrangement to another.

No transcriptions of an entire aria exist in Puzzi's surviving manuscripts, although sometimes he would assemble pastiches that added up to a complete aria and included all of the appropriate components in the right order. This can be seen in the deceptively titled 'Fra poco a me, aria nell' opera di *Lucia di Lammermoor* del Maestro Donizetti' (see musical example 13). This pastiche opens with a recitative (bars 1-20), followed by the *cantabile* quartet 'A te, o cara' from Bellini's *I puritani* (bars 21-62). Next, the advertised opera, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, is finally encountered although the selection is the *mezzo di tempo* 'Tu che a dio spargesti l'ali' (bars 63-93) in the middle of the aria rather than the opening *cantabile* that is generally identified as 'Fra poco a me ricovero'. The arrangement comes to a close with an unidentified virtuoso *cabaletta*.

Puzzi's extensive use of potpourris mirrored the general approach towards music among his audiences and was epitomised by the atmosphere where these works were performed: the ubiquitous 'Grand Miscellaneous' concert. It also reflected the prevailing attitude towards opera at the King's Theatre during Puzzi's career and in the preceding century, where opera was viewed as a series of arias, not as a cohesive work, thus giving rise to the term 'aria opera'.⁵⁰ Plot was of minimal importance and the singer and their virtuosity were the focus of the performance. One of the defining elements of aria opera in the eighteenth century was the popularity of the pasticcio, an opera made by stringing a series of popular preexisting arias together with a small amount of new

50. Donald Jay Grout, *A Short History of Opera*, vol. 1 (London, 1947), p. 179.

material.⁵¹ This carried over into Puzzi's era with the performance of fragments of operas at the King's Theatre, the frequent recycling of materials by opera composers and the practice of singers arbitrarily inserting their favourite display pieces -- so called 'suitcase arias' -- into an opera with no regard for musical or dramatic continuity.

Some of Puzzi's potpourris are overt in their presentation with titles such as 'Souvenir de l'opera *I due Foscari*', which presents a medley of themes from Verdi's opera or his 'Melange de petits airs', which draws upon a more eclectic range of sources and includes popular Donizetti melodies interspersed with folk songs.⁵² As has been demonstrated above in the case of the arrangement labelled 'Fra poco a me, aria nell' opera di *Lucia di Lammermoor* del Maestro Donizetti', Puzzi's arrangements often assume the form of potpourris or pasticcios even when it is not evident in the title, which only indicates the most popular extract in the medley. This is also the case with the arrangement billed as 'Ah per sempre' (from Bellini's *I puritani*), which harbours Bellini's 'L'amo l'amo' from *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* as well. This is a factor that should be added to the general caveats that apply when trying to draw any specific conclusions about what Puzzi played by examining concert programmes. This mode of arranging would have provided Puzzi with ultimate flexibility in programming. Puzzi's potpourris were generally designed to be performed in their entirety but in many cases their components were self contained enough to be performed separately if factors such as programme length (although doubtful in an environment where concerts often exceeded three hours) or Puzzi's endurance were an issue.

This assemblage of transcriptions worked so well for Puzzi and

51. Hall, p. 262.

52. Works catalogue nos. 41 and 24.

fulfilled the demands of the horn with such precision that his surviving opera arrangements show little sign of any compositional activity that exceeds minor adaptation of the melodic line or the crafting of simple transitional passages to bind the sections of a potpourri. It is impossible to make judgments about any of Puzzi's other opera-derived works, since the titles of his arrangements do little to identify any mode of composition. As has been noted, what Puzzi has titled 'Fantasie, Ah! Si per voi gia sento' is a direct transcription of the *cavatina* sung by Otello. Perhaps the term fantasia suggested that there was an improvisatory element that would have only been evident in the performance.

Arrangements for voice and horn

Arrangements for voice and horn form a substantial part of Puzzi's repertoire. As has been discussed in the last two chapters, this was clearly important to Puzzi for commercial reasons and provided the musical link to singers that was the overriding and exceptional element of his success as a soloist. The combination also functions extremely well from a musical standpoint, owing in large part to the similarities between the French school of hand horn playing and the *bel canto* voice. These two media were also an ideal match in volume and timbre.

Puzzi had many precedents for his arrangements, as composers have long been attracted to the combination of horn and voice in solo and ensemble settings. The obligato writing of Bach and particularly Handel, with which Puzzi would have been familiar from his performances with the Concert of Antient Music, is an early precedent. The strengths of Paris players such as Rodolphe, Siéber and Duvernoy inspired Gluck, Trial, Steibelt and other composers to include intricate horn *obbligati* in their

operas.⁵³ The heightened expressive capabilities of Classical woodwinds and horns also appealed to Italian opera composers. Mayr, Bellini, Rossini and Donizetti scored obbligato parts designed to intensify the emotions of an aria and interact with the vocal line as well as connect the phrases of the vocal melody.⁵⁴

The attraction of professional performers to obbligato repertoire was widespread and well established. Many of Puzzi's colleagues, including Lindley ('cello) and Nicholson (flute) appeared as obbligato performers at benefit concerts and occasionally at the Philharmonic Society. The clarinetist Thomas Willman was particularly active in this capacity. He accompanied singers such as Camporese, Catalani, Grisi, Malibran, Novello and Sontag and received much praise from contemporary critics for his outstanding musicianship and abilities as an obbligato player.⁵⁵ While Willman was the most noted obbligato player of his time in contemporary reviews, he appears to have played only existing obbligato parts and does not seem to have arranged any of his own. His interest in attaching himself to singers stopped where the composer's did and lacks the aggressiveness and industry of Puzzi's approach. In his extensive exploitation of this medium, Puzzi was unique.

Opera repertoire naturally offers many possibilities for the combination of horn and voice, although composers did not produce enough arias with horn obbligato to meet Puzzi's demand for this repertoire. Thus, he crafted numerous arrangements for horn and voice that paired the most popular

53. Morley-Pegge, pp. 206-208.

54. For a more in-depth discussion of obbligato writing in Italian opera, see Charles Patrick Cronin, 'The Comic Operas of Gaetano Donizetti and the End of the Opera Buffa Tradition', Ph.D. diss. (Ann Arbor 1993), p. 42.

55. Pamela Weston, *Clarinet Virtuosi of the Past* (London, 1971), pp. 106-107.

opera repertoire with the most fashionable singers. Concert programmes and Puzzi's surviving works show that these arrangements existed in several permutations: the addition of an obbligato part to a solo aria, arrangements of multiple voice selections where one of the voice parts has been transcribed for the horn, and the *ad libitum* use of the horn in large ensemble and chorus numbers.

The obbligato parts that Puzzi added to arias were most often formed by extracting melodic lines from the original accompaniment. Original musical input into these arrangements by Puzzi was minimal. His most common technique was to transfer the main countermelodies from the orchestra or piano score to the horn part and remove them from the accompaniment. Italian songs and canzonets, which will be discussed later in this chapter, seem to provide a richer sampling of Puzzi's original obbligato writing.

Puzzi's arrangement of 'Al dolce guidami' from Donizetti's *Anna Bolena* represents a typical example of Puzzi's craft in fashioning obbligato parts and illustrates the qualities that made an aria suitable for this treatment (see musical example no. 14). Its original key of F, while suitable for the horn, was easily transposed by Puzzi to the more preferable E-flat, which still remained within the range of the singer. Key was a critical factor in determining the form his arrangements took. Arias that were in or close to keys that corresponded to the horn's most desirable solo crooks (E-flat, E and F) were good candidates for horn and voice arrangements, as they could be transcribed while still remaining in a viable range for the singer. Arias in far-removed keys such as A, B, or C were more suitable for solo horn arrangements, since remaining within the compass of the voice was not an issue.

The general shape of the melodic accompaniment of 'Al dolce

guidami' is in a form ideally suited to the horn. Because of the similar range and key of the horn and *cor anglais*, the original *cor anglais* solo in the introduction to the aria (beginning in bar 8 of Puzzi's arrangement) serves as an ideal framework for a virtuosic horn solo. The *cor anglais* solo transposes quite naturally to the compass of the horn and provides an ideal showcase for technical mastery with its intricate passage work, long phrases and occasional chromatic tones. Puzzi somewhat alters the original melody in bars 9 and 11 and adds a prolonged cadenza in bars 13 and 14. The *fermate* in bar 14 offer several points for impromptu extemporisation before the horn assumes its role as vocal accompanist in bar 17.⁵⁶ Beginning in bar 30 of Puzzi's arrangement, the slow-moving, mostly tonic arpeggios of Donizetti's violin parts are transcribed into a very serviceable horn obbligato. These figures coincide naturally with the open harmonics of the hand horn and provide a secure framework for the few diatonic scalar passages that require the use of the hand. The interspersal of open and stopped notes in this manner would have been an aid for intonation, an important factor in a slow ensemble number.

From concert programmes it is evident that Puzzi frequently used the horn to substitute for a voice, usually the alto, in duet and ensemble numbers. Although these transcriptions do little to demonstrate Puzzi's skill as an arranger, the technical and musical challenges they presented were formidable and they are a tribute to Puzzi's skills and sensitivity as a performer. In his transcription of 'Dolce conforto', a soprano and alto duet from Mercadante's *Il giuramento*, Puzzi, or possibly a copyist acting on his instruction, has transposed the piece down a tone and has notated the alto part for horn in D (see musical example 8). The concluding bars of the

56. No technical or musical considerations explain Puzzi's alterations to the *cor anglais* melody in bars 8 and 10. Perhaps they reflect small variations in the source material from which Puzzi worked in making his arrangement.

duet, where both parts must coordinate their cascading scales and trills exactly, would have presented a stunning display of ensemble playing. Matching the agility and lightness of the voice throughout the piece and having the stamina to maintain the poised strength required by these last few bars would have demanded an incredible amount of control from the horn player. It exceeds what would have been required in Puzzi's obbligato parts, where the horn part is generally more independent of the vocal line and, in many ways, the test of skills posed here is greater than that of his most virtuosic solos.

Sources and performance patterns for opera-derived arrangements

Not surprisingly, the season's offerings at the King's/Her Majesty's Theatre and the Royal Italian Opera at Covent Garden, the two institutions licensed to perform Italian opera during Puzzi's career, were the greatest factor in determining his choice of opera-derived repertoire.⁵⁷ A tally of such pieces performed by Puzzi from 1817 to 1855 where the source composition could be clearly identified reveals that 84 % of these works draw on operas performed at these two theatres and that Puzzi's choice of works for any given year generally mirrors the opera season. Lack of complete records of Puzzi's concert appearances and the survival of only part of his library renders an empirically based analysis of how closely his repertoire corresponded with that of the opera houses impossible, but the nature of opera production and consumption at these theatres offers some general insight. Puzzi's preference for the works of Rossini, Donizetti and Bellini stems not only from their suitability for arranging, as discussed

57. Because opera played such a large role in determining Puzzi's repertoire, a table of the operas produced at London's Italian opera houses during Puzzi's career is given in appendix 4. Naturally, Covent Garden has less bearing on Puzzi's selection of repertoire, since it was not licensed to produce Italian operas until the establishment of the Royal Italian Opera Company in 1847.

above, but also from their prominence at the King's/Her Majesty's Theatre. Jennifer Hall's comprehensive study of opera repertoire in London during Puzzi's career demonstrates the extent of the dominance of these composers. At the King's Theatre in the 1820s, Rossini's works accounted for 60 % of the operas produced. Bellini and Donizetti became popular in the following decades. 42 % of the operas mounted in the 1840s were written by these two composers and in the 1850s, this figure increased to 52 %.⁵⁸ Examination of the works produced at London's Italian opera theatres also explains the presence of lesser known composers such as Mercadante, Mayr and Alary and the appearance of pieces based on non-Italian opera in Puzzi's repertoire.

Although these two theatres were the main venues for the production of opera in London during Puzzi's career, operas -- particularly German and 'adapted' versions of Italian works -- were mounted on other stages. Operas performed at locations such as St. James's Theatre, the Theatre Royal at Drury Lane and Covent Garden prior to the establishment of the Royal Italian Opera Company, comprise the remainder of the opera repertoire that Puzzi arranged. There are no known examples of Puzzi arranging or performing music from operas that had not already been produced in England. This takes on particular significance because Puzzi, through his frequent travels to the continent as an agent and also through the engagements his wife had as singer in Italy, would have had contact with much of the popular Italian opera repertoire before it arrived in London. This vouches for the importance of the currency and the familiarity with his audience of the works Puzzi chose to arrange. Although it would seem that being the first to bring the latest musical 'fashions' from Naples, Milan or Paris was an opportunity that

58. Hall, p. 267.

Puzzi would have been keen to exploit, their popularity in London had to be established before Puzzi would adopt them.

One of the most fundamental but striking features of operatic life during the first half of the nineteenth century was the insatiable demand among opera goers for novelty and the abundance of new works that composers produced to satisfy this desire. This would have had implications for Puzzi who, because operatic arrangements constituted such a large part of his repertoire, would have been subject to similar audience expectations. Again, lack of comprehensive information prevents us from being able to calculate how much new music Puzzi would have had to arrange each season to keep abreast of the demands of his listeners but analysing the group of performances referred to at the beginning of this section and considering the trends at the King's/Her Majesty's Theatre offers some insight into how much music Puzzi might have arranged and how much use he would have got out of these arrangements.

TABLE 5.3
Premieres at The King's/ Her Majesty's Theatre⁵⁹

YEAR	TOTAL # OF OPERAS PERFORMED	NUMBER OF PREMIERES	% OF PREMIERE WORKS
1825	9	4	44 %
1830	18	6	33 %
1835	15	2	13 %
1840	15	3	20 %
1845	20	2	10 %
1850	21	2	9 %

59. All figures are based on the table of operas in appendix 4. No tally has been made for 1855, since Her Majesty's Theatre was closed during this year. Performances at Covent Garden have not been considered here because the number of 'premieres' would appear disproportionately high, since the Royal Italian Opera was not established until 1847.

Table 5.3 illustrates that new works amounted to a significant proportion of the operas performed at the King's/Her Majesty's Theatre each season and provides a framework in which to gauge Puzzi's activities as an arranger. The information about Puzzi's performances is not complete enough to compile a similar table, but basic figures can be calculated from performances of opera-derived works where the source material could be identified. In this sample, 28 % of the opera arrangements performed by Puzzi corresponded with operas that premiered in London during the same season that they appeared in Puzzi's repertoire. This figure, and the small number of performance dates known for Puzzi's surviving manuscripts, indicates that Puzzi must have produced an extensive body of arrangements during his lifetime and that in general, these works would have had a relatively short useful life, corresponding with the period when the work was being performed in London's opera houses. 67 % of the opera-based works that Puzzi played at concerts were 'in season' at the King's/Her Majesty's Theatre when they were performed. The works that Puzzi was playing 'out of season' were generally from operas such those by Bellini, Mozart, and Rossini that enjoyed a broken run of many years at the theatre and were not removed from Puzzi's repertoire during the occasional year when the opera was not put on at the theatre.

While table 5.3 indicates that Puzzi would have been faced with arranging a large quantity of new music each year to maintain his currency, these demands would have lessened over the course of his career. Although the number of operas performed each season steadily increases over the period under consideration, the number of works

premiered each season was on the decline.⁶⁰ This would have allowed Puzzi to utilise more extensively works that he had already arranged. Also, he would have only had to craft a few well-chosen arrangements for the season, as exhaustive repetition of a small group of works was the norm among singers and virtuoso composers. The *Musical World* captured the sentiments of its readers by dubbing these pieces 'hacking songs'.⁶¹

A small number of works fell outside the scope of the two performance patterns outlined above. In these instances, a piece may have been programmed at a concert to please a patron, as was clearly the case when Puzzi and Rubini performed 'Bel raggio di luna' from Burghersh's *opera seria Il torneo* ten years after its premiere at St. James's Theatre. The audience at the concert included the composer and the Duke of Wellington. In other instances the arrangement was a 'signature' piece of the performers. This was clearly the case with the *preghiera* 'Fra nembi crudeli' from Mercadante's *I briganti*. The opera was only performed for one season in 1836 at the King's Theatre, but it was a fixture on programmes where Rubini and Puzzi appeared together in the first years of the 1840s and was a featured selection at Rubini's farewell concerts in 1842. After Rubini departed England, the piece dropped from Puzzi's repertoire. His arrangements for solo voice and horn were always performed with the same singers. In keeping with the importance of the singer's immanent role in creating the operatic work, they do not seem to have been recycled when the singer for whom they were originally arranged was no longer appearing in England. Owing to this, Puzzi's arrangements for horn and voice probably had a shorter useful period

60. For an explanation of this pattern, see Hall, pp. 272-279. Key factors that she attributes to this trend include issues of copyright, licensing and compositional style.

61. *Musical World*, vol. 3 no. 40 (16 December 1836): 221.

than the solo horn arrangements.

CANZONETS AND ITALIAN SONG

The sway that Italian music held over aristocratic society and Puzzi's activities as an arranger was not confined to opera. Italian song, particularly the canzonet, comprises the second most popular genre of source material for his arrangements. Alongside opera arias, the canzonet was a staple of the aristocratic drawing room, although it is a distinctly different composition both in style and function. Nicholas Temperley describes canzonets as 'non-dramatic and technically undemanding' pieces in which the 'overall character is one of melodious sweetness'.⁶² This would have made the canzonet, and Italian songs of a similar nature, an ideal contrast to and respite from Puzzi's virtuosic aria transcriptions. The canzonet is an entirely intimate form: simple in its compositional style, accompanied only by the piano or perhaps a harp or guitar, generally intended to be performed at home and nearly always written for a specific performer.

The rage for singing instruction that insured that every fashionable aristocratic household with young ladies would have sought the services of a singing master fuelled the composition of countless canzonets by instructors for their pupils. Thus, all musically aware aristocratic families would have been well acquainted with these compositions, making them a natural choice for Puzzi's solo repertoire and perhaps even providing opportunities for Puzzi and his patrons to perform together. Hundreds of composers wrote canzonets.⁶³ Some of them were famous composers of

62. Nicholas Temperley, 'The Italian Canzonet in Late-Georgian Britain' (transcript of paper presented at the Second Conference on Music in Nineteenth-Century Britain, Durham University, July 1999), pp. 4-5.

63. *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2.

Italian opera but many were written by lesser-known musicians who were keen to capitalise on the strong market for Italian song in England. This provides a context for Puzzi's inclusion of songs by composers such as Campana, Marras, Panizza and Tadolini.

The kinship of Puzzi and his wife with fellow Italian musicians resulted in dedications such as Marliani's romance 'Dieu me l'a dit' for Giovanni and Negri's canzonet 'Bella' written for Giacinta. Cesare Pugni also dedicated a *terzetto* to 'Signorina Puzzi'.⁶⁴ It is possible that the Puzzis had contact with Pugni during his career in Milan (1815 - c. 1840) and certain that they would have been well acquainted when Pugni became a central composer for the ballet at Her Majesty's Theatre in 1843 under the management of Benjamin Lumley. In other cases, Puzzi appears to have had no special connection with the composers, but arranged their songs because they were popular and would have been recognisable to his listeners. Masini's *romanza* 'La calma', Mercadante's *melodia* 'Il sogno' and Schira's *romanza* 'Tristo e fuor d'ogni speranza' existed in printed editions that appeared prior to Puzzi's arrangements. In creating obligato parts for these songs, Puzzi has simply extracted countermelodies from the original piano accompaniment in the same manner that he employed for operatic material. Providing an obligato for Mercadante's 'Il sogno' required even less work. In contemporary published editions Puzzi had a selection of violin, 'cello, flute and harmonium *obbligati* at his disposal for transcription.

The most interesting, and possibly original, example of Puzzi's work as a composer of obligato parts is found in Tadolini's song 'La potenza d'amore', composed for Rubini (see musical example 9). The obligato is notable for its complexity, both in terms of its musical function and with

64. Works catalogue no. 66.

regard to the advanced technical capabilities it demands of the horn player. It fulfils the traditional role of linking the vocal passages but also provides a chance for the horn to interact with the voice, sometimes in a very sophisticated, rhythmically and melodically independent countermelody. At other times, the obbligato writing assumes the characteristics of a second voice in much the same manner as the horn replaces the alto voice in Puzzi's transcriptions of vocal duets. The ensemble challenges it poses to the performers are formidable, and very similar to those encountered in Puzzi's transcription of Mercadante's 'Dolce conforto' in terms of the demands made on ensemble coordination and the technical prowess and refinement of the horn player. With Rubini's stratospheric climax (bar 74) and Puzzi's lavish cadenzas (bar 85), 'La potenza d'amore' was designed to be a *tour-de-force* of virtuosity for both performers. While the horn cadenzas were definitely the work of Puzzi, it is impossible to know the extent of his original contribution to the rest of the horn part, although an inscription on the cover of the music attributes the obbligato to him. Lack of a version of the song without horn prohibits a comparison between the horn obbligato and Tadolini's original accompaniment.

SCHUBERT *LIEDER* AND GERMAN REPERTOIRE

The Schubert *Lieder* transcriptions do not comprise a large part of Puzzi's output, nor is his treatment of them musically remarkable. At first glance, their existence appears to be an anomaly in a repertoire dominated by works derived from Italian vocal music, but their inclusion was deliberate and serves as an indicator of Puzzi's understanding of his musical environment and his shrewd efforts to profit from any trends that affected his market. A study of the circumstances perpetuating Puzzi's Schubert transcriptions also provides a context for the other German works which

appear in his performing repertoire.

Puzzi's arrangements of Schubert *Lieder* mirror the rising interest in this genre and in German music in general in London in the 1830s and 1840s. While Schubert's symphonies received a rocky reception, his popularity as a composer of *Hausmusik* flourished.⁶⁵ During the 1832, 1833 and 1834 seasons, the inclusion of German operas performed in their original language marked a radical departure from the usual repertoire of the Italian opera company at Her Majesty's Theatre and an influx of German singers arrived in London to mount these productions. Naturally, the more prominent of these singers made their way into the benefit and private concert circuit during their stay. German music was also the focal point of the chamber music movement of the 1830s. As has been previously discussed, Puzzi's choice of instrumental repertoire for his series of Classical Wind Concerts in 1837 was dominated by Austro-German composers. The obligatory vocal selections at this series were all drawn from the Italian opera repertoire with the important exception of a performance by Joseph Kroff at the second concert where he sang 'Der Wanderer', 'his old favourite, the fine *scena* by Schubert'.⁶⁶

Puzzi's interest in Schubert, well timed to coincide with the developments outlined above, would have also been heightened by his contact with the German singers who played a crucial role in introducing and popularising the *Lied*. Three of the most prominent were Kroff, the Austrian bass Joseph Staudigl and Wilhelmina Schröder-Devrient. Puzzi

65. See John Reed, 'Schubert's Reception History in Nineteenth-Century England' in the *Cambridge Companion to Schubert*, ed. Christopher H. Gibbs (Cambridge, 1997), for an in-depth discussion of Schubert reception in London during Puzzi's career.

66. *Musical World*, vol. 8 no. 103 (1 March 1838): 146. The quartet concerts seem to have been a popular setting for *Lieder* performances, since Kroff, who arrived in London in 1835, appears to have given the first London performance of 'Der Wanderer' at an 1836 Classical Quartet concert (Reed, p. 256).

frequently appeared in concerts where these singers were present. Staudigl and Puzzi lent each other professional support in the form of reciprocal benefit concert participation and often performed together in pieces for voice and horn.

By the time Puzzi wrote his first Schubert transcriptions in 1839, his listeners would have been well acquainted with the *Lieder* and would have had ample opportunity to purchase the songs for themselves, as they were being rapidly published in London in the 1830s by Wessel. Puzzi selected six of Schubert's most popular *Lieder* for his transcriptions, as is evidenced by the inclusion of 'Ungeduld', 'L'Addio' (composed by A.H. Weyrauch and attributed to Schubert during this period) and 'Ständchen' in published compilations bearing titles such as 'the most favorite melodies' (Chappell 1844).⁶⁷ Schubert transcriptions of every manner for a broad range of instruments had already gained great popularity and were widely published. The *Lieder* continued to be popular with brass players and appeared in arrangements for *cornet à pistons* by P. Gatterman and horn by Eugène Vivier and Jacques-François Gallay.⁶⁸

Puzzi's treatment of the songs is very simple. He has transposed them to comfortable keys for solo horn (F and E-flat), but with this exception they remain unaltered. The horn part has not been embellished, nor does it contain any cadenzas or present any other opportunities for improvisation. The accompaniments are also direct transcriptions of Schubert's piano parts. Puzzi's approach to these *Lieder* can be explained by Schubert's position in Dahlhaus's dichotomy of the 'twin styles'. Schubert's *Lieder* embraced the performance ethos of the German Classical tradition,

67. For full details, see works catalogue nos. 37-39.

68. Reed, p. 266. Jacques-François Gallay, 'Six mélodies favorites de F. Schubert', Op. 51 (Paris, 1842). The present author thanks John Humphries for sharing his copies of the Gallay Schubert arrangements with her.

which stressed reverence for the composer and demanded that the performer was a faithful interpreter of what was on the page. Reviews of the vocal attributes of lauded *Lieder* singer Wilhelmina Schröder-Devrient contrast sharply with those of her Italian contemporaries:

her style is pure: her strength lies in that which requires the expression of deep feeling: therefore her singing is highly dramatic, not only on the stage but in the chamber. She has no roulades, no hopping passages, in short, no vocal tricks and but few ornaments.⁶⁹

In this light, Puzzi's decision to simply transcribe *Lieder* is very much in keeping with the expected conventions of the time. The huge number of variations and fantasias by composers such as Czerny, Liszt and Heller may appear to contradict this argument. Examination of the more noteworthy examples of these works reveals a compositional phenomenon where virtuosity has been developed into a 'grand style of its own' that transcends the 'style brillant' variety, which consists of technical virtuosity largely in the manner of 'parasitic' ornamentation and figuration that 'garnishes' the melody.⁷⁰ Since Puzzi chose not to pursue compositional virtuosity, his unaltered transcriptions excluding the improvisational tendencies of his opera adaptations exhibit a good degree of musical sensitivity and awareness on his behalf. For Puzzi, virtuosity was a cultural and not a compositional phenomenon.

FOLK SONG

Puzzi's arrangements of folk songs such as 'Poor Mary Ann', 'Kelvin Grove', 'Robin Adair' and 'I Sigh for the Days that are Gone' are a manifestation of the popularity of folk songs and ballads among

69. *Harmonicon*, vol. 10 (1832): 146. Cited by Hall, p. 295.

70. Dahlhaus, p. 135.

aristocratic listeners during his career. While initially the domain of the commoner, folk song was gradually adopted by the upper classes and imbued with a universal nationalistic identity. During this period, Dahlhaus suggests that 'the folk no longer meant the lower classes but rather the Nation, the population of a state' and 'folk song became linked, or lumped together, with the national anthem'.⁷¹ In this light, folk songs and anthems were eagerly received in the aristocratic drawing room and performers took advantage of the possibilities for virtuoso embellishment offered by their simple, melodically focused structure and shaped them into fashionable exhibition pieces such as pianist Latour's arrangement of 'Le Petit Tambour de la Garde Nationale', which was praised for having the 'the air of the beau monde, and the delightful ease of good taste'.⁷² Folk songs had become so widely embraced by performers of all stripes by the end of the 1820s that critics began to bemoan their presence and decry their status:

But there was no lack of the popular vulgarities, [at the Three Choirs Concert in Hereford, 1828] 'Jock O Hazledean,' 'Kelvin Grove,' . . . -- to say nothing of other ballads, which are now taken off the barrels of even the street organs, because they are become wearisome from continual repetition.⁷³

Folk songs and ballads appear in Puzzi's repertoire in various permutations. Occasionally, they are simply transposed to an appropriate key for the horn. In his setting of 'Robin Adair', Puzzi adds only an occasional appoggiatura and indicates a cadenza at the end of the tune, retaining the simple melody which would have served as an ideal display for beautiful tone and thoughtful phrasing. Direct transcriptions of folk

71. Dahlhaus, p. 110.

72. *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review*, vol. 2 (1820): 499.

73. *QMMR*, vol. 10 (1828): 145.

songs, unlike opera arias, did not generally present ample opportunities for virtuoso display. When a greater exhibition of *bravura* was desired, Puzzi followed the lead of many singers and other instrumentalists, utilising the melodies as the basis for theme and variation arrangements. In his treatment of 'Kelvin Grove', Puzzi follows a statement of the tune with an impetuous variation where the melody is embroidered with triplet passing and neighbouring tones. A brief *ad libitum* cadenza leads into the final variation where arpeggios frame the tune and the meter returns to a duple subdivision, creating the sense of a *rallentando* as the variations reach their conclusion. The arrangement is a pleasing if less flamboyant display of horn playing than Puzzi's opera transcriptions.

Folk songs were also a popular basis for so-called 'concertos' in the early nineteenth century. Puzzi incorporated the popular 'Le petit tambour de la Garde Nationale' into the one 'concerto' that exists in his surviving manuscripts.⁷⁴ In typical pasticcio style, the score of a fantasia bearing the inscription 'Le petit tambour' has been bound together with the opening work titled Concerto di corno. It is clear that the works were not originally intended to be played together, as is evident by their somewhat different orchestration. Provision for their union has been made in the form of various corrections and a cadenza that has been sketched on the last pages of the opening concerto. It would appear that it was this combination of works to which handbills such as the one printed for two concerts in Liverpool in 1824 referred (see illustration 5.2). Unfortunately, only an orchestral score with very sparse and sporadic horn cues exists for Puzzi's arrangement of 'Le Petit Tambour'. A statement of the tune by the

74. See works catalogue nos. 1 and 2. The inclusion of a voice and piano setting of 'Le Petit Tambour' in the printed music section of the *Harmonicon*, as well as its frequent appearance in various guises at benefit concerts, is a measure of its popularity. See *Harmonicon*, vol. 3 (1824): 90-91.

orchestra followed by alternating tutti and solo sections indicates a theme and variations format, although nothing can be ascertained about the particulars of the horn part.

SCHEME

For the Eighth and Last Subscription Concert, with a *Selection* from the Opera of *The Cabinet*, in which Miss PATON and Mr. SINCLAIR have been performing this season, with such unprecedented success, at the Theatre-Royal, Covent-garden.

FIRST PART.

Grand SYMPHONY*A. Romberg.*
DUET, Miss PATON and Mr. SINCLAIR,
 (" Ricciardo e Zoraide.")*Rossini.*
SONG, Mr. SINCLAIR, " The Beautiful Maid." ..*Braham.*
 " When absent from her my soul holds most dear."
 (From the opera of the Cabinet.)
SONG, Miss PATON, " Hours of sorrow."
 (From the new opera of Native Land,.....*Rossini.*)
 Arranged by *Bishop.*
Scotch DUET, Miss PATON and Mr. SINCLAIR,
 " Though I leave thee now."
POLACCA, (from the Cabinet,) Mr. SINCLAIR. ..*Braham.*
 With a Horn accompaniment, Signor PUZZI.
By very particular desire, Miss PATON will sing the
 favorite Scotch BALLAD of " Mary of Castle Cary."

SECOND PART.

New OVERTURE (CENERENTOLA).....*Rossini.*
CAVATINA, Mr. SINCLAIR.—(From Otello.)*Rossini.*
SONG, Miss PATON, " Lo, here the gentle Lark." ..*Bishop.*
CONCERTO HORN, Signor PUZZI, in which he
 will introduce " Le Petit Tambour de la Garde
 Nationale."
SONG, Mr. SINCLAIR, " The Mountain Maid."*Sinclair.*
RECITATIVO and ARIA, Miss PATON,
 " Di tanti palpiti."*Rossini.*
To conclude with the celebrated BIRD DUET from
 the Cabinet, Miss PATON and Mr. SINCLAIR.*Braham.*
SYMPHONY.....*Haydn.*

Illustration 5.2

Programme from a handbill advertising a 'Grand Miscellaneous Concert' at the Music Hall, Bold Street, Liverpool on 20 April 1824. Note the inclusion of a concerto based on 'Le Petit Tambour'. (Reproduced from the Covert Collection)

INSTRUMENTAL SOURCES

Works derived from non-vocal sources make up a very small percentage of Puzzi's repertoire. The majority of arrangements in this category emanate from the showpieces of other virtuoso instrumentalists or are adaptations of popular ancient or Classical pieces. The *Air Varié*, Op. 10 written by French violin virtuoso Jacques Pierre Joseph Rode at the close of the eighteenth century provides an interesting illustration of the appeal of works by other virtuoso performers. Two transcriptions exist in Puzzi's surviving manuscripts and he is known to have performed the piece, under the title of *Rhodes Variations* [*sic*], in at least three benefit concerts.⁷⁵ Many of Puzzi's colleagues also appropriated the work for themselves, including Charles Nicholson, who supplemented his flute arrangement of the air with 'an original bolero' and Nicholas Bochsa, who adapted the work for harp and added his own set of new variations. The *CPM* lists thirty-nine printed versions of adaptations of the piece, of which the above are all examples. Their publication and their existence in arrangements for instruments such as flute, harp, piano, harmonium, voice and flageolet represent an interest in the home music market. As well as capitalising on the virtuoso appeal of the piece, Puzzi probably included it in his repertoire because it was an item that would have been familiar to patrons who might have been amateur players. A survey of the editions of this piece in the *CPM* does not even begin to explore the number of other virtuosos who, like Puzzi, included it and other similar works in their own performing repertoire but never published an edition.

One particularly interesting published arrangement of the piece is Cianchettini's piano transcription, which bears the inscription

Madame Catalani's Variations, precisely as sung by her with

75. 20 June 1836; 13 December 1838; 22 September 1840.

rapturous applause in all the first cities of Europe . . . This is the only genuine copy of Madame Catalani's variations, sanctioned and signed, Angelica Catalani [facsimile signature].⁷⁶

Puzzi presumably penned his rendition of the Air with the above edition in front of him (see musical examples 10, 11, 12). Like Catalani's version, Puzzi's arrangement has only two variations, based loosely on the second and fourth of Rode's four variations, in addition to the opening theme. This truncated version would have been sympathetic to the endurance capacity of horn players and singers.

Puzzi's short first variation resembles neither Rode's nor Catalani's and may be his own composition, although it is quite possible that has been adapted from another virtuoso's rendition of the Air. Puzzi's statement of the opening theme basically adheres to the original and is unaffected by Catalani's lavish *fioritura*, although he does include some very minor vocally inspired ornamentation such as the glissando-like ascending scale on the third beat of bar 7 and the broderie on the last beat of bar 11. Despite these departures, the overall shape and structure of his variations, and the transitional piano passage between the first and second variation, are like Catalani's. The third variation of Rode's original is a gentle, short adagio that would have been perfect for the horn. Puzzi's omission of this variation strongly suggests that he was working with Catalani's arrangement and not the original.

The most striking feature revealed upon comparing Puzzi's adaptation of the Air with Catalani's is the shared second variation (beginning in bar 28 of Puzzi's arrangement). While preserving the general character of Rode's original fourth variation by retaining the arpeggios and

76. *Rodes Celebrated Air, for the Pianoforte, with Madame Catalani's Variations, Precisely as Sung by her with Rapturous Applause in all the First Cities of Europe, arr. Pio. Cianchettini*, (Liverpool, 1822).

chromatic and diatonic scales that are its distinguishing features, Catalani has condensed the wide range of Rode's scales to fit within the scope of the voice and has rewritten the arpeggios in thirds so that they are more easily negotiable for a singer. Catalani's rendition is so well suited to the horn that Puzzi has only transposed it down a minor third so that the tonic arpeggios are aligned with the horn's open harmonics and made a few minor adaptations to the final bars of the variation. Its extraordinarily idiomatic style makes it tempting to imagine that Catalani had stolen Puzzi's variation, although the time frame (Puzzi's manuscript appears fifteen years after the published transcription of Catalani's variations) and the established pattern of Puzzi's preference for adapting preexisting compositions and arrangements strongly suggests that Catalani was the original composer.

Catalani's rendition of the *Air Varié* presented Puzzi with a version of a very popular and well recognised virtuoso display piece that needed little adaptation before it could be added to his repertoire. However, its most valuable feature to Puzzi would have been the copious advertisement provided by its former executants. Catalani's performances of the *Air Varié* were so popular that other celebrated singers, including Malibran and Viardot-Garcia made it their own *cheval de bataille*.⁷⁷ Even in the selection of instrumental works to arrange, connection with the operatic world was paramount and was undoubtedly the reason that Puzzi chose to arrange Rode's *Air*.

The second type of instrumental pieces in Puzzi's repertoire are Baroque and Classical works that he transcribed for solo horn. These are generally another vehicle that Puzzi used to link himself with the

77. Boris Schwarz, 'Rode, Pierre Jacques Joseph', *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie (London, 1981), p. 88.

popularity of virtuosity. Such works rarely represent an attempt to include more 'serious' music in his repertoire as an end in itself but were selected because they had developed a contemporary following. In some instances, this reflects a certain trend, such as the emphasis placed upon original instrumental repertoire by the chamber music movement of the 1830s. In other cases, the transcriptions were clearly an attempt to profit from the popularity ascribed to the work by another performer, like the aforementioned Rhode's Variations[sic].

The inclusion of a transcription of Corelli's Trio Sonata, Op. 5 no. 9 is indicative of both situations. This piece was a signature item from the repertoire of Dragonetti and Lindley that they performed innumerable times at benefit concerts, provincial festivals and Philharmonic Society concerts.⁷⁸ While Puzzi performed a version of the work he referred to as 'Corelli's No. 9' (works catalogue no. 20) at various benefit concerts, it seems to have been transcribed in the first instance for performance at Blagrove's 4 May 1837 Benefit Quartet Concert, a setting that demanded something other than Puzzi's usual operatic offerings. On this occasion, the sonata was accompanied by a string quartet:

Signor Puzzi also played Correlli's [sic] 9th solo, accompanied by Messrs. Blagrove, Gattie, Dando and Lucas on violins, tenor and violoncello and Sir George Smart on the pianoforte. With the merits of Signor Puzzi the public have been long acquainted -- suffice it, therefore, to say that he played the soprano part of the giga movement a sixth lower than it would have been played on a violin, and the bass part of the last movement a third lower than is printed, and in the latter he played with a rapidity that would have astonished the composer.⁷⁹

78. Fiona Palmer, *Domenico Dragonetti in England (1794 - 1846): The Career of a Double Bass Virtuoso* (Oxford, 1997), pp. 198, 208-209.

79. Review in an unidentified newspaper clipping preserved with a programme of Blagrove's Benefit Quartett Concert, JJC: Concerts 2: play places III.

This review demonstrates that Puzzi's approach to the trio sonata was very similar to his treatment of opera repertoire. He transcribes it in the same manner as an ensemble number, consolidating the melody into a single line. Study of the surviving piano version, arranged with the help of Moscheles, reveals that the transcription 'Corelli's No. 9' is actually a pastiche of movements from several Corelli trio sonatas, another favoured method applied by Puzzi in his opera arrangements.

PUZZI THE COMPOSER

The writing of rapidly produced transcriptions of the music most popular with his aristocratic auditors was Puzzi's primary pursuit as a composer. Only two solo works survive by which to consider his activities and attributes as a composer of 'original' music -- that which does not make recourse to any other compositions for its source material. Neither of these works is remarkable as a composition, but both are of interest because of the circumstances surrounding them. As an indication of his horn playing abilities that has not been predetermined by another composer's melodic lines, Puzzi's Concerto di corno has been discussed on pp. 142-143. The purpose and intended audience of Puzzi's only published horn music, Six solo [*sic*] pour le cor, is examined on p. 201. More works of this type probably did exist at one point, although the pattern established by this survey of Puzzi's surviving music indicates that the number of original compositions that included horn would have been small in comparison to transcriptions and arrangements.

Although not enough works survive to prove any hypotheses, it is reasonable to posit that Puzzi's composition of original works including horn dwindled as his career progressed and that if he undertook any significant amount of composing, it would have been during the period

when he was in France and perhaps extended to shortly after his arrival in London (approximately 1810 to 1820). At this time, Puzzi had not yet established the location or musical climate that was to become the focus of his career as a soloist and so had yet to settle into the pattern of arranging and transcribing the favourite music of his patrons. His sustaining link with singers was also still under development at this time, although some early arrangements, such as Puzzi's 1812 setting of Winter's 'Paga fui' from *Il ratto di Proserpina* for voice and horn, and his musical relationship to the DeLihu sisters in Paris, indicate that it was well under way.

While Puzzi's failure to produce a substantial body of original repertoire is not surprising in the context of his musical environment, other indicators suggest that composition was not one of his stronger attributes. In reviewing his arrangement for two voices of Panseron's barcarole 'Vagando in mar tranquil', the *Harmonicon* reported that the piece was 'smooth and simple; though Sig. Puzzi has not here exhibited himself as a very skilful harmonist'.⁸⁰ In two of his more complicated surviving arrangements for horn, Puzzi collaborated with his colleagues. Moscheles is credited as the arranger of the pastiche of Corelli trio sonatas titled 'Corelli's No. 9'. Leidesdorf wrote the virtuosic piano part, and possibly the variations as well, of the *Fantasie brillante* incorporating themes from Bellini's *Il pirata*. Puzzi's large output of successful arrangements and his production of functional music such as canzonets and pedagogical materials certainly proves that he possessed a working knowledge of composition, but it is most aptly described as that of a craftsman. It served him as a tool, but not was not a goal in itself.

However, in forming any conclusions about Puzzi's activities or merits as a composer, it must be reiterated that in the 'Rossinian'

80. *Harmonicon*, vol. 7 (1829): 251.

environment that Puzzi inhabited, 'the reality of music resides in its performance'.⁸¹ Puzzi's performances were in all probability graced with many interpretive nuances, emotion and virtuosic flourishes that were not indicated in the score in much the same manner that

Many a melody which looks banal enough on the page becomes luminous with meaning when sung by one who understands the Italian *bel canto* and the traditions of this type of opera.⁸²

The essence of Puzzi's fame as a performer was distilled in his ability to 'sing' on the horn and exemplified all that this implied to the cognoscenti of the world dominated by the Italian Opera. The designation of 'primo corno' that appears on some of his music is more than a label used to identify parts. It is the embodiment of a performance ethos akin to that of a *primo tenore* or *prima donna*. In this context, Puzzi's repertoire and his approach to 'composing' needs no further explanation.

81. Dahlhaus, p. 9.

82. Grout, vol. 1, p. 342.

CONCLUSION

Puzzi lived in London during an era of phenomenal musical richness. While derogatory comments about nineteenth-century England's status as 'das Land ohne Musik' do reflect a dearth of native-born musical talent, England possessed an unquenchable thirst for music that provided an exceptional environment for Puzzi's career.¹ It is difficult to imagine with anything but a consuming sense of awe and wonder what it would have been like to have been present at benefit concerts that drew together performers such as Puzzi, Liszt, Vieuxtemps, Rubini, Lablache, Tamburini, Persiani and Garcia and orchestral and chamber concerts where Puzzi would have played alongside instrumentalists such as Dragonetti, Lindley, Spagnoletti and Willman.² Puzzi's tenure in London saw the arrival of Rossini and Weber to produce operas for the city's theatres and the premieres of some of the nineteenth century's most noted orchestral and chamber music repertoire at the Philharmonic Society. It is easy to imagine that any talented musician who arrived in this setting would have prospered, but numerous obstacles and hurdles would also have confronted all who sought a fortune in music. Puzzi's success was exceptional and is attributable to a rare convergence of outstanding talent, an unerring understanding of the musical and social climate of his time,

1. Oscar O.A. Schmitz, *Das Land ohne Musik: englische Gesellschaftsprobleme* (Munich, 1914), p. 1.

2. Names of benefit concert performers drawn from 'Mr. Benedict's Annual Grand Morning Concert' (London: Her Majesty's Theatre, 17 May 1841), unnumbered concert programme, Covert Collection.

and the personal attributes that enabled him shrewdly to react to and manipulate the many elements of his environment. In this way, Puzzi was indeed a 'very extraordinary man.'³

Puzzi was unerring in selecting and cultivating the Italian opera and its patrons as the vehicle of his success. He exhibited extreme industry, aided by his natural ability to attract aristocratic trust and support, in his involvement in nearly every facet of London's operatic world, progressing from his position as an agent to director of his own *buffa* company and manager of various provincial tours. However, the pinnacle of his entrepreneurialism -- and that which distinguished him from all of his colleagues and secured his place of high visibility as a soloist -- was the way in which he used both the singers and the repertoire of the Italian opera to promote his performing career. Not content with the more than adequate provision that working as an agent would have provided, Puzzi continued his activities as a soloist, immeasurably enhancing their appeal and success by exploiting the link to singers that his position as an agent gave him. By adopting the most fashionable repertoire of the Italian opera and by musically joining himself with singers through his obligato arrangements, he was riding on the coat-tails of the immense popularity of sensations such as Giovanni Rubini's rendering of Otello or being swept along in the lucrative rustle of the skirts of Giuditta Pasta's Lucia.

While the largely opera-based repertoire that Puzzi produced is of little practical value to horn players today and has gained no enduring place in the instrument's repertoire, it has indirectly played an important role in influencing horn playing. Because of their popularity, Puzzi's arrangements afforded the horn a high degree of visibility and cultivated a level of elevated status that it would not otherwise have achieved in

3. *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review*, vol. 3 (1821): 279.

London, even with Puzzi's unmatched virtuosity. His choice of a genre that possessed such great aristocratic appeal opened the doors of the drawing room to the horn. His own fashionability as a refined foreigner and central figure within the operatic world made him a natural ambassador for the instrument and enabled him to endow it with a degree of social cachet and interest that it previously lacked.

Puzzi's music exhibited his individual performing talents to a much greater extent than any existing horn repertoire. His extraordinary qualities as a player are uniquely manifested in the great demands upon technique and musicianship that Puzzi's music makes upon the player. The success and popularity that he achieved with his repertoire and the feats that it enabled him to display attracted the attention and emulation of his horn playing colleagues and their successors. In this way, Puzzi's music facilitated his establishment of a preference for French-style instruments and playing techniques in England that would last for over one hundred years.

At first glance, Puzzi's acknowledged position as an 'extraordinary man' may appear to exempt him from the normal laws governing musical careers during his life; his popularity may seem today to be a faddish anomaly and his repertoire may now be construed as rather trite and devoid of any thought or originality. However, when his career is examined within the context of the musical, professional and predominantly Georgian social mores of his time, it is imbued with order and meaning and the mechanisms that made Puzzi an extraordinary success become easily understood. The multiple facets of his career are revealed to be the products of careful and deliberate construction, not of random luck or preordained fortune. Consideration of his life and work *in situ* is the key to explaining the particulars of Puzzi's career such as his

choice of employments, his reaction to patronage, the selection of venues for his concerts, the fashioning of his repertoire and his preference for certain instruments. This in turn leads to an understanding of the factors that enabled his success and unique position of influence as a player. In this way, active engagement with a broad range of contextual issues has much to offer the researcher who seeks to explain the extraordinary.

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