Three Arias From Mozart’s Don Giovanni: a Comparative Analysis of Performance Issues and Technical Problems Found in Four Complete Piano-Vocal Scores. A Vocal Accompanist’s Perspective

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THREE ARIAS FROM MOZART’S DON GIOVANNI:
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PERFORMANCE ISSUES AND TECHNICAL PROBLEMS FOUND IN FOUR COMPLETE PIANO-VOCAL SCORES.
A VOCAL ACCOMPANIST’S PERSPECTIVE

By

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A DOCTORAL ESSAY

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THREE ARIAS FROM MOZART’S DON GIOVANNI: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PERFORMANCE ISSUES AND TECHNICAL PROBLEMS FOUND IN FOUR COMPLETE PIANO-VOCAL SCORES. A VOCAL ACCOMPANIST’S PERSPECTIVE

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The objective of this essay is to study technical problems and performance issues in the piano-reduction accompaniments of three solo arias from Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*: “Or sai chi l’onore,” “Dalla sua pace la mia dipende,” and “Batti, batti, o bel Masetto.” This study is executed through the comparative analysis of the arias’ accompaniments from four piano-vocal score editions of the opera (Bärenreiter, G. Schirmer, Ricordi, and Boosey & Hawkes) with cross-reference to the full orchestral score (the *Neue Mozart-Ausgabe*). The essay contains a detailed presentation of the merits and flaws of each of the four piano-vocal score editions; a discussion of the realizations’ quality; examples by the author of plausible modifications; and the author’s suggestions for practice, fingering, pedaling, and dealing with various performance issues. This essay can provide a stimulus for vocal pianists to explore the countless possibilities in piano realizations of the orchestral accompaniments of operatic works, and to continue to refine and improve their ability to imitate orchestral sonorities and textures at the piano.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

General Background

There is a small but significant body of literature devoted to the art of accompanying and collaborative piano skills. A number of these sources are focused on vocal accompanying.\(^1\) Most of the authors give special attention to art-song accompaniment and vocal coaching. Although a few of these books, articles and doctoral essays contain some pages or chapters that deal with reductions of orchestral accompaniments, apparently there is only one doctoral paper, by Mary Adelyn Kauffman, that explores in detail the practical difficulties inherent in the concert performance of piano-vocal scores of complete operas.\(^2\)

Gerald Moore, one of the world’s great vocal accompanists and author of several books dedicated to the art of accompanying, wrote in *The Unashamed Accompanist*:

> One of the least grateful tasks which the accompanist has to perform from time to time is playing piano transcriptions of orchestral accompaniments. ….The accompanist, frail through he may be, becomes a substitute for a hundred men.

\(^1\) This conclusion is based on the bibliographical research for this doctoral essay. The complete list of references can be found in the bibliography.

\(^2\) Mary Adelyn Kauffman, “Practical Guidelines and Techniques for The Execution of Piano-Vocal Scores as Exemplified in The Operas of Mozart, Rossini, Verdi and Puccini,” (D.M.A. essay, University of Miami, 1992). A review of this paper can be found in Chapter 2.
Not being conceived in terms of the piano, most of these transcriptions are very unpianistic.\(^3\)

With the intention of reproducing the full score in the piano reduction, transcribers often hardly leave out a single note of the composer’s orchestral voicing and texture. As a result of this kind of “accuracy,” many vocal accompanists have to deal with unpianistic or unplayable accompaniment. To maintain an appropriate musical character, the vocal accompanist has to modify some of the figurations and adapt the piano vocal score to a more idiomatic and natural reduction to suit his or her own technical abilities.

In contrast, there are piano transcriptions of orchestral accompaniments that, in the words of Gerald Moore, “do not present any great terrors to the accompanist, but they are not absorbingly interesting to play.”\(^4\) For the sake of a more “playable” orchestral accompaniment, some transcribers and editors limit or simplify original orchestral figurations and inner voices that could easily be included in the piano-vocal score without technical difficulties or awkwardness.

A vocal accompanist is continually aware of the ways in which an inaccurate transcription of an orchestral score can produce a poor piano accompaniment. Very often, this can be easily corrected by a few small changes in the piano-vocal score.

Often, the piano transcription distorts or dilutes the original texture and voicing of the orchestra. As a result, the vocal accompanist should expand the texture or modify the figuration for the closest possible realization of the orchestral score.\(^5\)

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\(^4\) Ibid.

\(^5\) Examples of these modifications can be found in Chapters 4, 5, and 6 of this essay.
Choice of the Topic

There is a paucity of published materials dealing with the above-mentioned problems and modifications. The full score and orchestral recording are virtually the only sources that one can rely upon. There are very few publications that focus on the vocal accompanist’s problems when playing a piano-vocal score. Almost all of these sources address issues relevant to vocal coaches, but not to vocal accompanists. Mary Adelyn Kauffman writes one of the few essays addressed to vocal accompanists and their specific problems. Kauffman’s approach to the multiple issues that exist in piano-vocal scores for vocal accompanists, and her reasonable solutions for better realizations, inspired the author of this essay to undertake a detailed analysis of identical problems within a single opera. There is no published material dealing with performance issues and technical problems for the vocal accompanist in the concert version of solo arias from Mozart’s Don Giovanni. Therefore, this area of vocal accompanying and practice in operatic repertoire remains a vast, open field for research and practical application.

The purpose of this doctoral essay is to study the performance issues and technical problems in piano-vocal scores found in selected solo arias of the opera Don Giovanni by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, and to offer examples of technical and musical solutions. Each of these arias exemplifies certain technical problems and performance issues that can be found throughout Mozart’s vocal compositions with orchestral accompaniment. It is the author’s hope that this essay will enhance the vocal accompanist’s realizations and

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6 A review of related literature is located in Chapter 2 of this doctoral essay.

performances of these solo arias and provide a stimulus for applying the same kinds of technical attention and correction to other piano-vocal scores in the operatic repertoire.

**Structure**

The structure of this essay is as follows:

Chapter 1 introduces the general background of the problem, explains the choice of the topic, and presents the structure of the essay. Chapter 2 reviews the literature sources relevant to the topic. Chapter 3 presents the research method and the reasons for the selection of the particular arias. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 describe the technical problems and performance issues in the piano-reduction accompaniments for the solo arias “O sai chi l’onore,” “Dalla sua pace la mia dipende,” and “Batti, batti, o bel Masetto.” Each of these chapters contains three subheadings:

1. “Pianist’s General Goals” - a list of initially obvious tasks and possible difficulties for the pianist;

2. “Comparative Analysis and Discussion” - comparisons of realizations, and a detailed presentation of the merits and defects in different piano-vocal score editions with reference to the orchestral score; discussions of the quality of existing realizations; as needed, examples of plausible modifications offered, explained, and justified; author’s practice suggestions for technically difficult textures and figurations; the author’s pedaling and fingering suggestions.

3. “Other Issues” – additional review of the issues which have not yet been discussed (some of them are not related to any of the four piano-vocal score editions, but to the general performance and interpretation); author’s suggestions.
This chapter reviews the basic literary sources used as references for this project. The focus of this doctoral essay is to identify the vocal accompanist’s specific problems, and to suggest possible solutions to them, in selected solo arias in the piano-vocal score of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*. It is also relevant to examine secondary sources of literature that contain general historical information about orchestration, orchestral and instrumental techniques, as well as discussions of the vocal performance practice of Mozart’s period. Although these sources are not related specifically to the art of accompanying, they contribute to a better understanding of Mozart’s operatic style (specifically in the Da Ponte operas), to contemporaneous orchestration traditions, and to stylistic traits in the composer’s piano works (articulation, phrase shaping, pedaling, dynamics, and embellishments).

The first and the largest group of literary sources contains published materials directly relevant to the art of vocal accompanying. The second group consists of secondary sources that are not addressed to vocal accompanists or vocal coaches, but definitely would contribute to these artists’ professional knowledge. This group includes published materials about the opera *Don Giovanni*, publications that describe and comment on Mozart’s operatic orchestration and on instrumental and orchestral

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8 The bibliography section at the end of this doctoral essay is followed by a list of discography materials that were used by the author when working on this project.
techniques of the period, and several books that discuss Mozart’s pianistic style and issues of interpretation.

**Works on the Art of Vocal Accompanying**

*The Complete Collaborator: The Pianist as a Partner,* by Martin Katz,\(^8\) is the most recent and definitely the most comprehensive source of literature on the subject. The author, one of the few contemporary “gurus” among collaborative pianists, reveals many of his professional secrets. The book is concise, well laid out, and the language is involving and sometimes humorous. A companion web site, where the reader can listen to the musical examples presented in the book performed by the author himself, adds to the value of the book. In addition to the multiple topics related to the art of collaboration, maestro Katz dedicated a fair portion of his book to playing orchestral reductions. In comparison to other existing texts about the piano version of orchestral accompanying, most of which focus on “simplifying everything, removing any extraneous material and surviving an onslaught,” Katz prefers a positive approach, and underlines the ruinous influence of the “survival” mindset. The author enthusiastically urges pianists to use “unique, individual creations,” and insists on the fact that no two pianists will play the same aria identically.\(^9\) Here are just a few of Katz’s general statements: “there is no literal perfection in the world of orchestral reduction,” “comfort and practicality must be part of our decisions,” and the seemingly paradoxical “when we make ourselves pianistically comfortable playing reductions, we acquire the means to sound


\(^9\) Ibid., 154.
Martin Katz discusses the following problems, issues, and aid tools related to orchestral reduction accompaniments: sustained sound, imitation of a specific instrument or instrumental group of the orchestra, and duplicating idiomatic techniques (strings-tremolo, pizzicato; woodwinds; brass; harp; percussion-timpani, gong, cymbal, bass drum, snare drum; and continuo). He also discusses marking the score, where and why to make necessary changes, and dealing with certain technical problems such as repeated notes, jumps, and complicated passages. Without doubt, this book should be a constant reference source for any collaborative pianist.

The Technique of Accompaniment, by Philip Cranmer, is similar to a number of other sources that focus on basic accompanying skills. Chapter 7, “Piano Reductions,” contains the most valuable information in relation to this essay. The author illustrates the major differences that exist between piano reductions of the same orchestral score, discussing the logic and practicalities of each reduction, and the limitations of simplifying. Cranmer gives helpful advice about playing certain types of orchestral figurations and textures in the piano-vocal scores, and “tricks” for pianistic imitation of various instruments. The author is consistent in his opinion that if a piano reduction is too difficult, it should be reduced or re-configured, since even a simple reduction can sound musical and effective.

The Art of Accompanying, by Algernon H. Lindo, is of special interest for collaborative pianists. Written in 1916, this book is “almost the first word upon the subject,” and a record of the author’s experience of more than twenty years of

10 Ibid., 155.
12 Ibid., 45-50.
accompanying practice. The author covers the most important personal qualities and technical skills of the accompanist – sight-reading, variety of techniques, transposing, assorted kinds of alterations in accompaniment, emotional temperament and adaptability. Lindo also discusses accompaniment of opera, airs from oratorios, art songs and folk songs, and orchestral reductions; he describes and illustrates specific techniques in operatic and orchestral-reduction accompanying.

Robert Spillman wrote *The Art of Accompanying: Master Lessons from the Repertoire* for advanced students and pianists that want to know more about accompanying proficiency in detail and in depth. The entire volume is organized in units. Each unit presents an analysis of a piece or a set of pieces emphasizing specific aspects of performing. The orchestral accompaniments arranged for piano in several concerto movements from Mozart and Mendelssohn are discussed, as well as seven Italian operatic arias of Mozart, Donizetti, Verdi, and Puccini. The detailed study of each piece compels the reader to apply the given knowledge to further practice.

It is imperative to include Mr. Gerald Moore’s book *The Unashamed Accompanist*. Mr. Moore’s high-profile career as a vocal accompanist increased interest in and respect for the art of accompanying and for accompanying as a profession. He explains how keyboard skills such as sight-reading, legato playing, color and tone quality, and the independence of hand and eye are very important for the collaborative pianist. In addition, the book contains a short but useful chapter dedicated to orchestral

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accompaniment. Moore also describes the process of preparing arias from operas and oratorios, and points out some of the “bad habits” that a singer and an accompanist can transmit to each other.

_The Well-Tempered Accompanist_, by Coenraad Valentyn Bos,\(^{16}\) does not focus specifically on the accompanying of operatic literature, but rather addresses issues of vocal accompanying in general. Nevertheless, this book merits inclusion for its discourse on stylistic problems.\(^{17}\) Mr. Bos emphasizes that the diverse character of operatic and song literature obligates the accompanist to adapt readily and easily to variations in style of playing.\(^{18}\) The author discusses assorted orchestral adaptations for piano. Bos repeatedly advises the accompanist to be suspicious of any and all piano-vocal scores, to consistently consult the original orchestral score, and to make changes for greater effectiveness.

Mary Adelyn Kauffman, in her doctoral essay “Practical Guidelines and Techniques for the Execution of Piano-Vocal Score as Exemplified in the Operas of Mozart, Rossini, Verdi and Puccini,”\(^{19}\) examines common vocal accompanists’ and rehearsal pianists’ problems in the performance of piano-vocal scores. She provides a detailed study of typical difficulties encountered in the published scores, and offers solutions and techniques for a better realization of each problem. Kauffman also discusses the differences between piano-vocal score editions, referencing the full orchestral score,

\(^{16}\) Coenraad Valentyn Bos, _The-Well Tempered Accompanist_ (Bryn Mawr: Theodor Presser, 1949).

\(^{17}\) Ibid., 109-127.

\(^{18}\) Ibid., 110.

and possible ways of transferring orchestral textures and figures into a pianistic idiom.

Ms. Kauffman uses examples from Mozart’s Le Nozze di Figaro, Rossini’s Il Barbiere di Siviglia, Verdi’s La Traviata, and Puccini’s La Boheme to illustrate the above-mentioned problems and their solutions.

W. A. Mozart and Don Giovanni; Mozart’s Orchestration and Style: Books of General Interest

Julian Rushton, in W. A. Mozart, Don Giovanni, briefly outlines the history of the opera and includes a detailed synopsis. Rushton succeeds in portraying for readers and listeners the true atmosphere of the opera. He provides commentaries on the emotions of the characters and their expressions through the music and text. Rushton also includes an essay on the libretto. This book is a great help for a full understanding of the nature, plot, characters, and music of the opera.

The Orchestra, Volume II: Orchestral Combinations by Ebenezer Prout is a comprehensive source of information about the quality, nature and purpose of orchestral sound. It also describes how different instrumental groups of the orchestra function alone and in various combinations. The book contains numerous musical examples which illustrate Prout’s commentaries on the orchestral balance of tone, the contrasts and colors of the orchestral sound, the treatment of wind and string instrumental groups, and the combination of the orchestra with an individual soloist or solo group. One of the chapters describes the definition and function of the “small orchestra” (strings, woodwinds, and

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horns), which, with a few exceptions, was used by Mozart in Don Giovanni. In the chapter “Orchestral Accompaniment,” Prout devotes close attention to the accompaniment of vocal music, and the treatment of different types of recitative.

The Orchestra by Paul Bekker presents an impressive compilation of historical background information about orchestral development. The most extensive portion of this book contains essays in which Bekker discusses works by Mozart and many other major composers whose orchestral pieces were innovative and furthered the historical development of the orchestra. Included is a chapter, “The Opera Orchestra of Mozart,” in which the author narrates the historical facts that preceded the appearance of the Mozartian opera orchestra, and describes the composer’s innovative “marks” in operatic orchestration.

Interpreting Mozart on the Keyboard, by Eva and Paul Badura-Skoda, is one of the most comprehensive books about Mozart’s style and interpretation. Although this work refers primarily to Mozart’s keyboard oeuvre, it is a very helpful source for any musician or scholar. The book covers almost all elements of Mozart’s style and interpretation: specifics of the sound; tempi; articulation; all possible embellishment figures, such as the different kinds of appoggiaturas, arpeggios, turns, and trills; and cadenzas.

\[\text{\textsuperscript{22}}\text{Ibid., 55-80.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{23}}\text{Ibid., Ch. VIII, 184-235.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{24}}\text{Paul Bekker, The Orchestra (New York: The Norton Library, 1963).}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{25}}\text{Ibid., Ch. III, 68-87.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{26}}\text{Eva and Paul Badura-Skoda, Interpreting Mozart on the Keyboard, translated by Leo Black (New York, St. Martin’s Press, 1962).}\]
CHAPTER 3

METHOD

This chapter introduces the author’s research method and process for data analysis used to obtain better realizations of piano-vocal reduction scores in three selected solo arias of Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*. In addition, the reasons for these particular selections are explained.

Research and Data Analysis

Elements of the author’s research include the historical background of *Don Giovanni*, its libretto and characters, Mozart’s orchestration and style, and the composer’s expressive tools (articulation, embellishments, contrapuntal writing, phrase shaping, and tempi). Relevant information about the art of vocal accompanying and coaching were explored. Material regarding vocal and operatic accompanying skills and issues concerning orchestral accompanying in piano reduction were reviewed as well, including appropriate literature pertaining to Mozart’s vocal writing and its correct interpretation.

The practical focus of the author’s research is to offer better solutions and realizations for selected arias from the complete piano-vocal scores of *Don Giovanni*. These findings were developed and obtained through the following procedures:
establishment of general goals for the vocal accompanist; comparative analysis of the
selectedarias as presented in the complete piano-vocal score editions by G. Schirmer, Boosey & Hawkes, Bärenreiter, and Ricordi; cross-reference to the full orchestral
score (the Neue Mozart-Ausgabe, available online); and reference to representative recordings.

Choice of the Arias

The following arias are the subject of this essay: “O sai chi l’onore,” “Dalla sua pace la mia dipende,” and “Batti, batti, o bel Masetto.” It is the author’s belief that her analysis, discussion, solutions, pedaling and practicing suggestions are applicable to the wider range of Mozart concert and operatic arias.

“O sai chi l’onore”

This aria is rarely performed without a section from the preceding accompanied recitative, beginning with Donna Anna’s “Allora rinforzo i stridi miei.” This recitative is


28 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Don Giovanni, words by Lorenzo da Ponte, English version by Edward J. Dent, vocal score by Ernest Roth (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, 1946).


30 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Don Giovanni, opera completta per canto e pianoforte, drama giocoso in due atti, libretto di Lorenzo da Ponte, nuova edizione riverduta e coretta a cure di Maffeo Zanon (Roma: Ricordi, 1959).

one of the reasons for the choice of this aria, and is included in the discussion. The mood, the character, the music, the orchestral accompaniment texture, the vocal line – all of these elements make this vibrant aria different from “Dalla sua pace la mia dipende,” and from “Batti, batti, o bel Masetto.” At the same time, some of the previously mentioned criteria are quite typical for Mozart’s operatic style, such as the use of specific instrumental techniques, rhythmic figurations, and their relation within the texture.

Donna Anna’s character is sung by a dramatic coloratura soprano - a full, rich, strong voice type. This means the pianist has more possibilities to amplify the texture without the danger of covering the singer. This does not mean, however, that the issue of balance should not be taken into consideration, but it will be less of an issue in this aria.

“Dalla sua pace la mia dipende”

This aria is not as technically challenging for the pianist as it is for the singer. It is easily “sight-readable” even for a less experienced vocal pianist. Mozart’s style and writing are deceptively simple at times. That being said, a pianist can be surprised to discover a need for more effort to master the music than it seemed to require initially. In this particular aria, although the orchestral texture is light and uncomplicated, each individual instrument or instrumental group has its special placement, creating a lace-work of timbres, with deep colors and distinctive voices. With this delicate, refined orchestral setting imprisoned in the piano reduction, a pianist must call forth a sensitive ear, technical skills, acoustic imagination, and musical creativity to facsimile the rich and complex sound of the orchestra.
In this aria, a pianist will have to deal with the sustained orchestral sound alone, as well as when it is laid out as a frame for the moving harmonies and vocal and instrumental melodic lines. *Andantino sostenuto* is a slow tempo to sustain a piano sound for five measures in 2/4 meter. The moving chords and basses will require a special touch and pedal treatment from the pianist.

In many orchestral accompaniments, the texture is clearly landscaped in layers. Each layer, most often found in combinations of two or more, has a specific function: bass (sustained; moving melodically, or as a root of the harmony), filling (usually strings’ *tremolo*), melody (solo voice or instrument, or as a top line of harmonic movement), and inner-voices. To create an acoustic illusion of these layers coming out of territorially different places in the orchestra, a pianist will benefit from distributing a certain amount of weight, various touch, proper articulation, and even vertical “micro dynamics” within one general dynamic indication.

“*Batti, batti, o bel Masetto*”

The focal point of the accompaniment texture of this aria is a continuous stream of *violoncello obbligato*. This instrument’s part functions as a constant counterpoint to the soprano’s melodic line. Due to the nature of the instrument, the technical demands of articulation help to determine the *tempi*. For the pianist, the *violoncello obbligato* line becomes the center of attention – it is not always easy to duplicate the articulation and a closest-possible touch. Also, it is not always possible to keep the original line of *violoncello obbligato* intact and without damaging its phrasing, articulation, and the rest of the texture when played on the piano. In these cases, the authentic line will need
revision, which will have to be done in appropriate musical manner and in a similar pattern. In the four piano-vocal score editions, discussed in this essay, some of these adaptations are done successfully, others have room for improvement. It is up to the pianist’s judgment, taste, experience, knowledge, creativity, personal abilities, and desire to make a fit choice, or to come-up with new ideas if necessary.

The piano version of the orchestral accompaniment for this aria provides an excellent practice for the vocal accompanist to imitate the individuated articulations of legato strings, woodwinds, and the violoncello’s obbligato line.
CHAPTER 4

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF TECHNICAL PROBLEMS AND PERFORMANCE ISSUES IN “OR SAI CHI L’ONORE”

In concert performances, this aria is traditionally performed with the preceding accompanied recitative, starting with “Allora rinforzo i stridi miei” in measure 53. At this point in the opera, Donna Anna furiously demands that Don Ottavio avenges her. The music contains a range of strong emotions spanning anger, hate and resolution, and is extremely challenging for the soprano. “Although this aria does not necessarily require a very dramatic instrument, there are not too many voices that should attempt it.” It is more likely in playing this aria than with others, the pianist will find it necessary to produce the most ideal imitation of the orchestral sound and textures, to provide a needed support and sonic “ground” for the singer. Famous Donna Annas include Joan Sutherland, Leontyne Price, Ljuba Welitsch, Monserrat Caballe, Birgit Nilsson, Rosa Ponselle, Edda Moser, Edita Gruberova, Carol Vaness, Anna Tomowa-Sintow, Maria Callas, Renée Fleming, Kiri Te Kanawa, and Sharon Sweet, to name a few.

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33 A vast variety of recordings with these and other artists available at www.youtube.com (accessed December 10, 2010).
Accompanist’s General Goals

The orchestration of the aria includes two flutes, two oboes, two bassoons, two horns, and strings. From the beginning of the scene up to Donna Anna’s line “fuggie il fellon,” the recitative also includes either two trumpets\textsuperscript{34} or two clarinets in C.\textsuperscript{35} Prior to looking over the piano-vocal score, a pianist should familiarize him/herself with the orchestration. Whether it is listening to a recording while consulting the orchestral or piano-vocal score, or just using the informative and precise Bärenreiter piano-vocal score edition, the most important step is to determine the groups of instruments and their articulation. For these particular recitative and aria, listening with the piano-vocal score in hand will help the pianist formulate four prospective tasks much more quickly and confidently:

1. There are certain elements of the orchestral texture that have an audible priority, and others that do not sound as audibly as they look on the page – considering modifications of the piano reduction (Page 23).

2. A successful performance of any recitative requires a complete fluency with the text and the vocal line – practicing singing the vocal line and playing the piano part simultaneously is mandatory.

3. Periodically throughout the aria, the strings have tremolo-like figurations executed by a group of six sixteenth notes on every beat. In the piano version, depending on the tempo, this “enriched” rhythmic figure may sound too

\textsuperscript{34} David Hurwitz, Getting the Most Out of Mozart: the Vocal Works (Pompton Plains, NJ: Amadeus Press, LLC, 2005), 85.

heavy and blurry, which would be stylistically and musically inappropriate – discussing the tempo with the singer; considering modifications (Page 28, Example 5).

4. The orchestral accompaniment in this aria is quite full and richly voiced by Mozart’s standards - doubling the bass and other elements of augmented texture may be desirable (Pages 33-36; Examples 9a, 9b, 10b).

**Comparative Analysis and Discussion**

As mentioned earlier, the concert version of the aria usually includes a section from the preceding *recitativo accompagnato* starting from “Allora, rinforzo i stridi miei.” Mozart’s accompanied recitatives do not leave too much room for freedom in interpretation or for improvisation. The singer may vary the time within the phrase, but never the rhythmic structure. The pianist/conductor, on the other hand, should proceed mostly in tempo, unless the composer indicates otherwise.\(^\text{36}\)

The tempo for this recitative is *Allegro assai*. The chords in the orchestra are like the firewood for the fire-spouting vocal phrases. The orchestral interludes occur either after the vocal line, or near the last syllables in the final word of the phrase. Such a fast tempo is another reason for a pianist to be fluent with the text. Failure to do so may cause ensemble difficulties.

Ordinarily, the orchestral accompaniment must be strictly in time as written. But there are two chords in the orchestra, in the second half of measure 64, which are traditionally “late.” The sixteenth-note orchestral chord comes on the last, weak, short,

unstressed syllable with the word “co-no-scher-lo.” It would be quite challenging to join the singer precisely in time. Therefore, these chords are usually executed in *dopo la parola* manner\(^\text{37}\) (Example 1).

Example 1. “Or sai chi l’onore,” Bärenreiter edition with author’s addition, m. 64.

The orchestral accompaniment of this recitative is transcribed differently in all four piano-vocal score editions. Consulting with the orchestral score alone will not help the pianist to develop a solid preference for using one of these editions, and may leave him/her even more confused (Examples 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 2e).

\(^{37}\) This conclusion based on author’s research of multiple audio recordings.
Example 2. “Or sai chi l’onore,” mm. 54-58.

a. NMA orchestral score:
b. Bärenreiter edition:

c. Ricordi edition:

d. G. Schirmer edition:
Listening to a high-fidelity recording, however, will instantly give the pianist a clear idea of how the orchestral part really sounds, what is audible and what is not, and how valuable or insignificant are some of the elements of the orchestral texture. Considering all of the above, in this recitative the accompanist will hear the following:

1. The orchestral texture is very full, with the distinctive basso line and the dotted rhythm in the rest of the strings. Doubling the bass and enriching the chords are recommended.

2. The woodwinds are significantly less audible. Attempting to execute these parts on the piano may decrease the energy of this furious music.

The G. Schirmer edition captures a few essentials of these criteria, but still lacks the volume and fullness of the texture. Example 3 demonstrates an alternative solution. The rest of the accompaniment in this recitative is written in similar patterns, and should be modified in the same manner.
Example 3. “Or sai chi l’onore,” author’s solution, mm. 54-58.

The beginning of the aria is marked *Andante* and *piano*. One of the focal elements of the orchestral texture in the aria is a *tremolo*-like figuration in the strings (Example 4a). Apparently, Mozart wanted to portray the seething blood of Donna Anna through the group of six sixteenth notes on one beat in *alla breve* meter. This technique sounds effortless in the orchestra, but may become awkward when executed on the piano. All four piano-vocal score editions chose different interpretations of this texture (Example 4b, 4c, 4d, 4e).
Example 4. “Or sai chi l’onore,” mm. 70-75.

a. NMA orchestral score:
b. Bärenreiter edition:

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Andante
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G. Schirmer edition:
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Andante
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The most “precise” and, at the same time, the most pianistically inappropriate reduction is presented by the Ricordi edition. Employing the full four-note chord in this
register for the tremolo will produce a heavy, thick, clumsy sound (Example 4d).

The G. Schirmer edition went to the opposite extreme by reducing the original group of six to the ordinary four sixteenth notes on the beat. The Schirmer’s version of the accompaniment loses the intended character and quality of the music (Example 4c).

The Boosey & Hawkes’ transcription of this texture may seem too easy. However, if the soprano tends to move the tempo, this reduction is pianistically comfortable, preserves the harmony and the rhythmic value, and allows the pianist to fluently maintain the required *piano* (Example 4e).

There is also another solution for this type of texture (Example 5). Regardless of what option the pianist chooses to use, this tremolo-like figuration should be maintained in *piano*, with fingertips close to the keys, and with rotation of the wrist.

Example 5. “*Or sai chi l’onore,*” Bärenreiter edition with author’s suggested alterations, mm. 70-75.
Example 6. “Or sai chi l’onore,” mm. 80-83.

a. NMA orchestral score:
b. Bärenreiter edition:


c. G. Schirmer edition:
d. Ricordi edition:

![Musical score image]

The musical “dialogue” between basso and oboe (Example 4a) is easily executed in piano-vocal score reductions. Later in the aria, this texture transforms into a more complex *stretta* “conversation” of the basso and first violins (Example 6a). Since the continuous *tremolo* of the rest of the strings is laid out in the same range as the first violins, maintaining all three layers of this texture on the piano (first violins, second
violins with violas, and basso) becomes a complicated task. All four piano-vocal score editions offer their own version of measures 80-83 (Examples 6b, 6c, 6d, 6e).

The Bärenreiter and the Ricordi editions’ realizations are pianistically too “busy.” The G. Schirmer’s reduction eliminated the first violins, and the tremolo is reduced to four sixteenth notes on the beat, which is rhythmically incorrect. It would be acceptable as long as the tremolo is kept in its original form (Example 7a). The Boosey & Hawkes edition chose to ignore the existence of the tremolo, and consequently lost an essential element of the intended orchestral accompaniment. The latter transcription, with the exception of the important sextuplet tremolo, contains all the important elements of the orchestral texture. With a help of few minor modifications, a better realization can be reached (Example 7b).

Example 7. “Or sai chi l’onore,” mm. 80-83.

a. G. Schirmer edition with author’s modification:
b. Boosey & Hawkes edition with author’s modification and fingering:

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the richness of the orchestral texture and the character of the music in this aria allow the accompanist to be generous with doubled bass notes. Most often, piano-vocal score reductions are quite reluctant to double or lower the bass. They prefer to keep this line in the original range, which on the piano does not always capture the natural color and timbre of the double bass instrument. For example, none of the four editions offers to double or lower the bass in measures 116-118 (Examples 8a, 8b, and 8c).
Example 8. “Or sai chi l’onore,” mm. 116-118.

a. Bärenreiter edition:

b. Boosey & Hawkes edition:

c. Ricordi and G. Schirmer editions:
The Bärenreiter and the Boosey & Hawkes editions prefer to keep the melodic line of thirds of the oboes (Example 8d). When performed on the piano, this part becomes insignificant, since the string sixteenth notes are echoing the oboes, giving enough illusion to “trick” the ear. There is a better solution for this type of texture (Examples 9a and 9b are two variants of the same – both sound almost identical, but provide technically different execution in order to accommodate the needs and abilities of pianists):
Another example of the appropriate lower bass line is in measures 106-107 (Example 10a). Doubling the bass in this case will sound not only more “orchestral,” but will also provide a better support for the singer in her high register (Example 10b).

a. Bärenreiter edition:

![Bärenreiter edition image]

b. Author’s solution:

![Author’s solution image]

Other Issues

The previous analysis and discussion reveals problems that exist in all four piano-vocal score editions of this aria. The most important issues include the maintenance and execution of the tremolo figurations, doubled or lowered bass when
appropriate, the inclusion and preservation of audibly more important music material, performance matters in the recitative, and issues of various pianistic/technical modifications.

Another issue needs attention in this aria, one that is not obvious even after studying the Neue Mozart-Ausgabe orchestral score. Mozart’s performance practice traditions can be determined and understood only through continuous reference to the best scholars, the best recordings, and personal experience. The tempo and overall movement flexibility of “Or sai chi l’onore” is still a subject of debate for scholars: some are in favor of a “free” tempo that maintains a “regular pace while allowing an expansion for soaring tones.”\(^{38}\) Others prefer to stay true to Mozart’s written direction, where “‘Andante alla breve’ implies a medium speed and does not admit of much variations,” and make rather ironic comments about performances where the tempo is “controlled by rapid enunciation of words” and “sometimes accelerated, sometimes retarded, in the interest of ‘interpretation’.”\(^{39}\)

When the aria is performed with orchestra, the singer may express her interpretative ideas but, in the end, must obey the conductor. On the other hand, when the aria is performed with piano, although the accompanist should “think” like a conductor and play like an orchestra, but he/she should still serve and obey the singer by being considerate of the singer’s needs for flexibility. The vocal accompanist should be aware of possible tempo changes towards the end of this aria. They are not necessarily traditional, but occur quite often (Example 11a, 11b, 11c).

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a. Mm. 125-128:

b. Mm. 132-134:
c. Mm. 136-140:

The ascending D Major chords of the vocal line in measures 125-128 (Example 11a) are challenging for the soprano. Usually, the singer’s intonation requires more control in this section of the aria. It is imperative that the singer not feels rushed. The accompanist should “pull back” the offbeat rhythmic figures in the right hand. This simple adjustment will provide the environment that helps the singer to overcome her technical difficulties. However, it will also create either an illusion of the slower tempo, or will slow down the original tempo in reality.

The music and the repetitive text in measures 132-134 (Example 11b) point to the coda of the aria. Very often, the soprano chooses to take an even slower tempo here than in the preceding section. This new tempo also serves as a preparation to the “final statement” and a big allargando in measure 136 (Example 11c). The orchestral/piano postlude in measures 137-140 wraps up the aria a tempo, creating an effect of Donna Anna’s departure from the scene.
CHAPTER 5
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF TECHNICAL PROBLEMS AND PERFORMANCE ISSUES IN “DALLA SUA PACE LA MIA DIPENDE”

In the original version of the opera there was only one aria for Ottavio – “Il mio tesoro” in the second act. For the first Vienna performance in 1787, Mozart decided to replace it with “Dalla sua pace la mia dipende” in the first act.\(^{40}\) However, it became a tradition to include both arias in the opera performance.

**Accompanist’s General Goals**

For the orchestration of this aria, with the exception of one flute, Mozart used the same instrumentation as in the previous aria of Donna Anna “Or sai chi l’onore”: strings, two oboes, one flute, two bassoons, and two horns.\(^{41}\) The initial procedure for approaching the score is always the same – the pianist needs to know at least the basic orchestration, and the text translation. After the score is properly marked, most of the demands of the existing music texture will surface immediately; the rest will emerge during the learning and the rehearsal process. An examination of the score of “Dalla sua pace la mia dipende” reveals the following issues:

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\(^{40}\) David Hurwitz, *Getting the most out o Mozart: the vocal works* (Pompton Plains, NJ: Amadeus Press, LLC, 2005), 83.

\(^{41}\) Ibid., 89.
1. Sustained chords in the beginning of opening and repeat sections –
   considering using the *sostenuto* pedal; work on reaching the best possible and
   “carrying” touch.

2. Moving harmonies and melodic lines within a sustained note or a chord –
   considering using the *sostenuto* pedal when appropriate; attention to the
   acoustic differentiation.

3. The combination of individual instruments and instrumental groups, and their
   idiomatic articulations within the orchestral texture; these articulations happen
   to be blended among distinct instrumental families as well as within one –
   developing a clear mind-set for the desired touch and sound; working on
   secure and audibly obvious mixture of articulations.

4. In this aria, the orchestral accompaniment often doubles the tenor’s vocal line
   – knowing the text, and practicing simultaneous singing and playing, will
   preclude ensemble problems.

**Comparative Analysis and Discussion**

“Dalla sua pace la mia dipende” begins with a sustained chord in the strings,
marked *piano*. In the orchestra, this chord provides a perfect cushion for the tenor’s
opening legato phrase. Minimal linear harmonic motion in the orchestral part frees an
audience’s attention to focus on the beautiful vocal *legato* line. Strings are considered the
first group of instruments that adopted the ability for the even, uninterrupted, *legato*
quality tone from a voice.\textsuperscript{42} Unfortunately, the nature of the piano does not grant an accompanist the same continuous sound.

Martin Katz recommends (Example 12a):

\begin{quote}
...to re-strike a note or even an entire chord in order to maintain the sustaining quality of the orchestra, regardless of the orchestration. Doing so will of course introduce a rhythmic impulse which is not in the orchestra, but a chord that is no longer audible or capable of support is not the composer’s intention either. ...Sometimes simply re-striking a bass note can do the job; other times the whole chord is required. Tempo is a big factor here, for the slower the music, the more the decay of the piano will ruin things. In a passage with moving harmonies in the upper voices but only a single long bass note, the ear must continually monitor whether enough of the root is still sounding to render the various chords above it complete and well-balanced.\textsuperscript{43}
\end{quote}

Re-striking is definitely unavoidable at times. As an alternative, often a \textit{sostenuto} pedal can be applied. As for the beginning of this particular aria, the following suggestions may help, not to precisely imitate the sustained sound of the orchestra, but to deliver proportionally equal soft, rich, and lasting tone (Example 12b):

1. “Sink” into the keys slowly, with no more than the natural weight of the arm.
2. Opening (lifting the damper pedal) prior to the first chord will help to prolong the sound.
3. Use the \textit{sostenuto} pedal for \textit{Viola}, \textit{Violoncello}, and \textit{Basso} parts in the first five measures of the aria.


Example 12. “Dalla sua pace la mia dipende,” mm. 1-5.

a. Martin Katz’s suggestion:\(^{44}\)

\[
\text{Don Ottavio}
\]

\[
\text{Dal-la sua pa-ce la mia di-pen-de}
\]

b. Bärenreiter edition with author’s pedal indications:

\[
\text{Andantino sostenuto}
\]

\[
\text{Dal-la sua pa-ce la mia di-pen-de,}
\]

The Boosey & Hawkes edition suggests doubling the bass in the lower octave (Example 13). Depending on specific qualities of the available piano, this addition of the lower register can either create a suitably enriched sonority or can cause a heavy and

\(^{44}\) Ibid., 160.
overly dark color. This interpretation of the orchestral score requires the pianist to be aware of this subtle difference and to adjust accordingly.


A number of issues occur in measures 10-13 of the aria. The G. Schirmer and Ricordi editions contain a bizarre syncopated rhythm in the basso part in measure 10 (Example 14a, 14b), which in reality is only a sustained semibreve (Example 14c), combining the bass and viola parts. The Bärenreiter edition delivers a correct rhythm, but the note itself is misplaced an octave above the original basso line (in the late eighteenth-
century orchestra a *basso* part still includes “Violoncello e Basso”\(^{45}\).\(^{46}\) As a result, this line loses its primary intervallic connection, an accompaniment’s orchestral texture fades, and a singer gets less support right before going into his *passaggio* in the next bar (Example 14d). The Boosey & Hawkes edition manages to notate a proper voicing in measures 10-11, and, with additional *sostenuto* pedal on the downbeat of measure 10, appears to be the most reasonable (Example 14e).

Example 14. “*Dalla sua pace la mia dipende,*” mm. 10-15.

a. G. Schirmer edition:


b. Ricordi edition:

c. NMA orchestral score:
If a pianist is capable of spanning m10 in one hand, then an alternate solution can be offered, where the viola part is correctly placed, and the initially intended melodic line is preserved (Example 15).
Example 15. “Dalla sua pace la mia dipende,” author’s solution, mm. 10-11:

In measure 12, Mozart marked *staccato* in the *basso*, which means that the chords in the rest of the strings must be played with a different articulation, attack, and time value. The Ricordi and Boosey & Hawkes editions do not indicate any differences (Examples 16b, 16c); G. Schirmer marks *staccato* above each eighth-note in the left hand (Example 16a); only Bärenreiter provides an accurate and appropriate transcription (Example 16d).


a. G. Schirmer edition:
b. Ricordi edition:

c. Boosey & Hawkes edition:

d. Bärenreiter edition:
e. NMA orchestral score:

Measure 13 introduces horns in octave apart into the orchestration (Example 16e). Mozart’s articulation includes dots in combination with slurs to indicate *portato*. When performed on a piano, these octaves should be played with a clear attack of each eighth-note, and a fair amount of reach, horn-like sound. The appropriate use of pedal will help to produce this sound. Depending on the qualities of an individual piano and the acoustics of a performing venue, there are at least two ways of pedaling: first, pressing
the damper pedal for the initial chord and holding it for half a bar, and then changing the pedal for each of the two remaining horn’s notes (Example 17a); or second, pressing the damper pedal for the initial chord, holding it for half a bar, and changing the pedal once in the middle of the bar to release the initial chord (Example 17b). It is also acceptable to change the pedal on each eighth-note beat, when the initial chord is held and released only by the hands, but this variant is not significantly different from the other two. Although this pedaling observation may seem unimportant here, an artful use of the pedal, combined with a “focused” articulation, will deliver the best possible imitation of the horns’ distinctive sound.

Example 17. “Dalla sua pace la mia dipende,” m. 13, Bärenreiter edition with author’s pedaling suggestions.

a. Variant 1:
b. Variant 2:

For a pianist it is essential to remember to change the dynamic to piano in the horn part in measure 14, and to make a crescendo in the strings to measure 15 (Example 14d). Besides being true to the score, piano will supply a needed effect on the word “morte”, and crescendo will support a singer in sustaining the D and going to the G above with the rest in the orchestra.

Measures 17-37 establish the middle section of the aria. Often, performers move the tempo here. However, there are no reasons for this kind of interpretation: Mozart did not indicate a tempo change and, most importantly, he filled the orchestral texture with notes of smaller rhythmic value, which itself creates a feeling of a faster movement. At this point, the music in the orchestra first serves to illustrate the words “S’ella sospira, sospiro anch’io” (“If she sighs, sigh also I”). For the pianist, knowledge of the text is a key to understanding why Mozart changed the key from G Major to g minor, why the music flows differently, and what the composer had in mind giving to the flutes, first violins, and bassoons the sighing melodic and rhythmic figures (Example 18). Awareness of the details listed above will result in a better performance.
Example 18. “Dalla sua pace la mia dipende,” mm. 17-20, NMA orchestral score.

In the orchestral score, in measures 17-20, the *basso* line is marked *staccato*, in contrast to sixteenth notes with sixteenth rests in the second violins and violas. The Bärenreiter edition contains the most successful transcription of these measures (Example 19a). G. Schirmer and Ricordi are identical, and both give an incorrect idea of the articulation (Example 19b). The Boosey & Hawkes edition is acceptable, but visually alludes very weakly to the two groups of instruments (Example 19c).

a. Bärenreiter edition:

b. G. Schirmer and Ricordi editions:
c. Boosey & Hawkes edition:

This differentiation in the articulation might not seem noticeable when performed on the piano. In the orchestra, these two types of articulation may be variably presented, depending on the conductor and his/her demands. Usually, the detached eighth notes in the bass sound longer, deeper, and with a “velvet” tone. It is up to the pianist to find a solution to this audible difference: it is possible to make this distinction by a variation of touch, and duration of the notes, or by applying a rhythmic pedal for the *basso* line (also appropriate for the melody in the right hand).

The entrance of the oboe in measure 21 is similarly represented in the Bärenreiter and G. Schirmer editions (Example 19). It is impossible for a pianist to duplicate the same sustained gentle oboe tone for over two bars, with the accompanying sixteenth-note pattern in a lower register. On the other hand, it is not preferable to ignore the oboe’s introduction. The pianist has two options for executing this entrance: to establish the oboe’s F in the original setting (F5, or in other words, F an octave above middle C), and possibly re-strike it again on the down-beat of the next bar (Example 21a); or to play the
oboe’s F one octave down from the original and, with the support of the strings’ *ostinato*,
and the ear’s capacity to imaginatively fulfill the time gap until the next note in the
melody, to mitigate the fading of the “oboe” sound (Example 21c). In any of these cases,
as a help to achieve this impression, the pianist can practice singing the oboe part with a
crescendo throughout measures 21-22, and simultaneously playing a complete texture
with the correct dynamic marks.

Although in the orchestra the group of violins and violas are playing a sequence
of detached thirty-second notes in measures 21-22 and 26-27 (Example 22a), when
transcribed into the piano-vocal score this sequence appears as a tremolo. The pianist
should remember to employ a measured tremolo, which is a specific number of notes per
beat (in this case – four of the thirty-second notes); and, most importantly, to launch the
entire initial chord at once (Examples 21a, 21b). The chord might be in its original form,
or with alteration (inverted, amplified, relocated in the register), but it must be
established in the beginning of the “tremolo” and of every harmonic change within.⁴⁷

Example 20. “Dalla sua pace la mia dipende,” mm. 21-22, Bärenreiter and G. Schirmer
editions.

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University Press, 2009), 164-5.

a. Variant 1:

[Musical notation image]

b. Variant 2:

[Musical notation image]

The orchestral texture of measures 21-22 and 26-27 may seem nearly identical, but in the NMA score they have very distinctive dynamic indications (Example 22a, 22b). The dynamic *forte* occupies the first two beats in measure 22 in the NMA orchestral score (Example 22a) and supports the singer on his F one octave above middle C. In this case, only the Ricordi edition follows the NMA marks (Example 23a); while G.
Schirmer, Boosey & Hawkes, and Bärenreiter choose different interpretations (Example 23b, 23c).

Example 22. “*Dalla sua pace la mia dipende,*” NMA orchestral score.

a. Mm. 21-22:
b. Mm. 26-27:
Example 23. “Dalla sua pace la mia dipende,” m. 22.

a. Ricordi edition:

![Ricordi edition](image)

b. G. Schirmer and Boosey & Hawkes editions:

![G. Schirmer and Boosey & Hawkes editions](image)
The common, and simple orchestral accompaniment texture in measures 29-33 can sound somewhat more “orchestral” if the bass is doubled at the octave below. Often, this simple alteration is a helpful tool for a pianist dealing with an orchestral reduction. This kind of modification is most often appropriate in the beginning of a measure, and in this particular case, it should be “prepared” by downbeat octaves at least two measures ahead (measures 26-27).

Only the Boosey & Hawkes edition employs the octaves in the left hand (Example 24a). Nonetheless, the transcription appears to be in part inadequate: the left hand octave on the downbeat of measure 26 is presumed to be repeated in exactly the same pattern in measure 27, but is left out to accommodate the tenor’s lower note; an identical principle is applicable in measure 28; and the bass octaves start in the middle of measure 29, instead of the downbeat. An alternative solution is presented in Example 24b.

a. Boosey & Hawkes edition:

b. Author’s solution for mm. 26-29:
When there is an intention to establish the octaves on the downbeat of measure 29, a pianist can be tempted to keep the left hand melodic line from measure 28 in octave down, as it is in measures 26-27. But in this case, in measure 28, it is important to bring-up the melodic line to its original register, since this change illustrates the entrance of the bassoon, which prepares a relief from the fully-diminished VII7 chord. The effect of a “different instrument” can be powered-up with more articulated, solo-like touch. The use of the sustained pedal is necessary (Example 24b).

The damper pedal in measures 29-33 can be depressed directly on each eight note, and released on each eight rest. There is also another pedaling option of this texture: finger pedaling, where the traditional foot paddle is not being used, but the short sound-trail of archi is imitated by applying a slow speed attack and release of the keys, and by slight lengthening of each eight note.

As for the cadence in measures 34-36 of the aria, a pianist should consult the Bärenreiter piano-vocal score. Unlike other editions, this preserves the authentic rhythm and harmonic structure. Although, Bärenreiter’s version is not the most comfortable to play, it sounds the closest to the orchestral tutti. The pianist’s goal is to produce a fairly thick sound, and to keep the connection between each third in the left hand. The following is an example of syncopated damper pedal use, which helps to maintain the legato of thirds (Example 25):

---


The dynamic mark *forte* must be read cautiously, since the tenor is singing in his low register. Also, the pianist has to make sure to release the downbeat chord in measure 36 precisely as written, so a singer’s D under the *fermata* can beautifully surface as the beginning of his *cadenza*.

The technical problems and performance issues in measures 37-51 of the repeat section are absolutely identical to these in measures 1-16 of the aria. The pianist should remember to maintain a combination of *legato* and detached notes in measures 52-56 as is in the Bärenreiter edition (Example 26). Others do not make this distinction.

Other Issues

Earlier in this chapter, the following technical problems and performance issues were discussed: the maintenance of sustained sound; the use of *sostenuto* and damper pedals; “instrumental” touch and tone (touch qualities and articulation); inaccuracies in the scores (voicing and articulation indications); texture modification; and instrumental technique imitation (strings’ *ostinato* – piano’s *tremolo*). Some other problems, such as balance and ensemble, were briefly mentioned, but deserve additional observation and discussion. Due to a limited range of piano texture, it can be a difficult task for a pianist to imitate the “weight” of the orchestra. The latter problem is addressed later in the chapter.

Most of the above issues are closely related and codependent. For example, with the intention to make the piano accompaniment to sound more “orchestral,” a pianist may consider filling-in and expanding a few chords or doubling the bass, etc., which, when done inappropriately, can cause ensemble and balance dysfunction. On the other hand, with the same intention to provide an “orchestral” sound, the pianist may apply thoughtful voicing, articulation, and vertical distribution of the weight in the texture layers. This can significantly improve the balance and ensemble.

In “*Dalla sua pace la mia dipende*,” there are several ways for a pianist to eliminate the above-mentioned problems, and to achieve a better result in overall performance:

Knowing the text, and being able to play and sing alone – listening not only to the singer’s melody, but following the words as well, will considerably reduce any ensemble “surprises.” It is also important to remember that the sound always comes on the vowel.
Listening to the vibration of the singer’s voice – it will especially help to anticipate a relief from the long, sustained notes in the vocal part (Examples 27a, 27b, 27c). Regardless if the singer takes a breath after a long note, or carries it to the next phrase, a spin of the voice, or in other words vibrato, will always appeal to a pianist’s sensitive response. There are doubts and discussions about how much of the vibrato is appropriate in Mozart’s vocal music,⁴⁹ but one fact remains certain – the long, sustained notes are never sang with an absolute “straight tone,” which may leave a pianist clueless about singer’s breath life and interpretation intentions.

Example 27. “Dalla sua pace la mia dipende.”

a. Mm. 28-29:

Layering the accompaniment texture – in this aria, the accompaniment texture is very transparent. The piano transcription does not leave lots of evident possibilities to emulate the richness of the orchestral colors. Apart from applying various articulation to different imitated instruments and instrumental groups, sometimes “deepening” the bass in octave lower, and “stuffing” some chords, a pianist should consider an acoustic illusion of the abundant sound. It can be achieved by applying different weight and
dynamic combinations within vertical and horizontal alignment of the texture (Examples 27a, 27b, 28a, 28b, 29a, 29b. All the harmonic notes and melodic lines, which are suggested to be lighter in weight and color, are printed in a smaller font).

This technique also includes a contrapuntal voicing (Example 29a). Whenever the accompaniment texture contains doubling of the vocal melody, it is preferable to avoid its “highlighting.” In these cases, at least in this aria, Mozart always gives some counterpoint as a shade of a singer’s line (Examples 27b, 27c, 29a, 29b).

Example 28. “Dalla sua pace la mia dipende.”

a. Mm. 17-19:
b. Mm. 21-22:

Example 29. “Dalla sua pace la mia dipende.”

a. Mm. 10-11:
b. Mm. 23-24:

The suggested “layering” approach is not relevant to the general dynamic marks, and should not influence the volume. But it will enrich the texture with a more orchestral sonority and with more opportunities for individualized instrumental voicing. Several criteria were taken into consideration when the choices for the above examples were made:

1. The bass (“Vc. e B.”) is almost always secondly important after the most melodically significant voice in the orchestral texture;

2. When one or more instruments in the orchestra are doubling the vocal line, Mozart usually gives a counterpoint melody to some other instrument(s). In this case, this counterpoint should be executed with more distinctively;

3. Whenever two or more instrumental groups or individual instruments play the same melody but in different registers, in the piano transcription it is preferable to bring out the one that lies further away from the vocal line;
4. The “tremolo’s function is to provide excitement inside the material; it is never important on its own.”\textsuperscript{50} This statement pretty much excludes the possibility of \textit{tremolo} being the most prominent material. The only exception would be when there is nothing else in the texture;

5. The sound of the flute(s) is usually quite distinct, due to its “silvery” tone;

6. A counterpoint melody, which moves in the opposite direction from the vocal line, is most likely more important than other moving instrumental lines.

Thinking and playing like a conductor – in this aria the, composer’s writing does clearly show where a tenor can take more time freedom, and where the music should move almost evenly. The sustained chords and very slow moving harmonies in the opening of the aria, as well as in the beginning of the repeat section (starting in measure 37), allow a singer to be “in charge” of the music flow. As for the rest, the pianist should avoid any “piano music” \textit{rubati}. Any music “stretches” and forward “moves” should be done with the conductor approach, which is an organic proportion.

It is obvious that the majority of the above suggestions are generally applicable to most of the piano reductions in the operatic repertoire. However, \textit{“Dalla sua pace la mia dipende”} is an excellent model for the clarification and explanation of these routines.

CHAPTER 6
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF TECHNICAL PROBLEMS AND PERFORMANCE ISSUES IN “BATTI, BATTI, O BEL MASETTO”

Accompanist’s General Goals

This soprano aria has a rather remarkable orchestration for Mozart. Together with strings, the composer used one flute, one oboe, one bassoon, two horns, and violoncello obbligato. The latter takes a lead in the accompaniment texture. As always, before playing the very first note, a pianist must study the orchestration. For this aria, listening to the recording together with the score is a productive and quick way to classify issues of texture, balance and voicing:

1. The sound of the violoncello obbligato is constant throughout the aria – maintaining a clean, continuous movement of sixteenth notes is indispensable.

2. There are four audible layers in the sound of the orchestra: cello solo, basso line, strings, and winds with the flute dominance. The accompanist must use a diverse palette of touch, articulation, and voicing.

3. The strings archi very often double the soprano part. The accompanist must be careful with pedaling, balance, and volume.
4. The 6/8 section of the aria is marked *Allegretto* (not *Allegro*)\(^5^\) – a proper correlation of the *tempi* and an organic transition between them should be discussed and coordinated with the singer during the rehearsal.

**Comparative Analysis and Discussion**

As usual, the Bärenreiter edition provides accurate indications of orchestration and musical content. They are precise, but when the transcription generates an intricate texture, it often becomes pianistically awkward or even unplayable and insufficient to capture the orchestral sound. Here are a few examples:

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Example 30. “Batti, batti, o bel Masetto,” mm. 18-23.

a. Bärenreiter edition:

![Bärenreiter edition image]

b. G. Schirmer edition:

![G. Schirmer edition image]
The thirds in the left hand of the Bärenreiter edition are playable, but quite uncomfortable. This is especially true when followed by an awkward leap, as before the downbeats of measures 19 and 23 (Example 30a). The basso line in measures 20-21 becomes possible with practice, but it will most likely disrupt the legato from the violoncello obbligato part. The G. Schirmer edition offers a more reasonable solution (Example 30b).

A similar problem appears in the following example (Example 31a). The basso part in measures 28 and 30-31 may seem important at first. With some practice, it is possible to play the last eighth note in the left hand of each bar; yet again, it will disturb the required smooth stream of obbligato. The basso in measures 32-33 is feasible to execute if the rest of the texture is taken by the right hand until the last two sixteenths in bar 33. However, it will not be appropriate in this register unless the complete basso line has been delivered suitably starting from measure 28.

The G. Schirmer and Boosey & Hawkes editions offer two different solutions for the above issues that are different from the Bärenreiter. Both are pianistically comfortable. It is up to the pianist to decide which option will sound better. Again, listening to a good recording and consulting with the orchestral score (Example 31d) will help in making the appropriate choice. Some considerations:

1. The texture in the G. Schirmer edition is light and very easy to play (Example 31b), but it was achieved by sacrificing the obbligato register (measure 29), and inserting made up music material in the right hand that continues to double the vocal line (measures 28-29).
2. The Boosey & Hawkes edition maintains the *violoncello obbligato* line in the authentic range, and manages to present the woodwinds in the right hand. From the author’s point of view, these details make this solution preferable (Example 31c).


a. Bärenreiter edition:
b. G. Schirmer edition:

\[ \text{ciar, sa-pró-bá-ciár, ba-ciár, sa-} \]

\[ \text{fp} \]

\[ \text{fp} \]

\[ \text{fp} \]

\[ \text{fp} \]

\[ \text{Wood} \]

c. Boosey & Hawkes edition:

\[ \text{ciar, sa-pró-bá-ciár, ba-ciár, sa-} \]

\[ \text{fp} \]

\[ \text{fp} \]

\[ \text{fp} \]

\[ \text{fp} \]

\[ \text{Wood} \]
The following example from Bärenreiter displays a pianistically awkward attempt to preserve the bass line. When played as written, it can sound heavy, losing the desirable refinement (Example 32a). The distance of the basso from the other parts does not allow a pianist to play effortlessly and smoothly. Ignoring the basso line in measures 70-71, as in the Ricordi edition (Example 32b), will resolve the problem.

a. Bärenreiter edition:

b. Ricordi edition:

In the same manner as the previous examples, the basso part in measures 84-85 is not feasible unless the top melody in the right hand has been omitted starting from measure 82 (Example 33). This melody is doubling the voice an octave above. In the orchestra, this melody is given to the bassoon and the flute, of which the latter has a very distinctive silvery timbre and a different articulation from the voice part. Also, exactly the same phrase is sang by soprano right before (measures 78-81), and this time, the
“flute” adds an element of variation. All these conditions must convince the pianist to keep the melody in place.

Example 33. “Batti, batti, o bel Masetto,” Bärenreiter edition, mm. 82-86.

Unlike the Bärenreiter edition, neither the Ricordi nor Boosy & Hawkes contain any orchestration indications. The G. Schirmer does, but they are sometimes either misplaced, wrong, or missing:

1. The entrance of the bassoon and oboe is misplaced (Examples 34a, 34b).
2. The melody in the right hand is a unison with the vocal line, and is given to the strings. In fact, there is no instrumental doubling of the voice until the pick-up to measure 83 (Examples 35a, 35b).
3. The existence of *violoncello obbligato* is shown in the 6/8 section of the aria for the first time (measure 61). It is simply marked “cello.” Without the word *obbligato*, this indication does not emphasize the importance of the cello part throughout the aria (Example 36).

4. Since at least some sorts of orchestration suggestions are present, it would be helpful for the pianist to see the entrance of the winds towards the very end of the aria (measure 98). It would rouse her/him to experiment with the articulation, and to revise the texture (Examples 37a, 37b).

Example 34. “Batti, batti, o bel Masetto,” mm. 68-69.

a. G. Schirmer edition:
Example 35. “Batti, batti, o bel Masetto,” mm. 78-82.

a. G. Schirmer edition:
b. NMA orchestral score:


a. G. Schirmer edition:

b. NMA orchestral score:

In general, the G. Schirmer edition of this aria tends to simplify the piano version to the degree of unnecessarily recomposing the original music. It would be fair to admit
that the reason and the logic behind most of these changes are easily evident. In contrast with other editions, the basso part in the G. Schirmer is rarely pianistically uncomfortable, but sometimes this luxury is achieved at the cost of a serious revision, or even a short loss of the *violoncello obbligato*. Typically, these alterations allow the pianist to provide an easy flowing *legato* in the *obbligato* part. The following excerpts illustrate poor reduction cases from the G. Schirmer edition, and better solutions from others:

Example 38. “*Batti, batti, o bel Masetto,*” mm. 7-8 (identical to mm. 43-44).

a. G. Schirmer edition:

![G. Schirmer edition](image1)

b. Bärenreiter edition:

![Bärenreiter edition](image2)
When performed on the piano, the distribution of strings and *obbligato* parts in measure 7 (identical to m. 43) will definitely have a better chance of sounding “orchestral” as executed in the Bärenreiter edition (Example 38b). In this case, the *violoncello* line is laid continuously in the true range. In measure 8 (identical to m. 44), the G. Schirmer edition loses a true line of the *violoncello obbligato*. The goal of this
change was probably to obtain an easy, familiar left-hand pattern, but it can also form an audibly false descending inner voice. The original variant (Example 38c) is preserved in the Bärenreiter edition, and is comfortable to play, eliminating the rationale for G. Schirmer’s adjustment.

A remarkably poor realization of measures 25-27 is offered by the G. Schirmer edition (Example 39a). This is another case of made up music material in the right hand that is in unison with the voice part. Unless a singer has a serious problem with intonation, there is no reason for such poor piano transcription of the original orchestration (Example 39b). There is a better realization in the Boosey & Hawkes edition (Example 39c).


a. G. Schirmer edition:
b. NMA orchestral score:

c. Boosey & Hawkes edition:
Starting from measure 78 through the end of the aria, the *obbligato* in the G. Schirmer edition is constantly modified. These adjustments are consistent and reasonable. The basso is attuned accordingly and preserved in the original rhythm. All these revisions prevent unnecessary awkwardness and give the pianist security for a clean performance.

In its approach to the piano-vocal version of “*Batti, batti, o bell Masetto,*” the Boosey & Hawkes edition is somewhat a hybrid of Bärenreiter, G. Schirmer, and new ideas. This publication actually contains a few creative and original solutions for the generally problematical places in the score. For instance, the following musical example shows how the dominant six-five chords on the up-beat of each bar are preserved (Example 40a).

Example 40. “*Batti, batti, o bel Masetto,*” mm. 13-15 (identical to mm. 49-50).

a. Boosey & Hawkes edition:
b. Bärenreiter edition:

Although the Boosey & Hawkes’ solution is quite good, for some ears the fullest possible imitation of the orchestral sound is unfulfilled: the gap between lower and upper bodies of the upbeat eighth-note chords is quite wide (this fact might be a reason why the above mentioned chord is omitted in the Bärenreiter edition – Example 40b). By amplifying the original texture, a pianist can create an enhanced and more accurate illusion of the orchestral sound (Example 41):

Example 41. “Batti, batti, o bel Masetto,” author’s solution, mm. 13-15 (identical to mm. 49-50).
Another pianistically sensible transcription is contained in the G. Schirmer edition (Example 42): it has a light texture, and yet saves the color of dominant six-five chord but in the lower register. The choice between the previous example (Example 41) and G. Schirmer’s solution depends on the particular piano qualities, performance venue acoustics, and pianists’ preference and abilities.

Example 42. “Batti, batti, o bel Masetto,” G. Schirmer edition, mm. 13-15 (identical to mm. 49-50).

Along with the good reduction choices for this aria described above, the Boosey & Hawkes edition also possesses a few of the opposite. The latter mostly occur in the 6/8 section of the aria, related to the missing or poorly indicated basso line. The next two cases (Examples 43a and 44) illustrate these imperfections.
Example 43. “Batti, batti, o bel Masetto,” mm. 68-69.

a. Boosey & Hawkes edition:

b. NMA orchestral score:
In the basso line of measure 69 (Example 43a) it would be logical to continue the established pattern from the previous bar, especially when it exists in the orchestra (Example 43b). For some reason, Boosey & Hawkes’ editor overlooked the audibly expected change of the bass, and misplaced the correct root-position of the harmony (F in the basso line must come on the fourth eighth note of the melody in measure 69).

There is another instance of a missing bass in the Boosey & Hawkes edition (Example 44a), without which the texture comes dangerously close to a Czerny-like piano study. For comparison, Examples 44c and 44d demonstrate how easily the original basso line is incorporated into the piano-vocal reduction by the Ricordi and G. Schirmer editions.

Example 44. “Batti, batti, o bel Masetto,” m. 87.

a. Boosey & Hawkes edition:
b. NMA orchestral score:

c. Ricordi edition:
In the next musical excerpt (Example 45), there are three links of thirds in the sequence. The first two are played by strings, as opposed to the last one, which is given to the winds. When performed by the orchestra, the sound of the flute is dominant. The way it is transcribed for the piano-vocal score by the Boosey & Hawkes edition gives a pianist a clear implication of a diverse orchestration even without literal indication. As mentioned before, varied articulation would be desirable. Katz advises to use “flat, fleshy fingers and minimum articulation”⁵² for the strings, and “a very focused and quick finger attack”⁵³ when imitating a woodwind section of the orchestra. Also, it is important to keep in mind this sequence is implying a gradually decreasing dynamic, and the change of the register on the piano should not affect the piano in the last two measures of the piece.


⁵³ Ibid., 171.

The Ricordi edition of the aria is generally pianistically comfortable, and it provides the basic musical texture for a successful orchestral sound imitation. However, this edition contains some bizarre, awkward, or problematic transcriptions of the original orchestral score such as:

1. Grace notes on the downbeat of the bar, which sound inappropriate. In the first two instances, the reason is the desire to insert the basso part into the texture (Examples 46a, 46b). Another such use of a grace note is unjustified (Example 46c). Obviously, these grace notes must be avoided, or played together, since “we are always imitating a world-class orchestra’s string section, one which watches the maestro intently, always playing perfectly together.”

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54 Ibid.
Example 46. “Batti, batti, o bel Masetto.”

a. Ricordi edition, m. 20:

b. Author’s solution, m. 20:

c. Ricordi edition, m. 24:
d. Author’s solution, m. 24:

![Musical notation]


e. Ricordi edition, m. 34:

![Musical notation]

2. A pianistically awkward texture occurs in measures 28-31 (Example 47).

Physically unwieldy and widely spaced chords on the last eighth note of measures 28, 30, and 31 tend to make these up-beats heavy and, at normal tempo for the aria, virtually unplayable.

3. The violoncello obbligato line in measure 33 is visually interrupted and divided between two hands (Example 48a). This editor’s choice seems to be the easiest pianistically, but not the best. If a pianist is not aware of the continuous obbligato part, it may audibly disappear for the entire bar. A continuous distribution of the same music texture, as it is in the Bärenreiter and Boosey & Hawkes editions (Example 48b), would help the pianist to take proper care of the cello obbligato line.


a. Ricordi edition:
b. Bärenreiter and Boosey & Hawkes editions:

![Musical notation image]

**Other Issues**

When learning, and later performing this aria, a pianist will face several technical problems and performance issues. Although the following considerations are often applicable to the piano-vocal reductions of any orchestral music with voice, there is a range of criteria that must be carefully observed by the pianist specifically in this piece:

1. Tempo, and the transition to a new tempo;
2. Orchestration: articulation and revision;
3. Technical “tricks”: hand alteration, fingering, and the use of pedal;
4. Inaccuracies in the piano-vocal scores.

**Tempo**

Although the Neue Mozart-Ausgabe orchestral score specifies the original composer’s tempos, all of the piano-vocal score editions, with the exception of the
Bärenreiter, contain no tempo indication, or the wrong tempo for the 6/8 section of the aria:

a. NMA and Bärenreiter: 2/4 *Andante grazioso* – 6/8 *Allegretto*;
b. G. Schirmer and Ricordi: 2/4 *Andante grazioso* – 6/8 *Allegro*;

As suggested by Boris Goldovsky and Arthur Schoep, “the continuous accompaniment passages entrusted to the solo cello must be taken into account when choosing the tempo for this piece.” It would be wise to discuss with the singer the initial tempo and its change in the 6/8 section. Verbal communication is quite often underestimated, and omitting it may cause mutual frustration and an uncoordinated performance. In this aria especially, the singer and the pianist should be aware of the authentic tempo marks and peculiarities of the orchestration as a reason. In this case, both performers can form an alliance, staying away from struggles with breath or with left-hand articulation.

If a singer complains about a 6/8 *Allegretto* tempo being too slow, not allowing her to easily maintain breath in some of the long phrases, a pianist may help tremendously just by “eliminating downbeats,” and thinking in a two-bar pace to create a more natural flow. However, these maneuvers do not have to interfere with the original articulation of *violoncello obbligato* (pianist’s left hand).

Mr. Goldovsky and Mr. Schoep, in their *Bringing Soprano Arias to Life*, recommend $\frac{92}{12}$ for the *Andante grazioso*, gradually slowing down towards the end of

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this part of the aria, and $\frac{4}{4} = 63$ for the Allegretto.\textsuperscript{56} Although the suggested ritardando is not indicated by Mozart, it is occasionally executed in contemporary performances. Most often, the end of the first section of the aria is performed with a short ritenuto starting on the last sixteenth note of measure 59. In the next measure, the orchestra has a fermata on the eighth-rest right after the downbeat. At the same time, the soprano has a fermata marked over the entire bar (Example 49a). The Bärenreiter edition offers an optional and stylistically accurate embellishment (Example 49b). It can actually help to make a smooth and natural transition to the following tempo, if a singer chooses this option.

Example 49. “Batti, batti, o bel Masetto,” m. 60.

a. Bärenreiter edition:

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid.
b. Bärenreiter edition’s optional embellishment:

As for this particular transition to a new tempo, both a singer and a pianist should think like a conductor, who always anticipates, and prepares the upcoming tempo. Example 50 demonstrates a probable conductor’s approach. At the rehearsal, the pianist can function as a conductor during the fermata in the piano part. Doing so will quickly put both performers “on the same page” about this tempi correlation.

Example 50. “Batti, batti, o bel Masetto,” author’s solution for the transition from Andante grazioso to Allegretto, mm. 59-(60).
Often, the optional embellishment mentioned above is not sung at all. In general, legendary divas of the earlier generation preferred not to use it.\(^{57}\) The last two pitches on the word “core” are executed with fermata on each of them or just with a little stretch in time, and either with or without portamento.\(^{58}\)

**Orchestration**

In regard to the orchestration, for a pianist, the most important task is to set his/her ears and articulation for one individual and two groups of instruments: violoncello obbligato, strings, and woodwinds (with the domination of flute, since its entrances are the most audible in this aria’s orchestration). Once the score is marked, the pianist should determine the articulation and touch for the best possible imitation of these instruments. Martin Katz’s suggestions for the “piano-version” of strings and woodwinds were discussed earlier. He also emphasizes the different mindset of the wind player from one who plays in the string family:

> Each player in a wind section is really a soloist; there are not a dozen others playing the same notes with him, as would be the case with strings. This difference is crucial, because it introduces an individual ego as well as psychological pressure to everything winds do.\(^{59}\)

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\(^{57}\) The author refers to the astonishing performances by Lucia Popp, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, and Anna Moffo among others. The video and audio recordings are available at www.youtube.com (accessed September 26, 2010).

\(^{58}\) Mozart did not write this portamento. In any other case, it would be an absolute stylistic taboo to use one. However, it can be suitable to the situation in the opera, and Zerlina’s character. If the soprano prefers to use this portamento, it should be sung in Mozart’s style: the weight of the first note is taken-off right before the next one.

In this aria, the mindset of *violoncello obbligato* player, apparently, must be a combination of the string’s articulation with the woodwind musician’s mentality. And while the cellist is dealing with it alone, the pianist has to imitate the rest of the orchestra in addition. It has been mentioned more than once throughout this chapter that it is imperative to keep the continuous motion of the *obbligato* part. Since it is not always possible to keep the original intervallic connection within the melodic line due to the rest of the orchestral texture, there are differences in the left hand in various editions of the piano-vocal score (Example 51).

Example 51. “Batti, batti, o bel Masetto,” mm. 68-72.

a. Bärenreiter edition:
b. Ricordi edition:

\begin{music}
\new staff
\new time \time 6/8
\new clef \clef bass
\new staff
\new time \time 6/8
\new clef \clef bass
\new staff
\new time \time 6/8
\new clef \clef bass
\end{music}

\begin{music}
\new staff
\new time \time 6/8
\new clef \clef bass
\new staff
\new time \time 6/8
\new clef \clef bass
\new staff
\new time \time 6/8
\new clef \clef bass
\end{music}

c. G. Schirmer edition:

\begin{music}
\new staff
\new time \time 6/8
\new clef \clef bass
\new staff
\new time \time 6/8
\new clef \clef bass
\new staff
\new time \time 6/8
\new clef \clef bass
\end{music}

\begin{music}
\new staff
\new time \time 6/8
\new clef \clef bass
\new staff
\new time \time 6/8
\new clef \clef bass
\new staff
\new time \time 6/8
\new clef \clef bass
\end{music}
The existence of various reductions of the same musical material is a sign of somewhat complex orchestral layering, and is a cue for a pianist to explore the reasons behind the choices for interpretation. For instance, in measures 68-78 of the aria (Example 51), one can see four versions of the attempt to combine the violoncello obbligato with the rest of the orchestra (basso, woodwinds, and strings), which is quite wide in range. The pianist has a choice to make. The following steps can help to reach the decision:

1. **Comparison to the original orchestral score** (Example 52);
2. **Listening to the recording with the orchestral score in sight**—
distinguishing which instruments or groups of instruments have the
more audible and therefore valuable material;

In measures 68-69, the woodwinds and strings stand out from the orchestral
sound. Oboe and bassoon are doubling the vocal line, and strings are moving in harmonic
progression. At this point, the *obbligato* and the basso are barely heard. For that reason,
the chords played by the strings should be a main concern in the piano reduction. The
violoncello obbligato comes back into the picture, getting more audible again, in measure 70.

3. Playing through the piano-vocal score editions of this excerpt –

   defining the differences, merits, and flaws: pianistically comfortable,
   all the important parts of the music texture are preserved, some of the
   music texture is revised (successfully, unsuccessfully, makes it
   pianistically awkward, sounds stylistically correct or the opposite,
   etc.), does not sound “orchestral”, and so forth;

   For example, measures 70-71 do not have any major differences in all of the four
   editions. The only exception is the Bärenreiter, which in addition contains a basso part.
   In theory, this transcription is possible to execute with the use of both hands’ alteration.
   However, it will feel technically uncomfortable and insecure, and most importantly is not
   worth the trouble. As has been mentioned earlier, the basso and obbligato parts are not
   too important at this time.

   On the other hand, measures 68-69 are transcribed differently, as can be seen in
   Examples 51a, 51b, 51c, 51d in cross-reference to the orchestral score (Example 52).
   Excepting the Bärenreiter, all of the other editions made certain modifications to the
   original violoncello obbligato line. This is acceptable as long as it is kept in style,
   maintained in the pattern, and the initial difficulty is not replaced by the equivalent or
   worse. The Boosey & Hawkes edition did not pass the test with these criteria: the
   obbligato is altered quite poorly, with unnecessary leaps and lost harmonic function in
   the bass (Example 51d). The G. Schirmer’s reduction is the most “cozy” for the pianist’s
   left hand, and this new version of the obbligato does sound very appropriate. However,
the strings’ chords in the middle layer of the texture lose their fullness, since they are reduced to a single voice (Example 51c). The Ricordi edition absorbs the best from others, and appears to be a preeminent combination: all the problems are successfully solved (Example 51b).

4. Analyzing how one or another reduction can possibly affect the ensemble between the singer and the pianist;

The wide leap in the obbligato on the border of measures 71 and 72 in the G. Schirmer edition illustrates this issue. Although the double consonant in the Italian word “passar” takes time to pronounce, singers usually prefer to go over this leap in the faster vocal line, and rush directly to the following run. This is stipulated by the specifics of vocal technique and its way of dealing with wide intervals in this register. That being said, it is much safer for a pianist to avoid this jump in the left hand, as is done in the Bärenreiter, Ricordi, or Boosey & Hawkes editions (Examples 51a, 51b, 51d). Narrower intervals will provide a closer imitation of the cello.

5. Making a choice – it can be the choice of one edition, or a combination of two or more editions. If there is a possibility for a better realization, the pianist is always encouraged to create his/her own.

Considering all of the above, the best choice would be either the Ricordi edition, or the combination of the G. Schirmer (left hand) and the Bärenreiter (right hand). New variants of the same are always possible, but in this case not necessary.
Technical “tricks”

There are several places in this aria where, regardless of the edition, the pianist usually needs more practice time to reach a desirable result. Every pianist has his/her own technical “tricks”, but what works for one will not always work for another.

The Allegretto section of the aria starts with a very awkward sequence of scales in the left hand. Martin Katz, in his book The Complete Collaborator, specifically addresses this difficulty, and shares his own way of dealing with it:

This music is not chromatic; the classic period obviously demands clean, very stingy pedaling. We have no choice but to practice this annoyingly difficult passage and play it as written. (I must admit to often playing the first three measures with my hands crossed. I’m not proud of my need to do so, but I am usually pleased with the result.)

The hand alteration that works for Martin Katz might be very helpful for some pianists. For others, crossing the hands for the first three bars would feel too unnatural, and probably even more confusing than the original. If the pianist prefers not to alternate the hands, the following might help to secure these passages:

a. Practicing with exaggerated articulation of the violoncello obbligato, taking a bit of time on the downbeat (Example 53).

b. Practicing these passages divided into groups of short motives (Examples 53).

Example 53. “Batti, batti, o bel Masetto,” author’s practicing suggestion, mm. 61-63.

60 Ibid., 210.
Example 54. “Batti, batti, o bel Masetto,” author’s practicing suggestion, mm. 61-63.

a. Variant 1:

b. Variant 2:

c. At least for the beginning of this section of the aria, getting rid of the “accompaniment” mentality, and rather thinking of the left hand as an important counterpoint to the vocal line.

The following example demonstrates another kind of technical issue: the combination of two types of articulations in one hand. In this case, a smooth execution can be achieved by applying the offered fingering (Example 55).
Example 55. “Batti, batti, o bel Masetto,” author’s fingering suggestion for the left hand, mm. 58-60.

One more subject can be addressed in this aria. Pianists often underestimate the sustain pedal and, in general, do not give an extra thought to using this extraordinary feature of their instrument. It is indeed remarkable how just a few applications of this tool can make the performance truly special. The exploitation of the sustain pedal is even more important for an orchestral sound imitation and, in this aria, will bring the familiar piano reduction to another level.

Since the Bärenreiter edition is very detailed, it will be the best score, besides the orchestral, to look to for prolonged bass-notes, which are impossible to hold manually, and would be a good reason for the sustain pedal. There are two cases in the texture where a pianist can apply the sustained pedal (Examples 56a and 56b).

a. Mm. 19-20 (identical to mm. 23-24):

b. Mm. 34-36:
Inaccuracies in the piano-vocal scores

As always, the Bärenreiter edition is extremely precise and, in terms of accuracy, deserves to be trusted entirely. It was mentioned previously that the G. Schirmer edition occasionally contains some made-up orchestral music material, which technically cannot be considered as a misprint, a mistake, or an inaccuracy (Examples 35a, and 39a). There are very few inaccuracies in the G. Schirmer, Ricordi, and Boosey & Hawkes editions, but they need to be noted:

1. G. Schirmer and Ricordi – crescendo indication is placed earlier than in the original orchestral score (Examples 57a, 57b, and 57c);
2. G. Schirmer, Ricordi, and Boosey & Hawkes – Tempo indication issues for the Allegretto section of the aria have been discussed earlier.
3. G. Schirmer edition – false or inaccurate orchestration indications have been discussed earlier.


a. G. Schirmer and Ricordi editions:
b. NMA orchestral score:

The study of all of the above will necessitate the occasional revision of the score; thoughtful approach to the articulation and dynamics; careful observation of the vocal melody and the singer’s breath. It will also arm the pianist with the appropriate tools for solving any technical problems which exist or may arise during the learning process. Most of the mentioned criteria are closely connected, co-dependent, and can equally influence performers’ choices.
CONCLUSION

Any piano-reduction of the orchestral score is the work of a person who did his best to transform the original composer’s creation for multiple instruments into its imitation on a single piano for a pianist’s ten fingers. It is clear that the piano is never going to sound like an orchestra. However, some pianists or some piano transcriptions may sound much more “like an orchestra” than others.

Every vocal accompanist frequently deals with orchestral reductions and has endless opportunities to personalize these reductions, not only by changing the texture in the existing edition, but through experimenting with colors, articulation, timbres, and touch of “different instruments.” This process can be challenging, demanding, even frustrating, at the same time involving, and certainly thrilling. This essay contains a detailed description of this process for three selected arias from Mozart’s Don Giovanni: “O sai chi l’onore,” “Dalla sua pace la mia dipende,” and “Batti, batti, o bel Masetto.” Each aria occupies a separate chapter that consists of a comprehensive work-plan for the accompanist, comparative analysis of differences in four piano-vocal score editions with cross-reference to the full orchestral score, discussion of pros and cons of these editions, author’s ideas and solutions for the existing problematic textures and other performance issues, and sometimes author’s practicing suggestions.

The author believes that her analysis, findings, and solutions justify a proof of many possibilities and various takes on the piano-reductions of the orchestral
accompaniments. She also modestly hopes that her work will be helpful and inspiring to many vocal accompanists, and wishes that she and her colleagues will often get the at-all-times-desired compliment: “The accompanist sounded like an orchestra!”
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