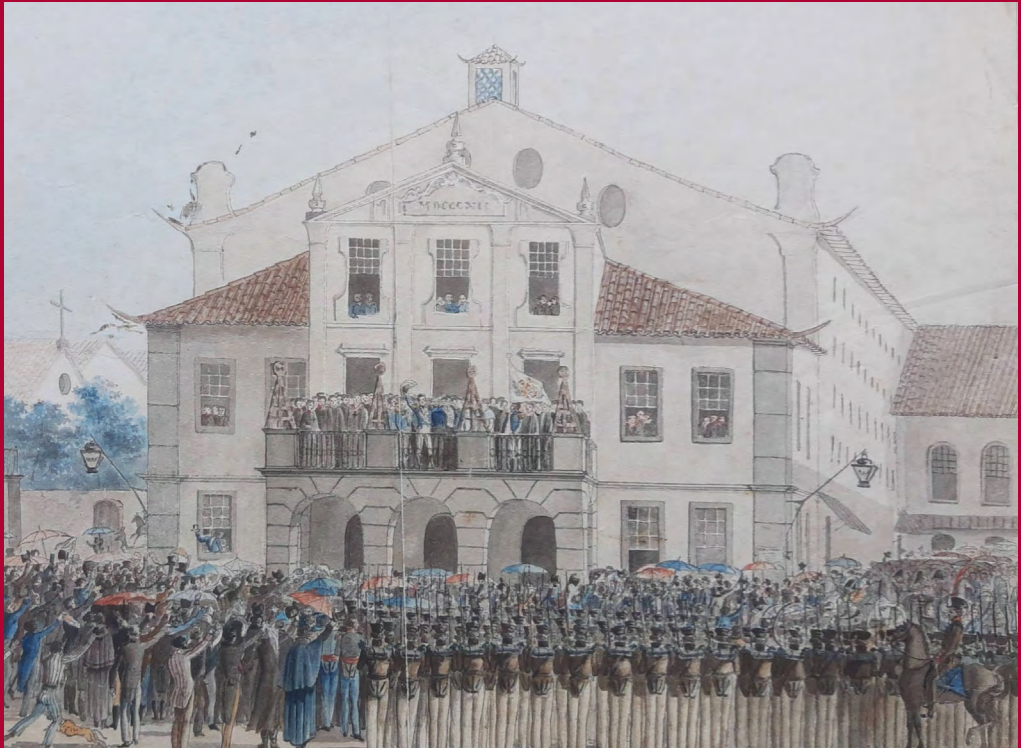




DON GIOVANNI IN RIO DE JANEIRO

**The Opera's First Performance Beyond Europe (1821)
and Its Cultural-Political Context**



Edited by
REINHARD EISENDLE · MATTHIAS J. PERNERSTORFER · SUNA SUNER

HOLLITZER
— H —



DON JUAN ARCHIV WIEN

DON JUAN STUDIES

2

Series Editors

REINHARD EISENDLE · MATTHIAS J. PERNERSTORFER





DON GIOVANNI
IN RIO DE JANEIRO
The Opera's First Performance Beyond Europe (1821)
and Its Cultural-Political Context

Edited by
REINHARD EISENDLE · MATTHIAS J. PERNERSTORFER · SUNA SUNER

HOLLITZER
H

The publication was supported by
DON JUAN ARCHIV WIEN – FORSCHUNGSVEREIN FÜR THEATER- UND KULTURGESCHICHTE

DON JUAN archiv WIEN



REINHARD EISENDLE, MATTHIAS J. PERNERSTORFER, and SUNA SUNER (eds.):
Don Giovanni in Rio de Janeiro:
The Opera's First Performance Beyond Europe (1821) and Its Cultural-Political Context
© Hollitzer Verlag, Vienna 2026
(= Don Juan Studies 2)

Cover image:
HIPPOLYTE TAUNAY: *Real Theatro São João. 26 de fevereiro de 1821,*
o Príncipe Dom Pedro jura em nome do pai, a Constituição "tal qual fosse redigida pelas Cortes de Lisboa.
Watercolour, formerly at Brazilian Institute col., Rio de Janeiro.

Responsibility for the content and for questions of copyright lies with the authors.
In the case of outstanding, justified claims, we request to be notified by the rights owner.

Rights for text and data mining reserved pursuant to Art. 4 (3) Directive (EU) 2019/790.

Layout and Cover: GABRIEL FISCHER, Vienna
Production: INGE JASCH, Vienna

Printed and bound in the EU
All rights reserved

Hollitzer Wissenschaftsverlag
Trautsonsgasse 6/6, A-1080 Wien

kontakt@hollitzer.at
www.hollitzer.at

HOLLITZER
— H —

ISSN 2960-4761
ISBN 978-3-99094-262-8

In memory of
Hans Ernst Weidinger

CONTENTS

HONOURS

- XIII** Embassy of Brazil in Austria
H.E. EMBAIXADOR EDUARDO PAES SABOIA
- XIV** Embassy of Portugal in Austria
H.E. AMBASSADOR JORGE SILVA LOPES
- XVI** Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Austria
H.E. AMBASSADOR TERESA INDJEIN
- XVIII** Musica Brasilis – Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro
ROSANA LANZELOTTE
- XX** Divino Sospiro – Centro de Estudos Musicais Setecentistas de Portugal
ISKRENA YORDANOVA
- XXIII** Mozarteum University Salzburg
STEFAN DAVID HUMMEL
- XXV** Introduction
REINHARD EISENDLE – MATTHIAS J. PERNERSTORFER – SUNA SUNER

I. OPERA IN THE TROPICS

- 3** Between Natural and Proper:
Refashioning Opera in Brazil (c.1750–1822)
ROGÉRIO BUDASZ (Riverside/CA)
- 29** Italian Opera and the Birth of Theatre Criticism in Rio de Janeiro
(1817–1831)
FERNANDO SANTOS BERÇOT (Rio de Janeiro)

II. LEOPOLDINA AND PEDRO: ARTS, MUSIC, THEATRE AND POLITICS

- 55 Archduchess Leopoldine of Austria, First Empress of Brazil (1797–1826):
Her Childhood and Youth at the Court of Vienna
KÄTHE SPRINGER-DISSMANN (Vienna)
- 97 Empress Maria Leopoldina:
Political Action and the Art of Reigning
PAULO DE ASSUNÇÃO (Lisbon)
- 117 The Musical Legacy of Pedro I of Brazil
ROSANA LANZELOTTE (Rio de Janeiro)
- 141 Opera of Independence:
An “Exhibition” in Two Acts
JULIO BANDEIRA (Rio de Janeiro)

III. SIGISMUND NEUKOMM IN BRAZIL

- 173 Sigismund Neukomm on Tour:
Warm-Hearted, Curious, World Traveller
HERBERT LINDSBERGER (Salzburg)
- 189 Sigismund Neukomm:
Ein österreichischer Komponist am brasilianischen Hof in Rio de Janeiro
OTTO BIBA (Vienna)
- 197 Sigismund von Neukomm and the Musical Construction
of the Voyage to Brazil (1816):
A Musically Documented Atlantic Crossing
RICARDO BERNARDES (Lisbon)

IV. DON JUAN PERFORMANCES IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY EUROPE

- 213 Don Juan in the Contemporary World:
Some Reflections on a Changing Plot
FRANCESCO COTTICELLI (Naples)
- 221 Mozart tradito:
le versioni ottocentesche del *Don Giovanni* a Napoli
PAOLOGIOVANNI MAIONE (Naples)
- 233 *Don Giovanni Tenorio* by Louis Henry at the San Carlo in Naples (1820)
MARIA VENUSO (Naples)

V. DA PONTE'S AND MOZART'S *DON GIOVANNI* IN BRAZIL, ARGENTINA AND MEXICO

- 255 *Don Giovanni* and Rio de Janeiro:
The Fate of Mozart's Masterpiece in the Brazilian Capital throughout
the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries
ROSANA DE MORAES MARRECO ORSINI BRESCIA (Lisbon)
- 271 *Don Giovanni* in Rio de Janeiro, 1821: Touching a White Map
REINHARD EISENDLE – HANS ERNST WEIDINGER
- 329 Mozart *americanizado*:
The Premiere of *Don Giovanni* in Buenos Aires in 1827
MAGNUS TESSING SCHNEIDER (Gothenburg)
- 353 Opera Divos after Colonialism:
Don Giovanni in Mexico City
FRANCESCO MILELLA (Madrid)

INDEX

- 381 Names
- 391 Places
- 395 Theatres
- 397 Musical and Poetic Works

HONOURS

H.E. EMBAIXADOR EDUARDO PAES SABOIA

EMBASSY OF BRAZIL IN AUSTRIA

It is a great pleasure to introduce this publication, which brings to light a little-known yet remarkable historical fact. Contrary to long-standing belief, it was in Brazil – not in the United States – that Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* was first performed outside of Europe. For generations, scholars have mistakenly cited the 1826 New York performance as the opera’s debut in the Americas.

The Brazilian premiere took place in 1821, a pivotal year in the political and cultural life of the Portuguese court in Rio de Janeiro. Since 1807, when the royal family relocated to Brazil to escape Napoleon’s advance, sustained efforts had been made to transform Rio into a capital worthy of a European dynasty. The city experienced a profound transformation: ports were opened to friendly nations, effectively ending Brazil’s colonial subordination to Portugal; new institutions such as colleges, the military academy, the national bank, and the royal library were established; roads were paved, and factories began to emerge.

Soon after, an Austrian archduchess married the Brazilian heir and arrived accompanied by what became the most significant scientific expedition to Brazil up to that time. The botanist Carl Friedrich von Martius, the zoologists Johann Baptist von Spix and Johann Natterer, and the painter Thomas Ender, among others, collected thousands of specimens and produced illustrations of people, landscapes, flora, and fauna. Their work enriched major European museum collections, including those of the Weltmuseum Wien and the Natural History Museum in Vienna. This monumental undertaking greatly advanced global knowledge of Brazil’s vast and complex natural world.

This momentum culminated in 1821, when Dom João VI, responding to the demands of the Portuguese Cortes, prepared to return to Lisbon, leaving behind his son, the future Dom Pedro I, and the Austrian princess, Maria Leopoldina. Their presence in Rio de Janeiro would prove decisive in the events leading to the proclamation of independence in 1822.

Within this context of political transition, scientific discovery, and cultural ambition, staging an opera as important as *Don Giovanni* on Brazilian soil was yet another sign of prestige and cosmopolitan aspiration. One can only imagine the atmosphere in Rio de Janeiro on 20 September 1821, when the curtain rose at the Real Theatro de São João.

I hope the reader will enjoy this journey through time and come to know a little more about our country at that pivotal moment.

H.E. AMBASSADOR JORGE SILVA LOPES

EMBASSY OF PORTUGAL IN AUSTRIA

It is a great honor to contribute with some words to the publication which celebrates the 200 Years of *Don Giovanni* in Brazil, the first staging of the Mozart's and Lorenzo Da Ponte's opera outside of Europe.

I wish to warmly thank Don Juan Archiv Wien and, in particular, its Director Dr. Matthias J. Pernerstorfer for this kind invitation. My predecessors had the honor to participate in the concert marking the bicentenary of the Rio de Janeiro performance, and in the symposium dedicated to the cultural-political context of that remarkable event in 2022. It is therefore a privilege for me to "complete the circle" by offering a brief foreword to the present volume.

Allow me to express my profound appreciation for the work carried out by Don Juan Archiv Wien, whose scholarly and artistic initiatives have greatly contributed to deepening our understanding of the rich and longstanding relationship between Portugal and Austria. The performance of *Don Giovanni* in Rio de Janeiro is a remarkable example of this shared cultural history.

I have taken up my duties as Ambassador of Portugal to Austria only four months ago. Strengthening the already excellent relations between our two countries is, of course, one of my priorities. From the very first day, however, I also set myself the goal of highlighting and bringing renewed visibility to the many historical connections that have existed between Portugal and Austria throughout in political, cultural and artistic domains alike.

These connections run deep. One may recall, as early as 1452, the marriage of Infanta Leonor of Portugal to the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick III and, the following century, the marriage of Emperor Charles V to Isabel of Portugal, daughter of King Manuel I. The eighteenth century offers further well-known examples, such as the marriage of King John V to Maria Anna of Austria, daughter of Emperor Leopold I. Together with the King she played a significant role in the country's cultural life, including its musical development.

Other links may be less widely known, yet equally fascinating, as John V's brother, Infante Manuel, fighting bravely in Eastern Europe, in the Imperial Army, under the command of Eugene of Savoy, together with Count Manuel de Silva Tarouca, who later became a close counsellor to Empress Maria Theresa. The current Albertina Museum in Vienna was once his residence, as in 1745 he received permission from the Empress to remodel the building and establish there his living quarters.

And, of course, just four years before *Don Giovanni*'s "arrival" in Rio de Janeiro, the union of Don Pedro, Crown Prince of the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and the Algarves, later Emperor of Brazil and King of Portugal, with Archduchess Maria Leopoldina of Austria tookplace – a pivotal moment in our shared history.

It occurred at a truly unique time, shortly after the Portuguese King returned to Portugal after thirteen years in Brazil. Their marriage by proxy took place only a few steps from where I write today, in Vienna's Augustinian Church.

Coming from Austria, a country with a long-standing musical tradition, the Archduchess was joining a family also with strong connections to music, starting with the first Braganza King, John IV, a passionate musician, renowned as a composer, as for his writings and vast music books collection, unfortunately lost in the 1755 Lisbon earthquake. Almost all his successors had a great interest in music. Once in Rio, the connections continued in the musical sphere, notably through the Austrian composer Sigismund von Neukomm, who gave music lessons to Don Pedro, certainly with great success – we should not forget that we owe to him both the Portuguese Hymn of the Charter and the Brazilian Independence Anthem – and later to the future Empress of Brazil.

It is therefore especially significant that *Don Giovanni*, one of Mozart's greatest masterpieces, was first performed outside of Europe, in Rio de Janeiro in 1821, at a time when Brazil was still part of the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and the Algarves, and barely a year before Brazilian independence. This performance is not only a landmark in operatic history but also a testament to the vibrant cultural ties linking Portugal, Austria and Brazil.

For all these reasons, I warmly commend Don Juan Archiv Wien for revisiting and illuminating this extraordinary moment of shared history. May this publication inspire further research, dialogue and appreciation of the longstanding cultural bridges between our nations.

H.E. AMBASSADOR TERESA INDJEIN

DIRECTOR OF THE AUSTRIAN CULTURAL FORUM ROME

FORMER DEPUTY – AND DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR
INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL FOREIGN POLICY, MFA, AUSTRIA (2011–2022)

204 years have passed since Mozart's *Don Giovanni* was first performed in Rio de Janeiro. There are many reasons to celebrate this event. As human beings we are witnessing the unifying, inspiring impact of a cultural achievement, of a piece of art and a masterwork in the truest sense of the word, no matter whether we are Brazilians, Austrians, Portuguese or any other citizen of the world. This performance marked an arrival, an arrival in the new world which opened a new world to its listeners, even though the music and the plot came from the “old” world.

The often mentioned and fondly remembered Austrian archduchess and Brazilian empress, Leopoldina, paved the way for feelings of heartfelt friendship in Austria with regard to Brazil, then over a geographically enormous distance. She was the one who defined Austrian views of Brazil, by her virtues, her deeds and her unwavering dedication to science and the arts, despite her relatively short life. She connected the two countries for a long time to come. Her presence is still felt today.

We are aware of the famous collection that the Austrian expedition to Brazil brought back to Vienna. Its many items were received with great joy, interest and astonishment. A special museum for displaying the pieces, the “Brasilianum”, was even built. Unfortunately, a fire in Vienna destroyed a major part of the collection, but still a wonderful part has been preserved until today. We can only imagine the feelings of surprise and fascination people of the early nineteenth century must have felt marveling at them. With sadness, we also recall the terrible fire that destroyed so many elements of the collection at the “Brazilian National Museum” in 2018, a collection whose foundation also points to Leopoldina's enthusiasm for her new home country.

When Leopoldina had to leave her beloved hometown of Vienna and her family, it was bound to be a farewell forever. And even though she showed feelings of love for her future husband, Dom Pedro de Braganca, she wrote melancholy words upon her arrival in Rio de Janeiro. However, she almost instantly fell in love with “her” Brazil, which was so rich in natural beauty and abundance, and blessed with a population that soon mirrored her affection for them. She transformed her feelings of uncertainty and loss into recovery and embraced her new home, which was to become a new nation.

In 1823 Leopoldina wrote in a letter: “Pode ter a certeza, caríssimo pai, que no meu coração serei sempre brasileira” (‘Dearest father, I assure you that – in my heart – I will always be Brazilian.’)

The scientific expeditions and their results allowed Austria to follow her on a path of enthusiasm for a new world, which had become also our new world, not in a manner of conquest or war but in a way of conquering hearts and transporting not weapons but arts and creating a place of longing.

This appraisal of Leopoldina's role in defining the relations between Austria and Brazil is also symbolized in the national colors of Brazil and constitutes no exaggeration: one just has to think about the many positive encounters this bilateral history has made possible already, until today.

Celebrating Brazilian independence is closely connected to Leopoldina's political activity. This is not only an issue of historical remembrance, but also establishes a positive link between Austria and Brazil in the present time. It was certainly no coincidence that Brazil supported Austria in its struggle for full independence after World War II, when it initiated efforts before the United Nations General Assembly to revive the Powers' efforts concluding a state treaty that would end occupation and limited sovereignty. Austria is still grateful for this effort, as we are for all the fruitful exchanges between our countries and cultures since the days of an Austrian archduchess becoming an empress and a beloved political symbol in the New World of Brazil.

The musical relations between Austria and Brazil can be considered as of particular importance. They are exemplified in this very volume, dedicated to Mozart and Neukomm in Brazil. And they go far beyond that. Both countries – small Austria and hundred times larger Brazil – define their “identity” to a large extent through music, with its many traditions and styles.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasise the importance of the work of Don Juan Archiv Wien, which cannot be estimated enough for its creative scientific achievements and its beautiful and useful publications in the realm of public diplomacy pertaining to history and present times.

ROSANA LANZELOTTE

MUSICA BRASILIS – INSTITUTO HISTÓRICO E GEOGRÁFICO BRASILEIRO

The process of Brazil's emancipation as a nation began in December 1815, when, as a consequence of the Congress of Vienna, Prince Regent Dom João of Braganza (1767–1826) decreed the creation of the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and the Algarves, a measure that enabled the royal court to remain in Rio de Janeiro. To consolidate the new kingdom, an alliance with Austria was pursued through the engagement of Prince Dom Pedro of Braganza (1798–1834) to Archduchess Leopoldina of Habsburg (1797–1826).

A musician like her fiancé, Dona Leopoldina encountered in Rio de Janeiro the Austrian composer Sigismund von Neukomm (1778–1858), the favorite pupil of Joseph Haydn (1732–1809). During the five years Neukomm spent in Brazil, between 1816 and 1821, he introduced the Viennese classical style by composing the first symphonies and sonatas written in the country. He pioneered the blending of genres by composing classical pieces inspired by the popular musical forms of the time: the *modinha* and the *lundu*.

Neukomm's catalogue constitutes an important source of information about the events he witnessed in Brazil, from the composition of the first pieces by his royal pupil Dom Pedro, to the Pernambuco Revolution and the acclamation of Dom João VI, all occasions marked by works of his own authorship.

Upon his return to Europe, Neukomm not only published several of his own "Brazilian" works but also edited twenty *modinhas* by Joaquim Manoel da Câmara (1780?–1840?), the only surviving testimony to the art of this popular musician of the era.

During her early years in Brazil, Dona Leopoldina longed to return to Europe, as she expressed in several letters to her father, Emperor Francis I of Austria (1768–1835), including those of 7 December 1817, 24 January 1818, and 14 May 1818. In this last letter, she made an eloquent appeal: 'Could you use your influence over His Majesty the King to arrange for us to return to Portugal? It is extremely necessary – the sole wish of my husband, and therefore mine as well.'

The constitutionalist revolt of Porto in August 1820 demanded the return of Dom João VI to Portugal and the swearing in of a new constitution. Dom Pedro, however, having declared his commitment to constitutionalist principles, would remain in Brazil as Prince Regent, a reality to which Dona Leopoldina, educated to serve the demands of dynastic politics, proved able to adapt.

In this context, the Princess commissioned Neukomm to write a gift for her father: the *Solemn Mass*, subtitled "Sancti Francisci" ("pour S.M. l'Empereur François II, par ordre de son auguste fille la Princesse Royale"), dated 18 November 1820. Dispatched on 17 February 1821, the Princess noted in her accompanying letter

that the mass contained ‘two fugues’, a detail she was careful to mention, knowing her father’s taste. At the same time, she included, for the first time, works by Dom Pedro, perhaps hoping to ease her father into accepting her husband’s political choices. This episode stands as one of the earliest examples of musical diplomacy in Brazilian history, a practice that Dom Pedro himself would later follow, deploying his *Mass* and *Te Deum* to secure Pope Leo XII’s recognition of Brazilian independence after the pontiff’s election in 1823. These and all of Dom Pedro’s known works are freely available in modern editions through the Musica Brasilis portal, along with some 7,000 works by Brazilian composers from all periods (<https://musicabrasilis.org.br>).

In celebrating the 200th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Austria and Brazil, we recall the fundamental role played by music, a shared vocation of both countries and equally a locus of encounter between Dom Pedro and Dona Leopoldina.

Musica Brasilis is proud to contribute to the publication of the book *Don Giovanni in Brazil*, a work that sheds light on the musical connections between Austria and Brazil at the dawn of their relationship.

ISKRENA YORDANOVA

DIVINO SOSPIRO – CENTRO DE ESTUDOS MÚSICAIS SETECENTISTAS DE PORTUGAL

The fruitful cooperation between Don Juan Archiv Wien and Divino Sospiro – Centro de Estudos Musicais Setecentistas de Portugal started back in 2015. In this ten-year period our centres organized in Lisbon and in Vienna interdisciplinary conferences on important topics concerning music and theatre in the eighteenth century. Our series of books *Cadernos de Queluz* by Hollitzer Verlag has been very successful, representing the important legacy of these international meetings involving major specialists in musicology, theatre studies, architecture and history. The main objective of these scholarly gatherings and the excellent books we have published is to demonstrate the vivid cultural exchange that took place in Europe during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Music and the arts have always spoken a universal language, serving as a common thread between nations. Often used as a diplomatic tool or a display of power, they build links and influenced politics. At a time of such complexity and uncertainty, studying the historic memory of cultural connections of the past is crucial for preserving a common cultural identity for the future.

The cultural and diplomatic ties between the Austrian and the Portuguese empires have deep historical roots. Royal marriages go back to the Portuguese Royal House of Aviz in the fifteenth century: at a time when Portugal had begun its Atlantic expansion, King Duarte's daughter, Eleanor (1434–1467), married Holy Roman Emperor Frederick III (1415–1493) in Rome in 1452. The Eternal city, as a religious center of power, played an important role in the development of cultural ties between Austria and Portugal.

In my introduction, I would like to emphasize the leading role of the female royal subjects in cultural politics at the Portuguese court during the eighteenth century. The Italian musical taste, and especially the taste for Italian opera, was first introduced to Lisbon at the beginning of the eighteenth century with the arrival of Archduchess Maria Anna (1683–1754), daughter of Emperor Leopold I (1640–1705), who married Portuguese King João V (1689–1750) in 1708. Under her influence, all the ceremonial and cultural setup at court underwent radical change. Her great interest in the Italian operatic style, which had been completely absent from Portugal until then, was combined with the young king's ambition for religious and cultural assertion. Thanks to the discoveries of gold and diamonds in Brazil, the Lusitanian Empire became one of the wealthiest in Europe. This combination of fortune and desire for greatness gave the input to implement various cultural actions, using the diplomatic net of influence, in which music played a central role. In first place, this involved inviting famous foreign musicians and singers to Lisbon. At the same time, young Portuguese talents were sent to Rome and Naples to study, and musical

education was established at the Patriarchal, which made the flourishing of Italianate musical activity in Portugal possible.

Recent studies show that Queen Maria Anna had a significant influence on the development of cultural life in the Portuguese capital. In 1719, the composer Domenico Scarlatti (1685–1757) and the architect Filippo Juvarra (1678–1736) were hired. They had previously worked together in Rome, setting operas for patrons such as Cardinal Pietro Ottoboni (1667–1740) and the Polish queen Maria Casimira Sobieska (1641–1716). One of Scarlatti's and Juvarra's goals upon arriving in Portugal, almost simultaneously, was to pursue an operatic career together. In fact, Juvarra designed an ambitious architectonic project for the western part of Lisbon (Lisboa Ocidental), which included an opera house. In 1720, Scarlatti composed twenty serenatas for various royal events at court, showing his operatic compositional skills. Along with Scarlatti came some excellent Italian singers. It was no coincidence that, although they were formally coming from the Papal Cappella Giulia, they all had parallel operatic careers in Italy. A notable example is the tenor Gaetano Mossi, who had previously sung in several performances of Vivaldi's works in Venice, Florence and Bologna. In Lisbon, he received no less attention than Scarlatti did.

The passion for opera continued during the reigns of João V and Maria Anna's children: their son King José I (1714–1777) engaged the most famous architects, composers, and singers to create sumptuous opera performances. During his reign and that of his daughter Maria I, the libretti of the *poeta cesareo* Pietro Metastasio (1698–1782) were used most frequently. His sister Maria Bárbara of Braganza (1711–1758), Queen of Spain and a musical patron in Madrid, enjoyed a unique lifetime relationship with her teacher, the composer Domenico Scarlatti. A passionate music collector and an excellent harpsichord player, she was equally close to the Spanish court's musical director, Carlo Broschi-Farinelli (1705–1782). He was the one who inherited her collection of instruments and her vast musical library in 1758.

For most of the eighteenth century, both the Portuguese and Austrian royal courts shared a tradition of the *serenata* as a favorite operatic genre for celebrating important occasions. Implemented in Lisbon by Queen Maria Anna already at the beginning of the century, the genre was successfully exported to the Spanish court by Maria Bárbara. The performances of serenatas increased especially during the reign of Maria I (Lisbon, 1734 – Rio de Janeiro, 1816), daughter of José I. She and her consort Pedro III (1717–1786) had especial esteem for their musical teacher David Perez (1711–1778). There are even documents showing that a dinner was held at the Royal Palace of Queluz in honor of the Neapolitan composer, which was a highly unusual occurrence given the rigid protocol of the Portuguese *Ancien Régime*.

Music was the Portuguese royal family's preferred art form, and the musical education remained important for future generations, also when the court moved to Rio de Janeiro in 1807. The son of Maria I, João VI (1767–1826), had studied with the composers João Cordeiro da Silva (c.1735–1808?) and João de Sousa Carvalho (1745–

1798). His son Pedro IV (1798–1834), who became the first Brazilian emperor, was a very gifted musician and studied with Marcos Portugal (1762–1830) and Sigismund von Neukomm (1778–1858). In May 1817, the formal marriage of Pedro IV and Maria Leopoldina of Austria (1797–1826) was celebrated in Vienna. Their union was an important political confirmation of the alliance between the Austrian and Portuguese empires. The official blessing took place only in November, when she arrived in Rio. To celebrate their marriage, Marcos Portugal performed *L'augurio di felicità*, for which he also wrote the libretto in Metastasian style.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Portuguese overseas capital was the most cultured in the New World. It is no coincidence that the American premiere of Mozart's (1756–1791) *Don Giovanni* took place in September 1821 at the São João opera theatre. A few months after the Portuguese court officially departed for Lisbon. This was a special occasion for the cultural output of Rio de Janeiro, which, as a capital of the Portuguese Empire, had the most advanced musical scene in the Americas. This event exemplifies the intersection of cultural, diplomatic and political transfers between the Old and the New Worlds, as the independence of Brazil was proclaimed by the monarchs Maria Leopoldina and Pedro IV a year later.

STEFAN DAVID HUMMEL

MOZARTEUM UNIVERSITY SALZBURG

As special project coordinator at the Mozarteum University Salzburg, it was both a great joy and an honor for me to accompany and support an extraordinary cultural event: the commemoration of the first performance of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* outside of Europe, which took place 200 years ago in Rio de Janeiro. This anniversary was more than just a musical milestone – it became a symbol of the global impact of Wolfgang Amadé Mozart's genius and the remarkable speed with which his music spread across every continent.

Don Giovanni serves as a prime example of how Mozart's works were already understood and celebrated as universal cultural assets by the beginning of the nineteenth century. The 1821 performance at the Real Theatro de São João in Rio de Janeiro – just a few decades after the original premieres in Prague and Vienna – marked a new high point in musical history, documenting the vibrant cultural exchange between Europe and South America. Even today, Mozart's music continues to unite and inspire people of all ages and cultures, and *Don Giovanni* stands as an especially striking testimony to this global musical dialogue.

For the Mozarteum University Salzburg, whose central mission is to cultivate, research, and actively disseminate the European musical tradition, it was of particular importance to help shape this commemorative project through diverse artistic partnerships, interdisciplinary research, and innovative presentation formats – especially an international livestream and cooperation with leading institutions in Brazil and Europe. The great international enthusiasm for the livestream received through our university website is yet another testament to the ongoing power and integrative impact of Mozart's music in today's interconnected world.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the collaborators, partner institutions, and artists whose dedication, passion, and curiosity about intercultural exchange made this unique commemoration possible. The close collaboration with musicians from diverse backgrounds, the involvement of international media, and the various publications accompanying the anniversary demonstrate the continuing vitality of musical remembrance and the importance of collaborative artistic creation.

May the memory of that first performance of *Don Giovanni* in Brazil remain a shining symbol of how music builds bridges, broadens horizons, and inspires enthusiasm – then and now. At the Mozarteum, we are grateful for this inspiring cooperation and glad to have set impulses for future musical encounters and projects.

INTRODUCTION

REINHARD EISENDLE – MATTHIAS J. PERNERSTORFER – SUNA SUNER

On 20 September 1821, Da Ponte's and Mozart's *Don Giovanni* was performed at the Real Theatro de São João in Rio de Janeiro, the capital of the Kingdom of Brazil, at that time unified with the Kingdom of Portugal. This representation, by the local Italian opera company of Rio, with Pablo Rosquellas (1784–1859) in the title role, is the first known performance of Mozart's opera outside Europe. Hence, it was the Brazilian theatre that brought Mozart's opera to the Americas – five years before the New York evening of 25 May 1826 at the Park Theatre, under the direction of Manuel García (1775–1832), with the involvement of Lorenzo da Ponte. This was followed by Buenos Aires (8 February 1827; Rosquellas) and Ciudad de México (23 June 1828; García), with both impresarios taking the title role.

This memorable performance, whose bicentennial was celebrated in 2021, occurred in a historically unique constellation, linking Portugal and Brazil with Austria in a specific way. In November 1807, the Royal Portuguese court, on the eve of the country's invasion by Napoleon's army, fled from Lisbon to the Brazilian colony. In consequence, in March 1808, Rio de Janeiro became the new royal residence and capital of the Portuguese Empire. This brought changes for both the political and cultural infrastructure of the colony and its capital city. The arrival of the Portuguese court in 1808 also had an impact on Rio's theatre culture. A new theatre building was constructed in the style of the Teatro São Carlos in Lisbon: the Real Theatro de São João, named after the Prince Regent, inaugurated on 12 October 1813, the birthday of the future emperor Dom Pedro I. Here, on 17 December 1814, on Queen Mary's 80th birthday, Da Ponte's and Salieri's drama tragicomico *Axur, re d'Ormus* was performed – the first “Viennese opera” brought to the stage outside of Europe.

Already since 1792, when Queen Maria I had been declared incapable of governing, the government affairs were conducted by João, the Queen's eldest living son, as Prince Regent. On 16 December 1815, the Brazilian colony was raised to the rank of a kingdom. Upon the death of Maria I on 20 March 1816, the United Crowns descended to the Prince Regent, henceforth King João VI of Portugal, Brazil, and Algarve. For his eldest son and heir, Dom Pedro de Alcântara (1798–1834), a marriage was arranged with the Archduchess Maria Leopoldina (1797–1826), the daughter of Emperor Franz I of Austria and his second wife Marie Therese of Sicily (the daughter of the Emperor's aunt Maria Carolina, Queen of Both Sicilies). Leopoldina arrived in Rio de Janeiro on 5 November 1817; her journey was accompanied by renowned scholars of mineralogy, botany, and zoology from Austria, Bavaria, and Tuscany, as well as by Austrian artists, all setting off for what would later become known as the nineteenth century's most significant expedition to Brazil.

When *Don Giovanni* was performed for the first time in Rio, the Portuguese court had already departed from Rio to Lisbon (on 26 April 1821). Dom Pedro remained in Brazil as Prince Regent together with his wife Leopoldina. The year 1821 was, just like the years to follow, politically turbulent – with mutinies and rebellions challenging the Prince Regent’s political manoeuvrability. One year after the premiere of *Don Giovanni*, Brazil declared its independence.

Inspired by its founder, Hans Ernst Weidinger (1949–2023), the Don Juan Archiv Wien planned to organise a conference in Rio de Janeiro to celebrate the bicentennial. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic at the time, this plan proved unfeasible. Instead of a conference, the Don Juan Archiv Wien hosted a special concert in collaboration with the Mozarteum University Salzburg, Divino Sospito – Centro de Estudos Musicais Setecentistas de Portugal (Lisbon Queluz), and Musica Brasilis (Rio de Janeiro). The concert took place on 20 September of this year at the Don Juan Archiv Wien, attended by representatives of the Austrian, Portuguese, and Brazilian diplomatic corps. The music, however, was performed at four locations: Vienna, Salzburg, Lisbon, and Rio de Janeiro. The performances from Vienna were streamed live, accompanied by concert recordings from the other cities, which had been recorded shortly before 20 September, specifically for this occasion.¹

This artistic event is still available online today. The programme featured works by the Salzburg-born composer Sigismund Neukomm (1778–1858), who had come to Rio de Janeiro in 1816 in the entourage of the French ambassador and lived and composed there until 1821 – an important mediator of the works of Joseph Haydn and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. The programme also included a composition by José Mauricio Nunes Garcia (1767–1830), one of the most significant Brazilian composers of the nineteenth century, whose work bears traces of Mozart’s compositions, and who was himself referred to as the Brazilian Mozart.

This concert also featured two world premieres, one “historical” and one modern. In the Throne Room in Palácio Real Queluz, Ricardo Bernardes conducted the *Missa Sancti Johannis*, written by Sigismund Neukomm in Paris in 1816 for Rio de Janeiro, but which was never performed there – likely due to differing tastes in church music – and no other performances are documented. And the composer, conductor, and pianist Hannah Eisendle, who performed Neukomm’s piano composition *O Amor Brasileiro* at the Don Juan Archiv Wien, composed *O Amor Brasileiro II* for this occasion (a composition for piano and electronics), which has since been performed at other venues, such as the Staatstheater Darmstadt and during the Concerti Corti festival in Salzburg; another performance is scheduled to take place in Vienna in June 2026.

¹ *Sigismund Neukomm in Brazil. A Concert Commemorating the Bicentenary of the first Performance of Don Giovanni out of Europe in Rio De Janeiro on 20 September 1821*, ed. REINHARD EISENDLE, MATTHIAS J. PERNERSTORFER, and SUNA SUNER. Vienna: Hollitzer Verlag, 2021.

The conference, postponed to September 2022 and regarded as an exemplary intersection of cultural, diplomatic, and political exchanges between the Old and New Worlds, was originally scheduled to take place in Rio de Janeiro – at various historical sites – as planned for 2021. Since it remained difficult to realise such a project in Rio de Janeiro, we ultimately decided to hold the conference in Vienna. This, too, was a collaboration between Don Juan Archiv Wien, Mozarteum University Salzburg, Divino Sospiro – Centro de Estudos Musicais Setecentistas de Portugal, and Musica Brasilis. The Brazilian Embassy in Vienna served as an additional partner: an opening concert featuring works by Neukomm and Mozart was held at the Brazilian Residence in Vienna.²

After such a long period of preparation and so many collaborations, it is now a great pleasure for us to present this volume, which is the result of a very close editorial collaboration with the contributors. The volume contains five chapters, which will be introduced below.

I. OPERA IN THE TROPICS

With his two outstanding books, *Teatro e música na América portuguesa: convenções, repertório, raça, gênero e poder* and *Opera in the Tropics: Music and Theater in Early Modern Brazil*, ROGÉRIO BUDASZ is one of the most significant historians of the history of opera in Brazil.³ Drawing on his major studies, the author reflects in this article on the unique conditions of Brazil's opera history from the analytical perspective of *proper* and *natural* (“Between Natural and Proper: Refashioning Opera in Brazil – c.1750–1822”), structural concepts in aesthetic discourse which, as the author notes in relation to historical discourse, are nonetheless ambivalent, shifting, and in some cases overlapping concepts. Budasz examines “how shifting expectations and perceptions of what is proper and natural have influenced the selection and organic adaptation of metropolitan frameworks and formulas, and how these concepts have been used to validate or dismiss the legitimacy of peripheral theatrical practices.”⁴

2 REINHARD EISENDLE, MATTHIAS J. PERNERSTORFER, and SUNA SUNER: *200 Years of Don Giovanni in Brazil. The “Opera of all Operas” Debut beyond Europe on 20 September 1821 in Rio de Janeiro and its Cultural-Political Context* (International Conference at Don Juan Archiv Wien, 29 September – 1 October 2022). Vienna: Hollitzer Verlag, 2022.

3 ROGÉRIO BUDASZ: *Teatro e música na América portuguesa: convenções, repertório, raça, gênero e poder*. Curitiba: DeArtes UFPR, 2008; *Opera in the Tropics: Music and Theater in Early Modern Brazil*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019.

4 ROGÉRIO BUDASZ: “Between Natural and Proper: Refashioning Opera in Brazil (c.1750–1822)”, in this publication, pp. 3–27, here pp. 6–7.

According to the author, the word ‘opera’ first appeared in Brazil in the 1740s: by 1760, this theatrical form had supplanted the Spanish comedias previously performed at civic festivals. In the early 1740s and 1750s, it is likely that puppets were used in the first opera performances – specifically, large-scale figures in the Portuguese tradition – which were then replaced by live actors by the mid-1760s. There are few records of how these operas were performed at the time: according to Budasz, the most likely version is one with spoken dialogues in Portuguese based on *folhetos de cordel* or literal libretto translations “with added comic characters (*graciosos*) and a few musical numbers; locally composed or in pasticcio assemblage.”⁵ Toward the end of the eighteenth century, this tradition began to seem increasingly suspect to the country’s elite, who were becoming more familiar with European cultural practices through their travels: “The *graciosos* and their worn out antics were also becoming out of fashion.”⁶ With the arrival of the Portuguese court in Rio de Janeiro, ‘proper Italian opera’ – a sung-through opera performed entirely in Italian – began to gain ground, and local opera singers were gradually replaced by international singers. “When Maria Teresa Fasciotti (1801–1852) and Mariano Pablo Rosquellas (1784–1859) arrived in Brazil, respectively in 1816 and 1818, Italian opera was already well-established.”⁷ – Both were singers in the premiere of *Don Giovanni* on 20 September 1821.

FERNANDO SANTOS BERÇOT analyses newspaper coverage of opera performances in Rio de Janeiro up to the end of Emperor Pedro I’s reign in his article “Italian Opera and the Birth of Theatre Criticism in Rio de Janeiro (1817–1831).” With a modified focus, this paper is a brilliant continuation of the previous contribution. The establishment of a press in Brazil only took place after the arrival of the Portuguese court in Rio de Janeiro, now the new capital; the first newspaper, the *Gazeta do Rio de Janeiro*, appeared in 1808, while the first daily newspaper did not appear until 1821: the *Diário do Rio de Janeiro* – this is also the newspaper which reported on the planned performance of *Don Giovanni* in the same year. The newspapers are thus an essential, and in many cases the only source for reconstructing the repertoire.

Until “the early 1820s the attention of the newspapers mainly covered celebratory performances associated with civic events and royal festivities. This link between theatre and political power remained evident throughout Pedro I’s reign (1822–1831). However, from mid-1826 onwards, with the reform of the Imperial Theatre, the arrival of new artists and the regularisation of performances, interest in theatre as a source of delight and as an object of aesthetic concern and taste preferences seems to have gained greater prominence in Rio de Janeiro.”⁸ The emergence of theatre criticism also led to the formation of ‘theatrical parties’.

5 Ibidem, p. 17.

6 Ibidem, p. 18.

7 Ibidem, p. 22.

8 FERNANDO SANTOS BERÇOT: “Italian Opera and the Birth of Theatre Criticism in Rio de Janeiro (1817–1831)”, in this publication, pp. 29–51, here p. 45.

Berçot also examines the political role of operas performed on specific festive occasions, such as two operas staged in 1822 following the Declaration of Independence: *La caccia di Enrico IV* composed by Vincenzo Pucitta (1778–1861; premiered in London 1809), and *Elisabetta, regina d’Inghilterra*, by Gioachino Rossini (1792–1868; premiered in Naples 1815): “the gala performances and the association between opera and the celebration of imperial power helped to shape the audience as an organic entity whose identity was linked to the court and conformed to its practices. Operas and ballets effectively fulfilled a well-defined social and political function in Rio de Janeiro as privileged vehicles of a monarchic pedagogy that were compatible with the ideals of independence.”⁹

II. LEOPOLDINA AND PEDRO: ARTS, MUSIC, THEATRE AND POLITICS

The first contribution by KÄTHE SPRINGER-DISSMANN examines the early life of Archduchess Leopoldine in Vienna: “Archduchess Leopoldine of Austria, First Empress of Brazil 1797–1826): Her Childhood and Youth at the Court of Vienna.” The author describes the multifaceted context of the Archduchess’s education: in particular, her studies in the fields of natural history, botany, and mineralogy, as well as music. In these subjects, she was taught by the most eminent scholars and musicians in Vienna. Käthe Springer also analyses Leopoldina’s education in the context of the great significance that scientific collections of various kinds held in the history of the Habsburg dynasty.

In the context of the negotiations for the marriage between Leopoldina and Pedro, plans were also drawn up – and ultimately carried out – for an expedition to Brazil featuring prominent scientists in the fields of botany, mineralogy, and zoology, one of the most significant Brazilian expeditions of the nineteenth century. The article also examines, from a critical perspective, the sometimes ambivalent projection of the tropical and the exotic in the European context. Of particular interest is the analysis of an extraordinary manuscript titled *Mes Résolutions*, written in 1817 before Leopoldina’s departure for the New World. This text contains principles written in the first person, which the princess took with her to the New World as a guide for her life: governed by strict religious precepts and self-imposed rules, with strict instructions for leading a modest life and a personal commitment to donate the savings from a life of luxury to the poor or to institutions in need.

⁹ Ibidem.

The following contribution by PAULO DE ASSUNÇÃO, “Empress Maria Leopoldina: Political Action and the Art of Reigning”, examines Leopoldina’s political role between the Porto Revolution (1820) and the proclamation of Brazilian independence (1822). This is based on an analysis of Leopoldina’s correspondence with various individuals: with her father in Vienna, with her aunt, Maria Amalia of Naples and Sicily, her sister Maria Luisa, with Georg Anton von Schaffer, a merchant and soldier who enjoyed the friendship of the Austrian princess, and with her husband in August 1822. It is a highly effective narrative structure that makes Leopoldina’s development – particularly her ambivalence – comprehensible: how, despite her political differences with her husband regarding new political ideas, she became an active advocate for independence, and how, despite her longing to return to Europe, she made the conscious decision to remain in Brazil.

It was not uncommon for Europeans to attribute a certain lack of education to the heir to the throne, Pedro, and later Emperor Pedro I, particularly in comparison to the highly educated Leopoldina. Such an assessment must be countered by the fact that Pedro’s education differed from Leopoldina’s, and that he was familiar with liberal political literature to an extent that Leopoldina was not. And in the field that united them both – music – he was also creatively active. The contribution by ROSANA LANZELOTTE examines Pedro’s compositional work: “The Musical Legacy of Pedro I of Brazil.” According to Lanzelotte’s account, his oeuvre comprises 16 compositions, in addition to the well-known “political” compositions *Hymno Constitucional* or *Hymno à Carta* (1821) and *Hymno Imperial e Constitucional*, later *Hino da Independência* (1824): six waltzes (his first compositions), three masses, and other church music, an overture, and two marches.

The final contribution to this chapter by JULIO BANDEIRA is defined as an exhibition: “Opera of Independence: An ‘Exhibition’ in Two Acts.” During his lecture in Vienna in September 2022, the art historian delivered an excellent presentation focusing on Thomas Ender’s sketchbook. Here, in this contribution, he chooses a different dramaturgy: a two-act structure featuring images, quotations from contemporary sources, and explanatory texts. The first act focuses on the Kingdom of Brazil, and concludes with the royal court’s return to Lisbon. The second act addresses the turbulent period that followed, leading up to Pedro’s coronation as Emperor of Brazil. Theatre plays an eminently important role in this as a venue for public performances, just as Bandeira’s work reveals the theatricality of political staging. In contrast to the grand political spectacles, the final images suggest that Brazil at that time was still a society of slaveholders.

III. SIGISMUND NEUKOMM IN BRAZIL

Sigismund Neukomm, who lived and composed in Brazil from 1816 to 1821, serves as an important link between Haydn and Mozart, connecting Vienna to Rio de Janeiro. The composer arrived there via French diplomatic channels in 1816. HERBERT LINDSBERGER explores Neukomm's extensive travels in the first article of this chapter: "Sigismund Neukomm on Tour': Warm-Hearted, Curious, World Traveler." The author is also a practicing musician and has, through a wide range of activities, championed the cause of the composer, who was born in Salzburg. In his article, he describes Neukomm's journey from Salzburg to Vienna, where he became both a student and a colleague of Joseph Haydn; his journey to Russia, where he also conducted *Don Giovanni*; his journey to France, with a brief return to Vienna during the Congress of Vienna; his trip to Brazil; and Neukomm's efforts to establish a Mozart monument in Salzburg.

The following article by OTTO BIBA: "Sigismund Neukomm: Ein österreichischer Komponist am brasilianischen Hof in Rio de Janeiro" is not based on a lecture from the 2022 conference – it was published twenty years earlier in *Musikblätter der Wiener Philharmoniker*. Otto Biba served for decades as director of the Archive of the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Wien*, one of Vienna's most important music collections. In the 1990s, the archive acquired a highly significant letter from Neukomm in Brazil to the Vienna Court Kapellmeister Joseph Eybler (1765–1846), written on 11. November 1817, in which Neukomm writes about his first encounter with Leopoldina as well as about musical life in Rio de Janeiro. This important document is reproduced in its entirety in this article and serves as the basis for a study of Neukomm's stay in Rio de Janeiro.

As part of the aforementioned concert in September 2021, RICARDO BERNARDES conducted Neukomm's *Missa Sancti Johannis*, written in Paris for Rio de Janeiro. There is no record whatsoever that this work had ever been performed before in the form in which it was composed. In this respect, it is highly likely that this musical event in September 2021 constituted a world premiere that was more than two hundred years overdue. Bernardes has written about the history of this composition in the accompanying concert booklet, which is now also available in bookstores: "The *Missa* sub titulo S.^{ti} Johannis by Sigismund Neukomm in the Context of the Royal Chapel of Rio de Janeiro in 1816."¹⁰ In his contribution to this volume, Bernardes examines the compositional process during Neukomm's journey from France (via Lisbon) to Rio de Janeiro between March and June 1816: "Sigismund von Neukomm and the Musical Construction of the Voyage to Brazil (1816): a Musically Documented Atlantic-crossing."

10 EISENDLE, PERNERSTORFER, and SUNER: *Sigismund Neukomm in Brazil*, pp 19–24.

IV. DON JUAN PERFORMANCES IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY EUROPE

All three contributions in this chapter focus on Naples as a significant European cultural centre. The chapter opens with a contribution by FRANCESCO COTTICELLI: “Don Juan towards the Contemporary World: Some Reflections on a Changing Plot.” Starting with a statement by Marvin Carlson, according to which the establishment of theatre history as a field of study in the nineteenth century shifted the focus to the changes and developments in the object of study over time, he explores whether the substantial changes noted by scholars really found immediate resonance after their debut. “How were they actually received? Did they have a visible impact on the season plans of major venues?” He concentrates on the two plays available on the Neapolitan stage in the early nineteenth century: Michele Abri’s version, based on seventeenth-century literary sources, and Da Ponte’s and Mozart’s opera, which premiered in Naples in 1812.

The performances of Da Ponte’s and Mozart’s opera in Naples during the first third of the nineteenth century and its ambivalent reception are the subject of the following article by PAOLOGIOVANNI MAIONE: “Mozart tradito: le versioni ottocentesche del *Don Giovanni* a Napoli.” Ten years before the premiere in Rio de Janeiro, the first productions took place in Italy: in Rome in 1811, and in Naples in September 1812 at the Teatro del Fondo, during the reign of Joachim Murat (1767–1815). This was the second production of a Mozart opera in Naples, following *La clemenza di Tito* at the Teatro San Carlo in 1809 (where, however, very little of Mozart’s original music was heard).

Further performances at the Teatro del Fondo followed in 1813, 1816, and 1827, as well as in 1834 at the Teatro San Carlo. This article analyses the surviving libretti from the performances of 1812, 1816, and 1834 and the cuts and modifications they contain. Among these, as later in Rio de Janeiro, is the transformation of the stage into a scene of hell at the end of the drama. Among the notorious modifications is the replacement of “Viva la libertà” with “Viva la società” in the 1812 and 1816 libretti, and with “Viva l’ilarità!” in the 1834 libretto.

The contribution by MARIA VENUSO discusses a Neapolitan ballet production that took place at the Teatro San Carlo in Naples one year before the premiere of *Don Giovanni* in Rio de Janeiro: “*Don Giovanni Tenorio* by Louis Henry at the San Carlo in Naples (1820).” At that time, there was already a long tradition of Don Juan ballets, which had been inaugurated by Gasparo Angiolini’s and Christoph Willibald Gluck’s ballet pantomime *Le festin de pierre* (premiered at the Burgtheater in Vienna in 1761) – one of the central reform works in eighteenth-century ballet history. At that time, Naples was an important hub in a ballet network that encompassed Paris, Milan, Vienna, London, Copenhagen, and Stockholm.

The five-act *Don Juan* ballet by Louis Henry (1784–1836) draws directly on Mozart’s opera and includes all of its characters: Don Giovanni, Leporello, Donna Anna, and Ottavio (here called the Duke), Masetto, and Zerlina – as well as other peasant girls courted by Don Giovanni, a girl loved against her will by a mentor, and a high-ranking political official. “La musica della pantomima in parte è di MOZARD [sic], ed in parte del Sig. Conte di Gallenberg. Tutt’i pezzi ballabili sono del Sig. Maestro Carlini, come anche i pezzi dall’arrivo della statua del commendatore sino al termine del ballo.”¹¹

V. DA PONTE’S AND MOZART’S *DON GIOVANNI* IN BRAZIL, ARGENTINA, AND MEXICO

In the first contribution of the final chapter by ROSANA DE MORAES MARRECO ORSINI BRESCIA examines the performance history of *Don Giovanni* up to the twentieth century: “*Don Giovanni* and Rio de Janeiro: The Fate of Mozart’s Masterpiece in the Brazilian Capital throughout the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries.” Mozart’s opera was not the first version of *Don Juan* to be performed in Brazil – according to the author, the first evidence of *Don Juan* plays in Brazil dates back to 1776 (Rio de Janeiro) and 1794 (Porto Alegre). However, in both cases, it is impossible to identify which version of *Don Juan* was performed – the author assumes, at least, that it was an operatic variant of the topic. Regarding the first performance of *Don Giovanni* in Rio de Janeiro in 1821, it is confirmed once again that sources are very scarce. “It is quite interesting that the record of the 1821 performance was later totally erased from the collective memory of the city, even though the quality of this ‘unknown’ opera seemed to haunt the conscience of the most cultivated minds of Rio de Janeiro.”¹²

The author deals extensively with the next performance of *Don Giovanni* in 1880: “When the opera was finally produced in July of that year, it did not achieve the expected success, in fact it was booed during the third performance. The *Revista Musical* claimed that the impresario had been pressured into staging the opera and that he was not fully convinced. The opera was coldly received, and the magazine [*Revista Musical*] published the opinion that ‘the abstract cult for beauty is very expensive under the tropics.’”¹³ The author describes the subsequent ambivalent reception of *Don Giovanni*, culminating in its integration into the operatic repertoire. “Despite its

11 MARIA VENUSO: “*Don Giovanni Tenorio* by Louis Henry at the San Carlo in Naples (1820)”, in this publication, pp. 233–252, here p. 243.

12 ROSANA DE MORAES MARRECO ORSINI BRESCIA: “*Don Giovanni* and Rio de Janeiro: The Fate of Mozart’s Masterpiece in the Brazilian Capital throughout the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries”, in this publication, pp. 255–270, here p. 264.

13 Ibidem.

troubled history in Rio de Janeiro, no other opera in the entire repertoire has been defended or criticized with such passion for as many years as *Don Giovanni*.¹⁴

The next contribution, by REINHARD EISENDLE and HANS ERNST WEIDINGER, attempts a further exploration of the largely unknown aspects of the Brazilian premiere: “*Don Giovanni* in Rio de Janeiro, 1821: Touching a White Map.” It seeks to illuminate this performance within the context of the history of the Don Juan theme. As a previously unused document for the Brazilian premiere, the libretto of the 1827 Buenos Aires premiere is consulted. This premiere was managed by Pablo Rosquellas, who, as in Rio de Janeiro in 1821, sang the title role. With some caution, this allows for the identification of clues regarding the 1821 Rio de Janeiro performance of *Don Giovanni*, and thus also facilitates a better understanding of several passages in contemporary newspaper reports. A comparison of this text with the libretto that formed the basis of the 1826 New York premiere of *Don Giovanni* follows, which leads into the performance practice of the 1820s in Paris and London.

The study explores which of the Don Juan operas performed in Europe might have already found their way to Brazil in the eighteenth century. Regarding the first known performance in Rio de Janeiro in 1776, it seems unlikely that a European opera formed the basis for this early Brazilian production. The developments the Don Juan theme underwent up to the 1820s are also examined. An epilogue leads back to the time of the Prague premiere and to Archduchess Maria Teresa, niece of Emperor Joseph II and daughter of the future Emperor Leopold II, for whose bridal journey to Dresden *Don Giovanni* was originally intended, and her role in previously little-known marriage plans with the then Prince João, later King João VI.

The first performance of *Don Giovanni* in Argentina in 1827, as well as the underlying libretto in the form of a Spanish translation into prose, forms the focus of the article by MAGNUS TESSING SCHNEIDER: “Mozart americanizado: The Premiere of *Don Giovanni* in Buenos Aires in 1827.” He begins by pointing out that the performers in the opera production of that time could not have had access to the stage directions as conceived by Da Ponte in the libretti of 1787 and 1788, and assumes that the producers of the performance only had access to the score as first published by Breitkopf & Härtel in 1801. According to the author, “the Buenos Aires libretto offers a unique insight into the performance and reception of *Don Giovanni* in the Americas, revealing both how German performance traditions – as encapsulated in the Breitkopf & Härtel score – were carried across the Atlantic, and how Mozart’s opera, nevertheless, was made to reflect the new cultural context in which it was performed.”¹⁵

14 Ibidem, p. 268.

15 MAGNUS TESSING SCHNEIDER: “Mozart *americanizado*: The Premiere of *Don Giovanni* in Buenos Aires in 1827”, in this publication, pp. 329–352, here p. 332.

The author analyses the manifold, sometimes subtle, modifications of the Spanish translation of the libretto, both with regard to the text of the dialogues and the new stage directions: Accordingly, Don Giovanni became a more violent and menacing figure, the comedic aspects were reduced, moral ambiguities were removed and the language was chastened, which was “probably meant to anticipate objections from those who saw theatre as a potential threat to public morality.”¹⁶ The author devotes a complex analysis to the word *burlar*/*burlare*, which seems to connect Da Ponte’s work and the Spanish *El Burlador de Sevilla* – however, the word “*burlar*” has a different meaning in Spanish than in Italian or in Da Ponte’s version: “the Argentinian translator manipulates the wording to make the ‘punished rake’ more like the ‘deceiver of Seville.’”¹⁷

In the final contribution, FRANCESCO MILELLA discusses the first performance of *Don Giovanni* in Mexico, which took place on 23 June 1828, about a year after the Argentinian premiere: “Opera Divos after Colonialism: *Don Giovanni* in Mexico City.” Among the opera stars was the impresario, opera singer, and composer Manuel Garcia, who had come to New York with an opera troupe in 1825 and had performed Da Ponte and Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* there for the first time in May of the following year – with the participation of Lorenzo da Ponte, who had emigrated to the United States in 1805. Da Ponte oversaw the printing of the Italian libretto – accompanied by an English translation undertaken by his son Lorenzo Luigi (1804–1840). That same year, Garcia travelled to Mexico City, where, as in New York, Rio de Janeiro, and Buenos Aires, the repertoire was largely dominated by Rossini’s operas.

For his analysis of this premiere of *Don Giovanni*, Milella employs an approach that differs significantly from the previous article: “My primary concern is not with a historical reconstruction of the performance as it might have been staged on 23 June 1828, nor with providing new information about its libretto, the score used by García, or the singers he chose for the performance: the lack of primary sources makes such work hard to realise, although not entirely impossible. My analysis takes, instead, a different direction: it focuses on the discourses generated by Mozart’s opera in the context of Mexico City. Such an approach, however, does not simply aim to investigate the reception of this opera. It rather seeks to explore *Don Giovanni* through all the manifestations of the opera in the fluid exchange of Mexico City and its elites. This perspective aims to flesh out specific and original meanings that were produced at a social and political level around *Don Giovanni* in postcolonial Mexico City.”¹⁸

16 Ibidem, p. 345.

17 Ibidem, p. 346.

18 FRANCESCO MILELLA: “Opera Divos after Colonialism: *Don Giovanni* in Mexico City”, in this publication, pp. 353–377, here p. 356.

We are delighted that the Brazilian and Portuguese diplomatic services, along with the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, showed such keen interest in our events. Special thanks are due to the Brazilian Embassy in Austria for its role as a partner in the Rio Conference, particularly to the Ambassadors José Antônio Marcondes de Carvalho, Nelson Antonio Tabajara de Oliveira, and Eduardo Paes Saboia, and the Attaché Tomás Seferin. Our thanks also go to the Portuguese Ambassadors António de Almeida Ribeiro, Miguel de Almeida e Sousa, and Jorge Silva Lopes, and to the staff of the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including Ambassador Teresa Indjein and Dr David Schriff, for participating in the 2021 concert and 2022 conference, and for contributing forewords to the volume.

We would also like to thank our other partners: Iskrena Yordanova and Massimo Mazzeo (Divino Sospiro – Centro de Estudos Musicais Setecentistas de Portugal), Stefan David Hummel (Mozarteum University Salzburg), Rosana Lancelotte (Musica Brasilis). We would also like to thank all the authors of this volume once again for their inspiring and intensive collaboration throughout the editorial process. Further thanks go to Inge Jasch for her profound and excellent proofreading, and for compiling the comprehensive index. Thanks also go to Gabriel Fischer for the layout of this volume.

Our thanks also go to the Weidinger family for their generous, long-standing support of the Rio Project: Mrs Erna Weidinger, Commercial Counsellor, and her son Hans Ernst – Giovanni – Weidinger, founder of the Don Juan Archiv Wien. We are also grateful to Marcel L. Molnár for supporting the continuation of the Don Juan Archiv's activities and our publishing efforts. As previously mentioned, Hans Ernst Weidinger, who had a particular fondness for Brazil and visited the country several times, provided the impetus for both the concert and the conference. This volume is dedicated to him.

I

OPERA IN THE TROPICS

BETWEEN NATURAL AND PROPER: REFASHIONING OPERA IN BRAZIL (C.1750–1822)

ROGÉRIO BUDASZ (RIVERSIDE/CA)

In the conclusion of his 1990 article on the performances of Spanish *comedias* in Brazil during the early 1700s, the Romanist Dietrich Briesemeister briefly pondered about the actors who might have been involved in those productions:

But who were the actors? Nothing is known about them, but it is unlikely that they were Portuguese, because in that case they would have performed the comedias in translation into their mother tongue for their own and the public's convenience.¹

There is no question that actors and audiences in colonial Brazil would have found it more natural to perform and easier to understand a theatrical production in Portuguese than in any foreign language. However, by the time these works by Lope de Vega (1562–1635), Calderón (1600–1681), Agustín Moreto (1618–1669), and others were being produced, Spanish comedias had been known and staged in Portuguese America for about a century. Some plays were even written in Spanish language by Brazilian poets.² From the late 1500s through to the the end of the seventeenth century, the Spanish *comedia* was the most appropriate spectacle to convey brightness to solemn and festive events across the Portuguese colonial empire. In Brazil, comedias were performed at civic and religious festivals, christenings, and weddings of the local elite, and in the academic environment of Jesuit colleges. They were also performed whenever a royal edict summoned the colonial subjects to celebrate a royal birth, wedding, or acclamation. In these cases, they were featured along with a *Te Deum*, horse tournaments, bullfights, and street illumination. Within this context,

-
- 1 DIETRICH BRIESEMEISTER: “Comedias españolas del Siglo de Oro en el Brasil colonial”, in: *Bulletin Hispanique* 92/1 (1990), pp. 101–109, here p. 108. Also published as “Representaciones de comedias españolas en el Brasil colonial”, in: *Comedias y comediantes: Estudios sobre el teatro clásico español*, ed. MANUEL V. DIAGO and TERESA FERRER. Valencia: Universitat de València, 1991, pp. 433–438. I was not able to find any later research by Briesemeister on the subject. All translations are mine.
- 2 *Patios de comedias* existed in Lisbon since the late sixteenth century and Portuguese playwrights were writing Spanish *comedias* even before the Iberian unification in 1580. In the colony, some devotional plays in Spanish were written and produced by José de Anchieta (1534–1597) and comedias following the Siglo de Oro conventions were written by Manuel Botelho de Oliveira (1636–1711), from Bahia (printed 1683 and 1705), and Francisco Sales Silva (born in 1712) and Antonio Splanger Aranha (1700s, sometimes spelled Spangler), from Pernambuco (staged in 1756).

and considering the prevalent bilingualism of local poets, intellectuals, and theater aficionados, staging a comedia in a Portuguese translation could be perceived as patronising, or even offensive. Furthermore, there is no evidence that such translations existed before 1750.

Although Briesemeister admitted that these plays were most likely performed in Spanish, he placed great importance on the need for them to be performed by native speakers. He correctly argued that the performances of Spanish comedias in various locations across the colony – from the coastal areas of Pernambuco and Bahia to the backlands of Minas Gerais – were not isolated cases, but ‘a constitutive element in the process of theatrical life in colonial society’.³ While he claimed that the local population lacked the means and the training to produce proper spectacles (because of the language factor), he did acknowledge some agency on the part of the local elite, suggesting that they were capable of importing entire companies from the other side of the Atlantic. In an attempt to strengthen this argument, he compared this hypothetical scenario with events that would unfold decades after Brazil gained independence:

They were probably members of traveling Spanish companies that performed in *tournée* thus anticipating the very frequent presence of European artists in the theaters and opera houses of South America from the second half of the last century. It is not known how they could have entered Brazil given all the prohibitive control (by official invitation and offering a novel program?) where they came from (passing through Lisbon?) and where they were heading to? (to other Spanish territories in the subcontinent?) Only they would be able to satisfy a demand in colonial Brazil to which the Portuguese themselves apparently did not yet know how to respond.⁴

In her groundbreaking work on theater in New Spain, Maya Ramos Smith examined the circulation of actors, singers, and musicians between Spain and parts of Spanish America during the seventeenth century.⁵ However, there is no evidence that Portuguese America was part of this network. Although Spanish actors performed in Lisbon in the early 1700s, there are no records of them reaching the ports of Recife and Salvador at that time, much less venturing through the mining regions of Minas Gerais. This would have required weeks of additional traveling and several permits, as these inland areas were closed to foreigners.

3 BRIESEMEISTER: “Comedias españolas”, p. 107.

4 Ibidem, p. 108.

5 MAYA RAMOS SMITH: *Actores y compañías en la Nueva España: siglos XVI y XVII*. Mexico City: Conaculta, 2011.

Briesemeister's argumentation presents a double bind. Brazilian actors could not *properly* represent Spanish comedias as they were not native speakers. Furthermore, they could not represent them *naturally*, in Portuguese, as there were no available translations. The Romanist even suggested investigating the 'prolonged activity in colonial Brazil' of Spanish companies as 'a curious phenomenon of theatrical and cultural sociology'.⁶ Nevertheless, two narratives by João de Brito e Lima (1671–1747), which describe the comedias represented in Bahia in 1717 and 1728, made the nationality of the actors a matter of local pride:

Com tal primor a língua desmentiam
As figuras, que ali representavam,
“Que aos mesmos Castelhanos excediam
No idioma espanhol, em que falavam”.⁷

★ ★ ★

Em nada aos Castelhanos imitaram
Porque em tudo parece os excederam,
Maior neles ficando sendo a míngua,
Vencendo a língua estranha a própria língua.⁸

(With such precision unraveled the language
the actors who were representing
that they surpassed the Castilians
In the Spanish language, in which they spoke.

★ ★ ★

Nothing did they imitate from the Castilians
Because it seems they exceeded them on everything
And their insufficiency become even greater
As the foreign tongue conquered their language.)

It is still open for debate whether they performed entirely in literary Spanish or delivered some passages in Portuguese, perhaps including the comic, semi-improvised interventions of the *graciosos*, but the poet made it clear that the actors were not Castilians.

6 BRIESEMEISTER: “Comedias españolas”, p. 108.

7 JOÃO DE BRITO E LIMA: *Applausos Natalícios*. Lisbon: Miguel Manescal, 1718, pp. 100–101.

8 JOÃO DE BRITO E LIMA: “Poema Festivo”, in: *Coleção de Várias poesias feitas por diferentes engenhos*, ed. JAYME DE LA TÉ Y SAGAU. Lisbon: Oficina da Música, 1729, pp. 101–143, here p. 140.

Research by Manuel Carlos de Brito, recently revisited by Giuseppina Raggi, has revealed that Portuguese actors performed Spanish musical plays in Lisbon around this time.⁹ As Raggi explains, letters by the Portuguese diplomat Giuseppe Zignoni (d.1724) mention the representation of *Fabula de Acis y Galatea* in 1711, celebrating the nameday of Dom João V. In this performance, three ladies of the court, all Portuguese, delivered recitatives and dialogues in Spanish and sang other musical numbers in ‘Portuguese style’. Likewise, the libretto of the comedia *El Poder de la Armonía*, bears the names of six ladies of the court, in addition to Princess Francisca. Some sang, while others recited their parts, all in Spanish. It is quite telling that all these performances took place at a time when there was no shortage of Spanish actors in Portugal. Clearly, they were not the only ones able to satisfy that demand. Convenience also does not seem to have played a significant role in the decision to perform these plays in their original language.

It was only around the middle of that century that a small number of Spanish comedia translations started to appear in the form of chapbooks, within the context of the so-called *Teatro de cordel*.¹⁰ These translations were not only accepted in specific contexts, but soon became the natural way to perform them outside of the court theaters.

These developments invite us to take a broader view of the circulation of European musico-dramatic genres within the colonial continuum. Using Briesemeister’s words, we should consider the conditions that could satisfy the demand for such spectacles. In the following pages, we will examine how shifting expectations and perceptions of what is proper and natural have influenced the selection and organic

9 These were *Fabula de Acis y Galatea* (1711, Lisbon, Biblioteca Nacional, L. 1324//4 A), *Fabula de Alfeo y Aretusa* (1712, Lisbon, Biblioteca Nacional, L. 1324//5 A and L. 18436//6 P), and *Comedia El Poder de la Armonía* (1713, <https://books.google.at/books?id=IJodb6DnXYgC>). Cf. LUIS CALISTO DE ACOSTA Y FARIA and JAYME DE LA TE Y SAGAU: *Fabula de Alfeo y Aretusa fiesta harmoniosa con toda la variedad de instrumentos musicos*. Lisbon: Manescal, 1712; *La Comedia El Poder de la Armonía fiesta de zarzuela*. Lisbon: Deslandes, 1713; MANUEL CARLOS DE BRITO: *Opera in Portugal in the Eighteenth Century*. Cambridge: CUP, 1989, pp. 3–4; GIUSEPPINA RAGGI: “O Espaço teatral na corte de D. João V e o papel da rainha Maria Ana de Áustria na promoção da ópera em Portugal”, in: *Serenata and Festa Teatrale in 18th Century Europe*, ed. ISKRENA YORDANOVA and PAOLOGIOVANNI MAIONE. Vienna: Hollitzer Verlag, 2018, pp. 19–57, here pp. 27–28.

10 Forjaz de Sampaio lists translations of CALDERÓN: *Afectos de odio y amor* (1783), *Alcaide de si mesmo*, and *O herói lusitano* (1794 imitation of *El príncipe constante*); LOPE DE VEGA: *Enganar para reinar* (1791); BANCES CANDAMO: *Escravo em grilhões de ouro* (1782); JUAN DE MATOS FRAGOSO: *O bruto de Babilónia* (1785, by Fragoso, Moreto, and Cáncer), *Os dous prodígios de Roma* (1787), *O sábio em seu retiro* (1787), and *O melhor par entre os doze*, *Reinaldos de Montalvão* (1783); CRISTÓBAL DE MONROY Y SILVA: *Destruição de Tróia* (1790); MIRA DE AMESCUA: *Capitão Belisário* (1777); RODRIGO HERRERA: *O rei justo vem do céu* (1752); VILLAVICIOSA Y AVELLANEDA: *Só o piedoso é meu filho* (1779); AGUSTÍN MORETO: *Desdém contra desdém* (1791); ANTONIO DE SOLÍS Y RIBADENEYRA: *Amar à moda* (1776 translation of *Amar al uso*). Cf. ALBINO FORJAZ DE SAMPAIO: *Teatro de Cordel – Subsídios para a História do Teatro Português* (Catálogo da colecção do autor). Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional, 1920.

adaptation of metropolitan frameworks and formulas, and how these concepts have been used to validate or dismiss the legitimacy of peripheral theatrical practices.

PHILIP GLASS MEETS ANTONIO JOSÉ DA SILVA

In 2013, when a critic of the *Los Angeles Times* asked Philip Glass (b.1937) if he and Robert Wilson (1941–2025) had intended to create an opera when they started working on *Einstein on the Beach*, Glass replied:

Absolutely no. Bob called *Einstein* an opera. He liked stirring up people. But we wanted to do a proscenium piece, and we needed an orchestra pit. We needed fly space. We needed people who could sing. We needed people who could dance. You could call it anything you want to, but the only place we could do it was in an opera house. That's where the stuff was.¹¹

In the same interview, Glass explained that another reason for calling it an opera was that, back in 1975, “the New York musicians’ union, operated on the dictum that operas play in opera houses. Call it something different and the union could shut down the show.”¹² On the one hand, there was the issue of convenience. On the other hand, there were the existing work regulations in terms of working hours, pay, and performance schedules. Not calling *Einstein* an opera would have required new negotiations, maybe not as favorable for the musicians and production staff.

In 1720s Lisbon, extra-musical factors such as available venues and forces, as well as the need to dodge legislation, played a role in determining what type of musical play could be called “opera”. In 1727, a decree issued by the Hospital de Todos os Santos ordered the suspension of all commercial theatrical performances, which, at that time, meant Spanish *comedias* at the Pátio das Arcas. The management of this venue was a source of income for the Santa Casa de Misericórdia, but at some point conservative sectors of society deemed it incompatible with the institution’s noble goals. One possibility of circumventing this prohibition was only explored ten years later, as explained by the administration of the Santa Casa:

Given that not too long ago another type of operas had been introduced to this court, which, although not produced with living figures, but with artificial ones, were truly *comedias* and operas, made in the same style as those and with music, being publicly represented in houses that were rented for this

11 MARK SWED: “Philip Glass’ *Einstein* Is Opera because ‘That’s Where the Stuff Was’”, in: *Los Angeles Times*, 5 October 2013.

12 Ibidem.