

# The Music Library of Francesco Viani (1809-1877): The Reconstruction of a Gift to the Paganini Conservatory of Genoa.

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## **The Music Library of Francesco Viani (1809–1877): The Reconstruction of a Gift to the “Paganini” Conservatory of Genoa**

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### Abstract

English Abstract:

On 13 June 1907 the music library of Francesco Viani was donated to the Liceo Musicale of Genoa, today the “Paganini” Conservatory, by his son Felice. Francesco Viani was vice-mayor and member of the theatre commission of the Municipality of Genoa from 1850; in this capacity he was personally involved in the artistic program of the theatres of the Municipality of Genoa. In addition, he was a *dilettante* pianist and composer.

The music collection of Francesco Viani consists of at least 250 printed music editions from the end of the eighteenth century to the first part of the nineteenth, and an equal number of music manuscripts, bound together in large volumes.

In the collection, one finds several excerpts from printed music editions of the early nineteenth century, including first editions of Bellini, Donizetti, Mercadante, Pacini, Verdi, Rossini, Meyerbeer, and also Mozart, for example the *Fantasia and Sonata KV. 475 and 457* and the *Three Sonatas for the Harpsichord or Piano Forte with an Accompaniment for Violin*, KV. 378–380, published in London by Longman and Broderip in 1790 [RISM M6825 and M6521], as well as other rare piano editions.

The music manuscripts deserve even more attention, due to the collecting passion of Viani. The collection reflects the choices of the owner, with his interest in Beethoven, Haydn, Cherubini, Rossini, and Italian opera composers as well; it provides evidence of the dissemination of musical works by important composers in the mid-nineteenth century in an Italian provincial town such as Genoa.

#### French Abstract:

Le 13 juin 1907, la collection de la bibliothèque de Francesco Viani a été donnée par son fils Felice, au Liceo Musicale de Gênes, aujourd'hui Conservatoire Paganini. Francesco Viani fut conseiller municipal et membre du comité du théâtre de Gênes. À ce titre, il fut personnellement investi dans la programmation artistique du théâtre, en plus d'être pianiste et compositeur dilettante.

La collection de Francesco Viani comprend au moins 250 partitions de musique imprimée datant de la fin du 18<sup>e</sup> siècle au début du 19<sup>e</sup>, ainsi qu'un nombre équivalent de manuscrits, reliés au sein de quelques importants volumes.

On peut y trouver plusieurs extraits d'éditions de musique imprimée du début du 19<sup>e</sup> siècle, dont des éditions de Bellini, Donizetti, Mercadante, Pacini, Verdi, Rossini, Meyerbeer, mais aussi Mozart. Par ex: *Fantasia et Sonata KV. 475*, *Trois sonates pour clavecin ou Piano Forte avec accompagnement pour violon*, KV. 378–380, publiés à Londres par Longman et Broderip en 1790 [RISM M6825 et M6521], ainsi que d'autres éditions rares de pièces pour piano.

Les manuscrits méritent d'autant plus d'attention que Viani était un ardent collectionneur. La collection reflète les choix de son acquéreur, à savoir le fruit de son intérêt aigu pour Beethoven, Haydn, Cherubini, Rossini ainsi que des compositeurs d'opéras italiens. Cette collection montre comment les œuvres de compositeurs du milieu du 19<sup>e</sup> siècle se sont disséminées dans une ville de province telle que Gênes.

#### German Abstract:

Am 13. Juni 1907 hat Felice, der Sohn von Francesco Viani, dem *Liceo Musicale* in Genua (dem heutigen Paganini-Konservatorium) die Bibliothek seines Vaters als Schenkung übergeben. Francesco Viani war seit 1850 stellvertretender Bürgermeister und Mitglied der Theaterkommission der Stadt Genua. In seiner Funktion war er persönlich an der künstlerischen Gestaltung der Theaterprogramme beteiligt. Außerdem war er Amateurpianist und -komponist.

Francesco Vianis Musiksammlung umfasst mehr als 250 Notenausgaben aus der Zeit vom Ende des 18. bis ins 19. Jahrhundert, sowie eine etwa gleiche Anzahl von Musikhandschriften, die in umfangreiche Bände zusammengebunden wurden.

In der Sammlung finden sich neben anderen seltenen Klavierausgaben diverse Auszüge aus gedruckten Editionen des frühen 19. Jahrhunderts, inklusive Erstausgaben von Bellini, Donizetti, Mercadante, Pacini, Verdi, Rossini, Meyerbeer und auch Mozart (*Fantasia KV475* und *Sonate KV457* sowie die drei *Sonaten für Violine*

und Klavier KV 378 – 380, veröffentlicht bei Longman und Broderip in London im Jahr 1790 [RISM M6825 and M6521]).

Die Musikhandschriften verdienen auf Grund von Vianis Sammelleidenschaft ebenfalls besondere Aufmerksamkeit. Die Sammlung spiegelt insbesondere sein Interesse an Beethoven, Haydn, Cherubini, Rossini und italienischen Opernkomponisten wieder. Sie belegt die Verbreitung der Werke wichtiger Komponisten zur Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts in Städten der italienischen Provinz wie Genua.

# THE MUSIC LIBRARY OF FRANCESCO VIANI (1809–1877): THE RECONSTRUCTION OF A GIFT TO THE “PAGANINI” CONSERVATORY OF GENOA

Carmela Bongiovanni

## Introduction

In his historical reconstruction of the music library of the Conservatory “Nicolò Paganini” in Genoa<sup>1</sup>, Salvatore Pintacuda states that on 13 June 1907 the music collection belonging to Francesco Viani was given by his son Felice to the Municipal Music School (today the “Paganini” Conservatory) of Genoa. With the exception of a few notes in his introduction, Pintacuda almost entirely excludes the Viani Collection from his catalogue of the old heritage of the Paganini library published in 1966<sup>2</sup>. The reason for this exclusion is possibly to be found in the consistency of the Viani Collection, largely rich in music manuscripts and editions dating back to the first half of the nineteenth century, while Pintacuda’s catalogue—with several exceptions—does not go beyond 1800.

Thanks to archival findings in the Municipal Archive of Genoa, it is now possible to trace not only the historical circumstances of the gift but also the personality of the donor, Francesco Viani (1809–1877). The discovery in the “Paganini” library of the deposit inventory<sup>3</sup>, although not exhaustive, has made it possible to almost completely reconstruct the Viani Collection, scattered among the various units in the library, and for the most part without sign of ownership. Only a part of the Viani Collection has maintained its original location: these are the miscellaneous volumes which gather printed or manuscript opera excerpts, in full or vocal score. In the old shelfmarks, organised by Lorenzo Parodi (1856–1926), at that time music librarian–teacher of music history<sup>4</sup>, the name of the donor was included in the library’s shelfmark. The dispersion of part of the Viani Collection among other library collections is not surprising, given the circumstances that the musical *Liceo*

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1. Salvatore Pintacuda, *Il Conservatorio di musica “Nicolò Paganini” di Genova: storia e documenti dalle origini ai giorni nostri* (Genova: Liguria edizioni Sabatelli, 1980), 86.

2. *Genova biblioteca dell’Istituto Musicale “Nicolò Paganini”: Catalogo del fondo antico*, ed. Salvatore Pintacuda (Milano: Istituto Editoriale Italiano, 1966).

3. The deposit inventory has the following title page: *Catalogo speciale delle Collezioni musicali del Cav. M<sup>o</sup> Francesco Viani donate al Civico Istituto di Musica dal di lui figlio Felice Viani Anno 1907 accettate dalla Giunta Municipale nella seduta del 13 giugno 1907*.

4. Lorenzo Parodi was professor of music history and librarian from 1906 to 1926; Salvatore Pintacuda, *Il Conservatorio di musica “Nicolò Paganini” di Genova: storia e documenti dalle origini ai giorni nostri* (Liguria: Sabatelli, 1980), 87, 140.



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