

which is the subject of the drama, as it is the principal subject of scientific progress. It is the essential nature of Classical art, that it addresses this principle of scientific discovery in a special way; the subject of all valid Classical art is that creative process of mind by which man is set apart from and above the beasts.

In Classical musical composition, which is the unfolding development of the polyphonic singing of poetry, the principle of creativity is presented in its most concentrated expression. In the instance of that form of motivic thorough-composition which Wolfgang Mozart discovered through reworking the relevant compositions of J.S. Bach, this principle of Classical musical composition, as developed by Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, et al., has been brought to its highest relative degree of concentration.

If one wishes to become an accomplished scientific discoverer, such music is the most efficient rehearsal of one's relevant creative potentialities of mind. If one desires no more than to achieve the solace of truthful beauty within the experience of one's own mind, such music is the instrument by aid of which to bring one's mind, again and again, into such a state of happiness. Of such music, man must never be deprived. From those discovered principles of both vocalization and mind, on which the production of such truthful beauty depends, let us never depart.

I hope this text will change the music world

by Arturo Sacchetti

Maestro Arturo Sacchetti is an organist, conductor, organ teacher, and the former artistic director of Radio Vatican.

The aim of this conference is the release of this manual. This is certainly an event, at least for those who are familiar with the facts of music, although deep scientific and physical-acoustical implications are also at play here. The book tells the story of the development of tuning over the centuries. It is difficult to orient oneself in this chaos, in which precious original historical instruments have been cut in a certain way. The problem emerged when this implement called the tuning fork did not even exist yet. We do not know how they tuned then. Yet there was certainly a criterion—the relationship between the human voice and the instruments, these machines, these tools of music. There was therefore a basis for establishing what the *Manual on Tuning* calls a “scientific tuning,” based on the part of music which is alive, which is what really counts. Because there is a distinction between the scientific aspect and the living practice of music. So we may discern a clear distinction between those who do research, and take these sorts of problems seriously, and the practicing musicians who are not concerned with this dimension.

In order to attempt to bring some order into the chaos of different tunings, some people have worked very hard, first of all to make some historical facts known, and then to demonstrate that these facts are not philological discourses abstracted from the reality of music. This is a very serious matter, since it has a direct physical effect on anyone who sings.

I wrote a brief introduction to the Italian text, which concerns the illustration chosen for the cover. Verdi is relevant, in the sense that in Italy this man still convinces people who understand music. I will read my introduction, to make the reasons for this conference clear.

A lost war?

“‘A lost war?’ Maybe someone may so characterize the initiative to lower tuning launched in recent years. An uncontrolled folly has taken over the music world, not only in Italy (for once!), but internationally. Those who actively practice music, particularly on the vocal front, have felt on



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TO REACH the LaRouche page on the Internet:

<http://www.clark.net/larouche/welcome.html>

TO REACH the campaign by electronic mail:

larouche@clark.net

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their skin, or rather on their vocal cords, that something is very wrong. Great singers and great conductors signed petitions, documents, calls, and invitations to stop the bad habit of raising the pitch, but their calls remained unheard. Not only has the pitch not gone down, but it is rising ever higher.

"There are no words adequate to condemn this bad habit. Irresponsibility prevails. The motto is 'adapt': Wind instrument builders cut their products to A=442 Hz, and string instrument and keyboard instrument builders adapt. Falsity triumphs: In music conservatories and symphony orchestras, places where respect for A=440 [international standard pitch] ought to be indisputable, concert A normally starts at 442 Hz and goes higher!

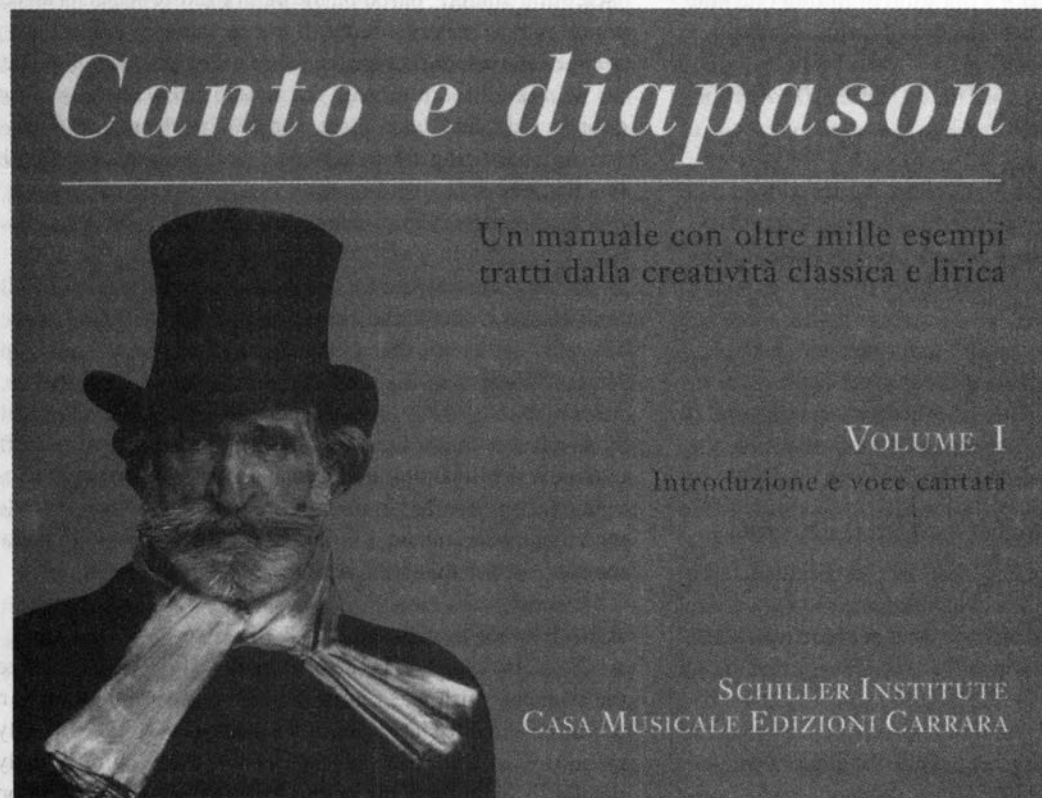
"Nobody ever thinks of taking into consideration historical tuning, which is the reference point for any musical creation. And when specialists who play historical instruments perform with the tuning of that epoch, people shake their heads in commiseration. Doing violence to musical compositions by changing the tuning is a sign of our time, the result of a deep-rooted lack of culture and insensitivity. 'Forgive those who know not what they do,' one could paraphrase. But remedies are far off, and a lot of water will have to pass under the bridge before we will be able to listen again to musical compositions in their original key.

"If signs of awareness can be seen in the interpretative performances of Baroque and Renaissance music, the music

of the nineteenth century is still enormously neglected. From the *bel canto* era down to the end of *verismo* opera, vocal music particularly is suffering, and what is usually heard from that creative period is very distant from the authentic sound.

"It is very timely that the American Schiller Institute, inspired by Lyndon H. LaRouche, has published a book containing precious research aimed at demonstrating the presence in nature of a 'human' standard pitch. The fusion between scientific aspects and musical examples evidences the immutable logic of a 'natural' tuning centered on a concert A at the frequency of A=432 Hz.

"But, besides the undisputable scientific-musical aspects, what are the benefits of the logical tuning of the nineteenth century? Many, to be sure. First of all, the possibility to again perform operas which have become impossible because of their very high vocal texture, but also to achieve a smooth, sweet, and warm timbre which would enhance the blending of voices, the application of a harmonious relationship between voices and instruments, natural shifts between vocal registers, mastery of rhythmic pulsation thanks to natural voice production, and the acquisition of musical breathing which is an indispensable element for the spontaneous translation of musical ideas. That is a good deal. It follows, therefore, that current reinterpretations of nineteenth-century music are far from the truth, stripped as they are of their original mantle, and ridiculously camouflaged.



The Italian edition of the Schiller Institute's "A Manual on the Rudiments of Tuning and Registration." Pictured is Giuseppe Verdi.

“This book anticipates the needed return to a natural pitch, as an authentic ‘hook’ offered to the younger generations in order to rebuild the music patrimony which has been transfigured and insulted by the twentieth century.”

Authenticity

Many musicians are now orienting to “revisiting” old music. I do not know if everybody knows the practice of performing with old instruments. You use old instruments, or copies of such, and go back to original manuscripts and you adapt measures which aim, in the interest of historical coherence, to reproduce the original sound, the naturalness, the spontaneity which was in the mind of the composers. This practice, however, goes only up until 1830-40, and leaves out completely the opera composers of the nineteenth century, up until the beginning of the twentieth century. I hope this will change, also because some walls are starting to come down, not so much out of willingness, but out of fatigue. I will only mention one fact which, to me as a musician, is a scandal. How is it possible that in the middle of an opera by Giacomo Puccini, written in 1896, an aria is transposed half a tone lower, in the middle of an opera in “open form,” which means that there is no end of the recitative, and beginning of the aria?

The same goes for many other analogous cases, such as Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, Beethoven’s “Missa Solennis,” all compositions which should be performed lower altogether; because it is quite difficult to perform them, one feels bad about them. It is not a question of hitting one note, it is a question of quality, of beauty, of color, of blending of voices, of musical texture, of all those aspects which make art. But since we live in a time characterized by long donkey ears, to publish this book was certainly an act of courage.

The first time, it ended badly, so now we are trying again with more confidence. I say it ended badly, because in 1987, the Schiller Institute launched this initiative to lower tuning, and those who present the book today can again expect to create a lot of polemics. But where there is a will, there is a way. And therefore we try again, this time with a book, a noteworthy text which presents this aspect. It is the outcome of years of work, offering ways of reflecting on this issue. It contains suggestive theses, for example, the one concerning the natural tuning of the human body, based on the DNA cell which carries the human being. These cells of life bring to the dimension of the human singing voice a frequency of 432 Hz. The study shows unequivocally that the living human being has a natural tuning of its own. Then it goes into the various differences of register shifts and vocal ranges for each species of human voice. Then it gives music examples for each one of them, and they are very interesting. Why?

Because many people practicing music have not realized that a composer, before being such, had also studied singing. It’s the case for Rossini, and many other composers who knew

very well the various voices and their register shifts.

They did not proceed backwards, let’s say “à la Marcello”: first music, then words. No, they knew the artistic criteria which led to choosing a certain vowel for a certain phrase. They were perfectly aware of the meaning of wedding a sound to a poetic text. That’s how they decided phrasing and articulation, in order to create an artistic rendering. Imagine if all these beautiful aspects, which the composer wanted, were to disappear completely one day, a hundred years later. Nothing would be left of this fortress.

So, today, we tune to A=448, and people claim that “life goes on.” Musicians keep singing and playing, although they seem pretty distracted. The singers have to make too much effort? Well, they should adapt. The sovereign law of money predominates. Would you believe that a conductor would dare to tune down to A=435 just before a performance? It seems improbable to me. This is the problem.

This is what has prompted our initiative. It is not only a question of nostalgia for the aroma of Verdi. It is much more serious. The publication of this book aims at addressing those musicians who will look into these pages, particularly those young musicians who crowd our conservatories, where they find pianos tuned to A=442, and are being ruined already when they are children. Maybe, being curious, by looking into this book, they will discover that things are not as they are led to believe. They will study examples and testimonies. The text we propose today aims to make known a reality.

I do not have too many illusions on the outcome of this publishing venture, particularly not in Italy, because the state of our culture makes it difficult not so much to buy a book, but to overcome the difficulty our musical and artistic world has in respect to knowledge, to which it has become quite allergic. Our aim is very clear, and it is that from knowledge derives a musical practice which is alive, responsible, aware of what it is doing, and mainly inspired by artistic respect, which, although it may sound strange, overlaps with morality.

If there is no respect for art, there is no art. Ours is a small contribution, a small grain thrown in the large sea of the music business. Let’s hope that some person of culture will pick up this contribution to the world of music. As we said before, our initiative of 1988 ended badly, when legislation we had proposed was ingloriously emended from A=432 to A=440 and became law, in the Italian Senate, on Feb. 2, 1989. This legislation, as it often happens in Italy, foundered because the rules to apply the new tuning were never published. So there is a law, but there is none. And the same mess continues.

In conclusion, I would like to offer my reflection. I support the need for the historical tuning fork. I open here a last parenthesis on the so-called critical music editions, which means that you take a published musical score, change a few appoggiaturas and republish it as new. I recently looked into a critical edition of Rossini’s *The Barber of Seville*: It was completely different from the one we used to know. But nobody

realized the fact that if you want to have a critical edition, the most important issue is the tuning which was used at the time, otherwise it is no critical edition, it is yet another unprofessional performance.

This is another side of the disorder reigning sovereign in the music world. In the intentions of the scholars, researchers, translators, and initiators of *Canto e diapason*, there is no business intention. The text is exclusively concerned with the health of the vocal cords, and this is no small thing. As you know, you can change the strings of a violin, but there is no way to change the vocal cords, since they are a musical miracle, a source of joy, of happiness, of calmness.

Renato Bruson: Why good voices are disappearing

Renato Bruson (baritone) attended the Rome presentation of Canto e diapason held on June 9 in the auditorium of the Pontifical Institute for Sacred Music. Accompanied by Prof. Antonio Sardi de Letto of the Pontifical Institute, he sang a musical example taken from the music manual, from Verdi's opera Ernani, the aria "Oh de' verd'anni miei." He sang first at A=445 (which is the orchestra tuning at the Rome Opera Theater, where he had just sung the main role in Verdi's Simon Boccanegra the evening before, and then at A=432. He then commented as follows:

I came here today to endorse this initiative to lower tuning. At A=432 you could hear the difference in terms of smoothness of the sound, in comparison to A=445. The misplacement of all the vocal extension due to today's high tuning is one of the reasons, together with the lack of good singing schools, for the fact that entire voice species are disappearing, particularly medium voices, such as mezzosopranos and baritones, true baritones.

It is a serious matter, and orchestra directors should take these music examples more seriously, as well as our politicians [laughter], at least European politicians. Because this would be something for the European Parliament—we would require a European standard, or eventually two, one for opera music and one for symphonic music, if they want to keep tuning up as they do. Although I understand that there are also some problems with wind instruments, particularly brass instruments, and they are forced to build new ones. Last night at the opera, for example, we had a scene with an Egyptian trumpet, which sounded flat, because it would not reach up to the high tuning of the orchestra.

This is my reflection, which justifies my commitment to this initiative. I wish that the music world may understand our intention, at the service of those who want vocal music, this great heritage of our civilization, to survive.

The disappearance of entire voice species is due to the physical and even psychological stress undergone by singers with today's high tuning. I am not a singer, and could not replicate what Antonella Banaudi just did. But you can imagine the state of mind of a singer who has to fight daily with the reality of vocal strain. I have faith in man and Nature. And therefore, I hope that this text will change the situation, thanks to its simplicity and sincerity.



Renato Bruson performs in Verdi's Simon Boccanegra.

I am not talking about the politicians around the corner [referring to the Italian Senate, a few steps away, which emended in 1989 the legislation proposal presented there by the Schiller Institute, changing it from A=432 to A=440], because if they were really interested in this matter, they would have come to this conference.