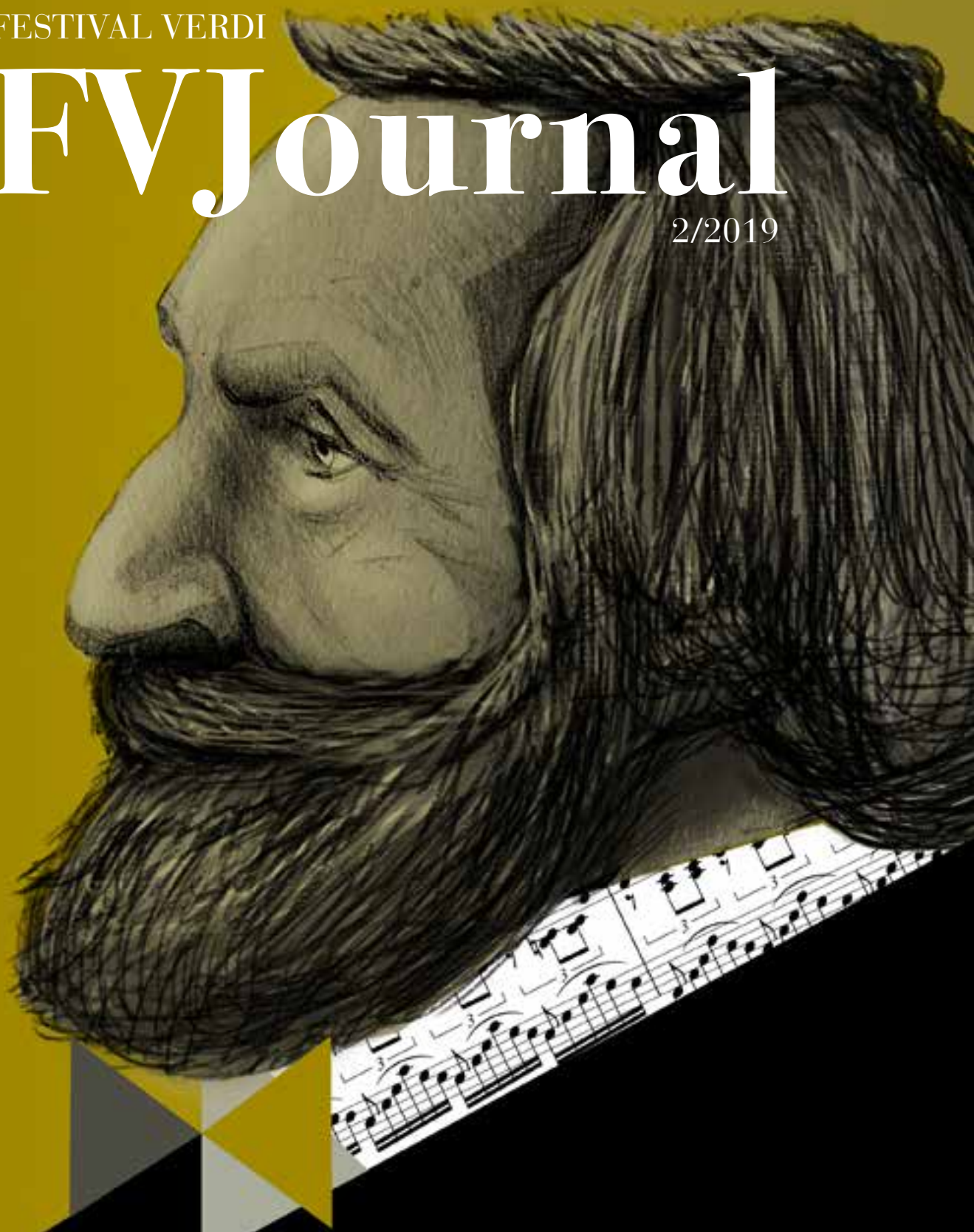


FESTIVAL VERDI

FVJ Journal

2/2019



I due Foscari

ANDREAS GIGER
«Surpassingly Beautiful»
or «Too Uniform a Color»?

GERARDO TOCCHINI
Opera and the
Historiography
of the Risorgimento:
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The New Voice

GLORIA STAFFIERI
On the Road to
the Promised Land



FESTIVAL
VERDI
P A R M A

2019



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It is with great pleasure that we introduce this second issue of the *Festival Verdi Journal*, edited, as last year, by Alessandro Roccatagliati, an illustrious member of our Academic Board. The *FVJournal* is published in preparation for the subscription campaign for the Festival Verdi and for the Festival Verdi road show, which will see performances at Italian Embassies and Italian Cultural Institutes in numerous capital cities across Europe, South America and the United States.

The demand for the first issue, which has encouraged us to increase the print run for this second number, has confirmed and strengthened us in our desire to complement the Festival with a printed journal consisting of essays commissioned from experts in the field together with a wealth of photographs and original illustrations. This publication, we hope, will be an effective tool for promoting the Festival as well as offering a valid contribution to the field of Verdi studies; we trust, moreover, that it will serve to secure the loyalty of our audience, which is fundamental to consolidating the international role of the Festival Verdi in the global cultural tourism calendar.

The decision to print the journal in both Italian and English versions has been widely welcomed, and has allowed an international audience to enjoy and to benefit from the high calibre of the critical essays relating to each of the operas produced during the season, thus enriching the quality of their participation in the Festival Verdi programme. Furthermore, the beautiful presentation of the journal itself, a happy reminder of the unforgettable experience of the productions themselves, is the result of the care devoted to the illustrations, which in this edition have been entrusted to the pencil and colors of Pierpaolo Gaballo.

We are already receiving requests from individual audience members and groups for copies of the *FVJournal*, and we hope that opera lovers around the globe will find space on their bookshelves for a each new edition as the years pass.

We wish the *Festival Verdi Journal* a long life, and hope that you, the public, enjoy reading this new issue.

ANNA MARIA MEO



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fter its inaugural issue last year, the *Festival Verdi Journal*, a publication created by the Teatro Regio Parma and the Scientific Committee of Festival Verdi, is back in 2019. We have conceived an annual journal, published in two separate editions in English and Italian, which collects essays introducing the four operas on the programme, written by scholars of the highest international standing. The *Festival Verdi Journal* aims to grant intellectual substance, scholarly rigour, and timeliness. At the same time, the publication is meant for a general audience, is written in a fluid and accessible style, and has a visual appearance that is both elegant and reader-friendly.

Each opera is explored in two essays. The first, longer essay introduces the opera, tracing its genesis and creative process, its reception, and salient musical and dramatic features. The second is more specialised, and explores specific themes, such as literary sources, issues of genre, voices and singers, as well as politics and economics. A series of images with detailed captions, finally, encourages the reader to reflect upon visual aspects and staging, ranging from period images to stage photos from recent productions. In addition to this iconographic element, which documents the visual history and current approaches of each opera, a distinctive feature of the *Festival Verdi Journal* is the presence of numerous original illustrations. After Davide Forleo's elegant pictures of 2018, in this issue Pierpaolo Gaballo has risen to the challenge of creating attractive and absorbing illustrations inspired by each title in the 2019 programme.

The *FVJournal* is published several months ahead of the festival that will take place in the autumn, almost like a reflector that shines light on forthcoming operatic productions, stirring the interest of an international readership, and preparing all of us to enjoy the performances. Thus, it effectively complements the conventional programme books associated with each opera, which will be available during the Festival Verdi providing essential information, concise essays, production notes, and the libretto. The *Festival Verdi Journal* transcends the specific productions and individual performances, and stands as a publication one will be able to refer to in anticipation of other nights at the opera; it is a tool preparing the reader for a better informed and more fulfilling listening experience and providing a better understanding of Verdi's art and its context. Its aim, in the end, is to assist any admirer of Verdi's theatre by providing solid information and insights.

Happy reading, and see you at Festival Verdi 2019!

FRANCESCO IZZO – ALESSANDRO ROCCATAGLIATI

FESTIVAL VERDI

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Edited by Alessandro Roccatagliati

Cover art and illustrations by Pierpaolo Gaballo

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Four Explorations by Alessandro Roccatagliati



Pierpaolo Gaballo

FVJournal Artist

“Cerco il centro” is the title of an artistic project by Pierpaolo Gaballo consisting of research, poetics, and transformation

Shapes, materials, colors, lines, stories: nothing is outside the creation of Pierpaolo Gaballo worlds. The artist, a native of Puglia, delights us with his continual quest for expression which results in his enormous versatility and his desire always to explore further.

“Cerco il centro” (“Looking for a center”) is how Gaballo defines his own output. But, essentially, without defining it. Eschewing conventional models and categories, his output always has a suggestion of transformation, as in a work for the theatre.

This, then, is his identity: transformation, endless quest. The center is to be understood as the point of arrival, of complete understanding of the self, a perennial yearning, a path that unfolds among illustrations and drawings, the moulding of materials and the creation of stories.

In his work we find a strong link to Lecce, his native city, tangible in the creation of elegant shapes and strong personalities. A cradle of beauty and culture that has nurtured his free, international spirit.

Pierpaolo Gaballo creates worlds, opens the imagination and the heart to original visions, at times dreamlike, at other times extremely close to the realities of everyday life. A narrator of the possible who writes in canvas, in print, in ceramics. An artist who moves between abstract graphic compositions and figurative illustrations, using not only black and white but also colors as materials, three-dimensional textures, and the materials and signs of time.

A versatility born of abundance, never of uncertainty. A never-ending search that is determined, energetic, and which never leads to confusion. Holding everything together is the poetry of the images. Gaballo’s ability to surprise us and then to let us imagine, allowing us explore the poetics of his references, accompanying us through the contradictions and the harmonies of the symbolic, inviting us to discover something that seems to lie elsewhere. And yet this “something” is to be found inside each one of us.

SIMONA PALESE



“Surpassingly Beautiful” or “Too Uniform a Color”? *I due Foscari* in the Context of Its Genesis

*An exploration that sheds light
on both the merits and problems of Verdi’s sixth opera*

BY ANDREAS GIGER

It is no exaggeration to say that the role of the octogenarian doge Francesco Foscari counts among the most beautiful baritone parts in the Verdian canon. Piero Cappuccilli counted it among his favorites, Leo Nucci still does, and Plácido Domingo added it to his repertoire immediately after *Simon Boccanegra* and *Rigoletto*. The opera as a whole has garnered more ambivalent judgments, however, probably due to a statement Verdi himself made to his librettist Francesco Maria Piave four years after the opera’s premiere: “In subjects sad by nature, if we are not very careful, we end up making a morgue as,

for example, in the *Foscari*, which have too uniform a tinta and color from beginning to end.” Verdi’s tendency to exaggerate is well known, especially when he was trying to make a point about something else, and we have learned to take such pronouncements with a grain of salt. His reaction was quite different, for instance, when he first received the libretto from Piave, calling it “a beautiful drama, very beautiful, surpassingly beautiful!” Whatever the truth, it is worth exploring *I due Foscari* from the perspective of its unusual genesis, because it sheds light on both the merits and problems of Verdi’s sixth opera. ↪



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Four Explorations: “I due Foscari” in Pictures by Alessandro Roccatagliati

Cultural Milieux

In the years 1842-44 the young Verdi, recently established in Milan, was welcomed into intellectual and artistic circles where he met people who would influence his development as an artist. Among those who frequented the salon of Andrea and Clara Maffei, with whom he would remain friends for life, there was the painter Francesco Hayez; in his paintings, which adhered to the school of national romanticism, Hayez loved to depict episodes and characters from the history of mediaeval and renaissance Italy. The two canvases relating to the Foscari that Andreas Giger considers in his contribution – *L'ultimo abboccamento [...]* (Fig. 1) e *Il doge Francesco Foscari destituito [...]* (Fig. 2) – were conceived and painted, exhibited and publicly discussed in the same years as Verdi’s early operatic successes. It is thus quite legitimate to identify cross references between Hayez’s paintings of the Foscari and Verdi’s opera on the same theme, especially in view of the milieu in which the young

The fate of the historical Francesco Foscari – the Doge who lost his only surviving son (Jacopo), his crown, and ultimately his life to the intrigue of a vengeful Patrician (Loredano, Foscari’s rival for the office of Doge) – was a popular subject in the nineteenth century, frequently treated in literature and art: *The Two Foscari* by Lord Byron; several plays by Italian authors, all titled *La famiglia Foscari*; and paintings by Francesco Hayez and Eugène Delacroix. Normally, Verdi’s interest in a new subject was prompted by a novel or a play, but in this case, it was most likely prompted by two of Hayez’s paintings: *L'ultimo abboccamento di Jacopo Foscari* (1840: fig. 1) and *Il Doge Francesco Foscari destituito con decreto del Senato veneto* (1844: fig. 2). Verdi knew Hayez through his association with the salon of Clarina Maffei in Milan and surely would have known

these paintings. By the time he began work on *I due Foscari*, *L'ultimo abboccamento* had already been sent to Vienna, but a reproduction in an album prepared for the Brera exhibition, accompanied by an emotional description by Jacopo Cabianna, would have been available. And Verdi would have been able to follow first-hand the genesis of *Il Doge Francesco Foscari destituito*: the painting was begun in 1842 and exhibited at the Brera in September 1844, when Verdi was completing his opera.

Hayez’s paintings placed the fragile and suffering Doge front and center, and they served as the model for some of the opera’s scenes. The setting of the act II finale, for instance, bears a close resemblance to Hayez’s *L'ultimo abboccamento*. Here, the Doge must witness his son Jacopo’s sentencing to renewed exile on a false charge of murder, resist pardoning him,