ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To Warren Kirkendale, who first suggested that a modern edition of Caldara’s

*Il più bel nome* would make a valuable contribution to the *Denkmäler der Tonkunst in* *Österreich*, I express my thanks for much advice and encouragement. Aware of the time-consuming nature of such a project and engaged in the completion of other publications,[[1]](#footnote-2) Prof. Kirkendale kindly suggested that I take over the edition, making use of much

source material previously collected by him and his wife Ursula. Daniele Lipp and Michael Talbot kindly answered several questions during the course of writing the introduction to this edition. Thanks are also due Prof. Emilio Moreno for making available the score he used while making his excellent recording of *Il più bel nome*.[[2]](#footnote-3) Alfred Noe provided much help with the text of both serenatas here andI am grateful to Sonja Tröster for the many excellent suggestions made in the course of proof reading.

In 2017 at the conference *Antonio Caldara nel suo tempo*[[3]](#footnote-4) at C̆eský Krumlov, Andrea Zedler informed me of the interesting work done on Caldara by her colleague Magdalena Boschung, whom I thank for sharing source material for the serenata *Chi s’arma di virtù*, which appears in this edition and for whose advice and expertise I gratefully acknowledge. I must also acknowledge the paper given at that conference by Werner Rainer[[4]](#footnote-5) in which it was reported that Caldara’s *Chi s’arma di virtù* was repeated at Salzburg on 19 October 1718.

I express my gratitude to Johan Eeckeloo and Richard Sutcliffe of the Library of the Royal Conservatory at Brussels and to Frau Gertrud Gaukesbrink of the Diözesanbibliothek at Münster for permission to consult their manuscript holdings and to use their sources in this edition. Prof. Martin Eybl, Director of Publications for the *Denkmäler der Tonkunst in* *Österreich*, made the happy suggestion of including Caldara’s Roman serenata *Chi s’arma di virtù* of 1709 in this edition.

Thomas Griffin

INTRODUCTION

The two large cantatas, or *serenate*, published here testify to the high quality of music Antonio Caldara provided the aristocracy of Europe in the first decade of the 18th century. Ursula Kirkendale characterized *Il più bel nome* as “a work of the highest level.”[[5]](#footnote-6) Years after its first performance in 1708 the memory of this serenata must surely have played a role in Caldara’s appointment as Vice Chapel Master to the court at Vienna in 1716, with remuneration far in excess of that of the imperial chapel master Johann Joseph Fux, thus making Caldara perhaps the highest paid composer of his century.[[6]](#footnote-7)

In 1709, a year after *Il più bel nome,* Caldara composed the serenata *Chi s’arma di virtù* for a conspicuous outdoor performance under the auspices of his new Roman patron, Prince Francesco Maria Ruspoli, for whom Caldara worked for the next seven years as *maestro di cappella* before his appointment to the imperial court of Vienna.

No one seems to know for certain the date, place or exact circumstances surrounding the performance of *Il più bel nome*, although the superior quality of its music has long been acknowledged. Early in the twentieth century the Catalan musicologist Joseph Rafael Carreras y Bulbena made several extraordinary claims for this work, saying that it was the three-act Italian opera heard at Barcelona in 1708 as part of the wedding celebrations for Charles III, Habsburg claimant to the throne of Spain, with Elisabeth Christine of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel.[[7]](#footnote-8)

The cantata survives in a single manuscript score in the library of the Brussels Conservatory. Clearly it was not the opera heard at Barcelona for the royal wedding of 1708. The score contains no divisions into acts, scenes or parts, nor does the text commemorate a wedding.[[8]](#footnote-9) As the title page of the score announces, it is to honor “The Most Beautiful Name / In celebration of the most happy name of Her Catholic Majesty Elisabeth Christine Queen of Spain.”[[9]](#footnote-10)

On the score it is called a *Componimento da Camera per Musica*, a term that Michael Talbot reveals was the invention of the librettist Pietro Pariati, who was essentially its sole user.[[10]](#footnote-11) Large cantatas like *Il più bel nome* are usually identified by the generic term *serenata*. During the early decades of the 18th century works of this sort were traditionally performed to mark the birthday or name day of a monarch or high-born lady.

Thus one might suspect that *Il più bel nome* was a name day serenata for Elisabeth Christine, and this may very well have been the case. A similar work, *L’Oracolo del fato*, text by Pariati and music by Francesco Gasparini, was given at Barcelona on that occasion in 1709.[[11]](#footnote-12) On 28 November 1708 the three-act opera *Zenobia in Palmira* was performed at Barcelona to celebrate Queen Elisabeth Christine’s name day.[[12]](#footnote-13) Daniele Lipp has suggested to this writer in private correspondence that the public performance of *Zenobia* took place about a week after the queen’s actual name day (19 November) and does not rule out a more intimate celebration at the court when a serenata, such as *Il più bel nome,* might have been given.

Ursula Kirkendale has advanced an alternative hypothesis to explain the circumstances surrounding the performance of *Il più bel nome*. It depends on two facts: 1) Elisabeth Christine is called “Queen of Spain” on the title page of the score and 2) the characters in Pariati’s libretto speak of the queen’s reign in the future tense.[[13]](#footnote-14)

By early 1707 it had been decided that Charles should marry. Three you ladies of the high aristocracy were candidates, two Savoyard princesses and the protestant Elisabeth Christine of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel. Portraits of the three princesses were sent to Charles in Barcelona, since he had never met them in person. For various reasons the Habsburg family chose Elisabeth Christine to be his bride. In August their engagement was announced and declared officially at Vienna on 16 October 1707. A wedding ceremony *per procurationem* was held at Vienna on 23 April 1708, with Charles brother the Emperor Joseph standing as proxy.

But the two had not yet met. Until the marriage was consummated there might well remain questions regarding its legitimacy or the status of Elisabeth Christine. A day or two after her Viennese wedding this new queen, accompanied by a train of over one hundred attendants, began her leisurely journey overland to Genoa. There she boarded ship for the final leg of her voyage to Barcelona.

At every town or city of any importance through which her train passed, Elisabeth was feted magnificently with ceremonial entrances, banquets, Masses, *Te Deums*, and musical entertainments. When she entered Venetian territory, at Brescia, for example, she lingered for two days (27–28 May). On the twenty-eighth she enjoyed, in a *finto giardino* adorned with vases of flowering acacias, statues of divine figures, all surrounded by wax torches emphasizing the magnificent setting, a serenata sung by a chorus of thirty voices accompanied by seventy players of various instruments. The music, which has evidently not survived, was by Luigi Mancia, setting a text of the Brescian poet Giovanni Battista Bottalicio.[[14]](#footnote-15)

This was clearly not the occasion where *Il più bel nome* was performed. But one can well imagine a similar celebration somewhere during the queen’s journey through northern Italy to Genoa. Ursula Kirkendale suggested Milan as the most likely place, as Elisabeth tarried there for no less than five weeks.

How does Pariati’s text celebrate “the most beautiful name of Elisabeth Christine”? The serenata, for it is certainly not an opera, is sung by five high voices and a chorus. There are no bass voices. Paris (*Paride*), Venus (*Venere*), Juno (*Giunone*), Hercules (*Ercole*) and Fate (*Il Fato*) are the soloists of the miniature drama. An SSAT chorus represents the Followers of Beauty or of Virtue. Pariati’s text is derived from the ancient Greek myth of the judgment of Paris.[[15]](#footnote-16)

Ursula Kirkendale calls this story “the ever–fruitful myth” which has “provided material for innumerable baroque wedding operas, of which the best known is Cesti’s *Pomo d’oro* for the wedding of Charles’s father,Leopold I.”[[16]](#footnote-17) Pariati does not simply retell the ancient myth wherein Paris must choose the most beautiful of three goddesses (Venus, Juno, Minerva).

In the serenata of Pariati/Caldara the Greek myth and its consequences have already unfolded. Pariati links Paris and Venus together as the champions of beauty (love and sex), in an argument or verbal contest with Hercules and Juno, the defenders of virtue (duty, honor, achievement). Like many serenata texts, this is a dispute of precedence, in this case between physical beauty and duty, defined as virtue.

The contest begins with each character offering relatively sane and conventional arguments in favor of his or her position. As is usual in oratorio or opera, a statement or assertion is voiced in recitative, followed by an impassioned or affective affirmation in an aria. In a fully staged opera of the time, a scene would end with such an aria and the singer usually would then exit. Performed much like an oratorio, however, a serenata like *Il più bel nome* did not require the singer to exit after the aria. This is one indication that it was not conceived as an opera.[[17]](#footnote-18)

After seven arias, each character having sung at least one, it becomes clear that no resolution to this dispute of precedence will be forthcoming. At this point (in recitative no. 17) the argument disintegrates into an undignified shouting match. Suddenly Fate descends from heaven, upbraiding the two humans and two goddesses for their anger, vanity and unreasonable behavior. If this had been a staged work with machines, this would be a classic example of *deus ex machina*. But there is little indication in the score that staging or machines were employed.[[18]](#footnote-19)

Returning to a more civilized mode of address, the four characters continue praising their respective goddesses and ideals: Venus, beauty and love, or Juno, virtue, duty and honor. Fate again intercedes, saying he finds value in all their qualities. Fate, an all-powerful allegorical figure, explains that they need not continue to argue, for there is one who excels Venus in beauty and Juno in Virtue. Both the goddesses and mortals are amazed that such a being could exist. They desire to know her name and to worship her. Finally, Fate explains that she is called ELISA.

At the first pronouncement of her name, the imaginary setting of the cantata, the fields of Elysium, is suddenly transformed into a paradise. (This transformation is noted by the singers. It does not necessarily suggest that the cantata was staged). Since this ELISA surpasses both goddesses in beauty and virtue, all the contestants, mortal and immortal, express their desire to become her servant. The serenata ends on a joyful note.

While *Il più bel nome* was certainly conceived as an entertainment for an aristocratic audience, the primary purpose of the work was to reveal and celebrate ELISA (Elisabeth Christine) as the newly chosen bride of Charles III. As noted on the title page of the score, she is addressed as Her Sacred Catholic Majesty (Queen of Spain). This would suggest that the serenata must have been heard after the proxy wedding at Vienna in April 1708, which, at least by Habsburg reckoning, made her queen. Kirkendale noticed that many of

the references in Pariati’s text referring to the glories of ELISA were expressed as predictions. “The text contains a profusion of verbs in the future tense (*saprò, dirò, vedrò, vedrai, vedrà, risponderà, sarà, avrà, aggiungerà,* etc.), often alluding to future events.” She continues, saying “the future tense of the verbs tell us that the *componimento* was heard before the actual wedding [at Barcelona], thus anticipating the event, and the word *nome* does not indicate the name day, but the names of the three bridal candidates, of which

the most beautiful is Elisabeth.[[19]](#footnote-20)

If Kirkendale is correct, the serenata was most likely heard somewhere in northern Italy, probably after May 1708 when the queen left Brescia and before late July 1708 when she departed for Barcelona. As noted above, it is also possible that Caldara’s *componimento* may have been performed sometime soon after Elisabeth Christine’s arrival in Barcelona, but not as the wedding opera on 2 August 1708 or much later than the year 1708. Daniele Lipp has studied a cache of financial documents in the Milan *Archivio di Stato* related to Elisabeth Christine’s stay in that city, but has found no clear reference to the performance of *Il più bel nome* in Milan.[[20]](#footnote-21) Given the similarities between *Il più bel nome, L’Oracolo del Fato* and *Il*

*nome più glorioso,* Lipp suggests in private correspondence that *Il più bel nome* was probably heard in 1708 at Barcelona, rather than in Milan as suggested by Kirkendale. Whether given first in northern Italy during the queen’s journey to Spain, or in Barcelona in the year of her arrival in Catalonia, it is possible that among the many journals, diaries and chronicles remaining to be studied, the place and date of this serenata’s performance may yet be discovered.

Chaos and confusion often dominated the relatively short period of Habsburg rule at Barcelona, with Charles sometimes in the field fighting the Bourbons, at other times Barcelona suffering under siege from them. One should not wonder that much uncertainty remains concerning the music heard during this era. After having attempted to reconcile all the known scores and libretti with the major chronicles of the period, Laura Bernardini writes, “thus we have now seen that just as it is not possible to assign to every festive

event at Barcelona [the name of] an entertainment [found in a libretto, score or chronicle], at the same time some entertainments commissioned specifically for festivities at Barcelona remain without a certain date of execution.” (*Abbiamo dunque visto finora che, cosı̀ come non è stato possibile assegnare a ogni evento festivo di Barcellona un componimento, allo stesso tempo alcune componimenti commissionati appositamento per i festeggiamenti di Barcellona restano senza una data certa di esecuzione*.)[[21]](#footnote-22)

Caldara’s location during much of 1708 is unknown. Although it is usually assumed that he accompanied the queen to the Habsburg court in Spain, it is entirely possible that he did not leave Italy; even if *Il più bel nome* and *Il nome più glorioso* were heard in Barcelona, he could have sent the scores to the court. In the autumn of that year his opera *Sofonisba, dramma per musica* was given at the *Teatro* San Giovanni Grisostomo in Venice. But by March 1709 documents published by Kirkendale confirm that the composer had begun work for Prince Francesco Maria Ruspoli at Rome as his house composer and *maestro di cappella*, a position that Caldara would occupy for the next seven years.[[22]](#footnote-23)

When aristocratic patrons of Caldara’s time, such as Prince Ruspoli, commissioned a work, they expected to receive newly composed music. Certainly this imposed a heavy burden on composers, who must have been sorely tempted to reuse arias and other closed pieces written earlier, especially if they could be certain that the new patron was not aware of the earlier composition. In fact, this was a rather common practice and can be well documented, for example, in the literature on Handel.[[23]](#footnote-24) Magdalena Boschung has discovered that several arias from *Il più bel nome* reappear in Roman works by Caldara in 1709. The serenata *Chi*

*s’arma di virtù*, the most significant of these Roman works and in which two of the earlier arias are found, is included in this edition.

*Chi s’arma di virtù* (text by Jacopo Buonaccorsi), was a conspicuous serenata that Ruspoli had performed in the square of the Santi Apostoli from a platform built above the *portone* (main entrance) to the Palazzo Bonelli, where his family then lived.[[24]](#footnote-25) From her study of the Ruspoli account books preserved in the Vatican archives, Ursula Kirkendale notes that Ruspoli had 600 copies of the libretto[[25]](#footnote-26) for *Chi s’arma di virtù* printed as souvenirs for his many aristocratic friends. The nobility of Rome were invited to leave their coaches (without horses) in the square facing his palazzo during the day. On the evening of performance (27

August 1709) the Roman nobility enjoyed the serenata while seated in their coaches, which were arranged as if they were opera boxes in the square facing Ruspoli’s residence.[[26]](#footnote-27) Like *Il più bel nome, Chi s’arma di virtù* saw a performance after Caldara was hired in Vienna. On 19 October 1718 it was performed at Salzburg in celebration of Franz Anton Harrach’s accession as prince bishop.[[27]](#footnote-28)

The text of *Chi s’arma di virtù* is extremely curious, especially in comparison with most serenata texts of the era. Works of this sort were conventionally given to honor a person, often a high-born lady, on her birthday or name day. Or they might simply be given for a lady as flattery. By the early 18th century they sometimes also marked a happy occasion not associated with a lady, such as the arrival of a foreign prince at Rome or the news of a military or political victory. But in virtually all cases the miniature plot of the serenata ended on a joyful note, as did *Il più bel nome*, for example.

But there is no allusion to a contemporary person in Buonaccorsi’s text, and the three characters who sing the serenata achieve contentment in the end only by adhering to ethical probity as taught by the Church of Rome. Why would Prince Ruspoli sponsor such an extraordinary public event for the entertainment of his fellow aristocrats? Perhaps it was in response to criticism he received several years earlier while still a marchese. A note in the *avvisi di Roma* at Munich[[28]](#footnote-29) recalls one instance of this. In a document dated 3 August 1706[[29]](#footnote-30) Ruspoli’s uncle Cardinal Marescotti is reported having criticized the marchese for sponsoring public serenatas by female singers of little merit in the flooded Piazza Navona.[[30]](#footnote-31) The cardinal deplored the fact that they exhibited a too bold wit and were not suitable inventions for a man with wife and children.

A year earlier, on 22 September 1705, Ruspoli came into the full inheritance that would make him one of the wealthiest men of Rome. As Kirkendale recalls, this was due to his “uncle Cardinal Galeazzo Marescotti, who had played a decisive role behind the scenes” in a lawsuit to settle Francesco Maria’s inheritance.[[31]](#footnote-32) Precisely who provided Marchese Ruspoli with his 1706 serenatas is not known. The Ruspoli account books in the *Archivio Secreto Vaticano* begin only in late 1706 and offer no solution to this question. But among the six serenatas by Alessandro Scarlatti that survive in scores dated 1706, there are two[[32]](#footnote-33) that seem to be dedicated to Ruspoli’s wife, Isabella Cesi. Could these be among the serenatas that the Cardinal found objectionable?

Between 1706 and early 1709 the wealthy Marchese Ruspoli undertook numerous initiatives with the intention of advancing his social position at Rome. As Ursula Kirkendale expresses it, “one of these was the appointment of Caldara as his house composer, instead of recalling the protestant Georg Friedrich Händel to this post.”[[33]](#footnote-34) Was the text of *Chi s’arma di virtù* Ruspoli’s response to the moralistic concerns of his uncle the cardinal, or to the spiritual values of Clement XI? With this text three pastoral characters demonstrate the hopeless nature of romantic or erotic love. Mirtillo loves Clori, who rejects him, for she is hopelessly in love with Silvio, who in turn prizes liberty and rejects the snares of love, specifically those of Clori. In all likelihood this serenata was intended to be Ruspoli’s public affirmation of and compliance with the moral ethos of the Roman Curia under Clement XI, perhaps even as a public expression of gratitude for his promotion to the rank of Prince of Cerveteri.

Despite the great expense Ruspoli lavished on *Chi s’arma di virtù*,[[34]](#footnote-35) the performance on the night of 27 August was nearly marred by rain.[[35]](#footnote-36) Compared with Pietro Pariati’s witty and elegant libretto for *Il più bel nome*, Caldara may have found little of inspiration in Jacopo Buonaccorsi’s conventional and cliché-ridden text for *Chi s’arma di virtù vince ogni affetto*, as the complete title of the serenata reads. This title (perhaps the most successful example of wit in the work) was taken from a line of Giovanni Battista Guarini’s Arcadian play *Il Pastor Fido,* which dates from the late 16th century. Spoken by the character Amarilli in act three scene three, an anonymous translation into English[[36]](#footnote-37) renders it “One arm’d with vertue conquereth all desire,” indicating that the Italian word *affetto* refers not only to affection in the general sense, but to the suffering caused by love or desire.

As mentioned above, two arias[[37]](#footnote-38) from *Il più bel nome* were reused in *Chi s’arma di virtù.* In addition to these two unexpected examples, two arias (nos. 22 and 32) found in the 1709 score are lacking in the printed libretto.[[38]](#footnote-39) Possibly they too were preexisting arias by Caldara that the composer found expedient to insert into Ruspoli’s serenata. These four arias suggest the pressure that Caldara may have been under to finish the score for Ruspoli. Other indications of the haste with which the serenata was produced are seen in the many minor errors in the text of the printed libretto, errors that were corrected in the text of the manuscript score.

Machael Talbot reports that Albinoni’s *Il nome glorioso*, with twenty-five closed pieces, represents the upper size limit for serenatas at Venice.[[39]](#footnote-40) Both of Caldara’s serenatas published here are nearly that long. *Chi s’arma di virtù* was divided into two parts, as was typical of Roman serenatas of this era. This was not the case with *Il più bel nome*, which appears to have been conceived as a lengthy single work. Some indication of the limited time that Caldara must have faced while composing *Chi s’arma di virtù* may be seen in the chronology of his works that emerge in Kirkendale’s study of the Ruspoli account books. In July of 1709 Caldara’s four-part serenata *Il trionfo d’amore* was finished for Ruspoli and perhaps performed with a modest ensemble at one of the Prince’s weekly open houses.[[40]](#footnote-41) This would have left less than a month for the composition and preparation for the conspicuous performance of *Chi s’arma di virtù* on 27 August.

Both serenatas make use of arias for *continuo* and voice alone as well as arias in which the voice is accompanied by instruments in addition to the *continuo.* In the case of the first type, *continuo* and voice alone, there are usually separate *ritornelli* for strings that play before the voice enters, and after it finishes. In both serenatas the number of *continuo* and voice alone arias is slightly fewer than half the total number of arias. In this respect both serenatas are somewhat similar in favoring arias accompanied by instruments in addition to the *continuo*. Almost all arias are of the *da-capo* type.

Similarly, in both serenatas a great variety of combinations are seen in the instrumental accompaniment of the voice, varying from typical late baroque procedures to more modern methods characteristic of the 18th century. The 18th-century examples are of particular interest as they serve to demonstrate Caldara’s position in the history of music as an early exponent of the pre-classical or gallant style. In no. 32, “Più non sono la più bella” of *Il più bel nome* the voice alone is accompanied by a single line of violins playing below it, where the score indicates *Li violini suonano il basso*.[[41]](#footnote-42) Similarly, three other arias in *Il più bel nome*,

nos. 16, 22 and 34, the latter marked *Con Flauti e li Violini suonarano il Basso soli e piano*, display aspects of the so-called *bassetto* technique.[[42]](#footnote-43) No. 34, the charming menuet “Quel pastorello vide un ruscello”, sung by Paris in the serenata of 1708, is found truncated and transposed from C major to G minor in *Chi s’arma di virtù*, where it appears as aria no. 38, “Sento nell’alma un non so che.” The change of mode is unusual. The innovative orchestration of “Quel pastorello vide un ruscello” makes it the more interesting of the two.

A striking example of this modern style of accompaniment is found at the first entrance of the voice in aria no. 16 of *Il più bel nome.* During the instrumental *ritornello*, which precedes the voice, the strings are arranged in a traditional four-part texture, which includes a true *basso continuo*. But at the entrance of the voice, the *basso continuo* disappears, as shown in Illustration 1.

There are a number of other elements in *Chi s’arma di Virtù* that set it apart from *Il più bel nome*, such as the accompanied recitative that opens part two of the 1709 serenata, a technique rarely encountered this early in the 18th century. While the beginning of *Il più bel nome* sounds particularly Handelian,[[43]](#footnote-44) the opening *sinfonia* of *Chi s’arma di virtù* is reminiscent of instrumental works by Antonio Vivaldi. Could it have been adapted, or even plundered, from an earlier work by the red priest? Or does it suggest Vivaldi’s indebtedness to Caldara as an innovator?[[44]](#footnote-45) Probably neither of these cases is true. Michael Talbot kindly informed this writer that the *sinfonia* is not by Vivaldi, but exactly what one might expect from a Venetian composer of this era.

Aria no. 36 of *Chi s’arma di virtù*, “Sento nell’alma,” is unique in having a contrasting middle section. Arias of this sort are rarely found this early in the 18th century, but become common several decades later. The fourth aria of *Chi s’arma di virtù,* “Amore è un rio pensier,” effectively anticipates a characteristic melodic syncopation, with a leap of a sixth above a harmonically static bass, much used in the 1720s and later by gallant composers (See Illustration 2). All these innovations at Rome suggest that by 1709 Caldara was starting to outgrow the conventions of late baroque style, taking tentative steps into the gallant style.

Two arias found in *Il più bel nome* turn up in another guise in *Chi s’arma di virtù*. The splendid first aria of *ll più bel nome*, “S’egl’è ver che amaste un dı̀” is heard in part two of *Chi s’arma di virtù* with a new text, “Prigionier d’un biondo crine”.[[45]](#footnote-46) Here the B section has been extended to accommodate a longer text, a perfectly understandable change to the aria. In “S’egl’è ver che amaste un dı̀” Caldara touches briefly upon the subdominant tonality just before the final authentic cadence at the end of the A section. The full subdominant tonality, including the note A flat, not just the IV or II65 chord, is heard at the approach of the cadence on B flat, producing a particularly decisive and satisfying close for the voice, a technique sometimes used by J. S. Bach at the approach of an important cadence. This mannerism is also found in the works of Alessandro Scarlatti, Handel, Caldara and other composers of the time. It is generally regarded as a distinctive feature of modern (i.e. progressive or 18th–century) tonal practice. When Caldara rewrote the aria as “Prigionier d’un biondo crine” for Ruspoli at Rome, however, he touched upon the subdominant much earlier before the closing cadence, producing a less agreeable effect at measures 52–53. This may have been required to set the new text, but it produced an aria less successful than the original. It may also suggest how much pressure Caldara was under to finish the serenata for Ruspoli.

If we consider the short period of time that Caldara may have had to compose *Chi s’arma di virtù,* the music he provided certainly must have pleased his patron, Prince Ruspoli, and delighted the aristocracy of Rome. Clearly one should not fault the composer for reusing several pieces from *Il più bel nome* in it. But judging by the superior work in *Il più bel nome*, Caldara certainly understood the overriding importance of a commission from the Habsburg dynasty, a commission that resulted in some of his finest secular music in the first decade of the 18th century and which was surely a major factor leading to his later appointment

as Vice Chapel Master of Emperor Charles VI in Vienna.

One must note the fame that Caldara enjoyed after his appointment to the Imperial Chapel, which resulted in repeat performances of both pieces in this edition in German-speaking lands, long after their original composition as occasional works in Italy or Spain. Rossend Arqué*s* identifies a printed libretto of *Il più bel nome* in the Landesbibliothek Coburg (Germany). Although it does not correspond to the score in this edition, it probably served to celebrate Elisabeth Sophie of Brandenburg on her nameday, although the exact date and circumstances of its performance are unknown. Werner Rainer identifies a repeat performance of *Chi s’arma di virtù* on 19 October 1718 as part of the celebration at the installation of Franz Anton Harrach as Prince Bishop of Salzburg.[[46]](#footnote-47)

1. Particularly worthy of note is the completion and publication of Ursula Kirkendale’s *Hesiod’s Theogony as Source of the Iconological Program of Giorgione’s “Tempesta”: The Poet, Amalthea, the Infant Zeus and the Muses*. Florence 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Available on compact disc Glossa GCD 920310. An earlier, less successful, recording by Prof. Francesco Bonastre was distributed with the Catalan journal *Recerca Musicològica*, 19 2009. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Papers published in: Milada Jonàs̆ovà and Tomislav Volek (eds.), *Antonio Caldara nel suo tempo*, Prague 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. *Ibid*, pp. 245 and 263. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Ursula Kirkendale, *Antonio Caldara: Life and Venetian-Roman Oratorios*, revised and translated by Warren Kirkendale. Florence 2007, p. 52. The serenata was investigated at the *Congrés Internacional* Il più bel nome deAntonio Caldara (1708)*, i les musiques de l’època de la Guerra de Succesió. Barcelona, 9–12 desembre de 2008*. Papers presented at this meeting were published in the Catalan journal *Recerca musicològica*, 19 (2009). Of particular interest are Rossen Arqués, *Il più bel nome* de Pietro Pariati, poeta cesari I vìctima dels fills de Momo, pp. 103–139 and the same author’s edition of Pariati’s libretto, pp. 259–283, as well as Laura Bernardini, Teatro e musica a Barcellona alla corte di Carlo III d’Asburgo, pp. 199–227. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Kirkendale, see fn. 4, pp. 111–112. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. Joseph Rafel Carreras y Bulbena, *Carlos d’Austria y Elisabeth de Braunswich Wolfenbüttel a Barcelona y Girona.* Barcelona 1902, pp. 118f. Carreras y Bulbena even asserted that it was the first opera performed in Spain. Modern scholars now doubt this. See, for example, Andrea Sommer-Mathis, Von Barcelona nach Wien: Die Einrichtung des Musik- und Theaterbetriebes am Wiener Hof durch Kaiser Karl VI, in: *Musica Conservata: Günther Brosche zum 60. Geburtstag.* Tutzing 1999, pp. 359f. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. At this time an opera would have consisted of at least three acts, perhaps even five. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. IL PIÙ BEL NOME / Nel Festeggiarsi il Nome Felicissimo di SUA MAESTÀ CATTOLICA CRISTINA REGINA DE LE SPAGNE. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. Michael Talbot. The Serenata in Eighteenth-Century Venice, in: *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle* 18 (1982) p. 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. As proven by the existence of a printed libretto. Another serenata, *Il nome più glorioso,* music by Caldara, text by Pietro Pariati, was probably given at Barcelona to mark Charles III’s name day, 4 November, although it is unclear in which year it was performed. *L’Oracolo del fato* and *Il nome più glorioso* survive in manuscript scores preserved in the Austrian National Library and can be accessed on the internet by searching IMSLP/Petrucci Music Library. Both scores were copied by the same hand, but not the one that copied the MS of *Il più bel nome* in Brussels. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. Daniele Lipp, “Este es vuestro Carlos, este es vuestro Rey:” Representation of Political Propaganda in Musical Life at the Habsburg Court in Barcelona during the War of Spanish Succession (1705–1713), in: *Music in Art* 42 (2017) p. 104 and Numeroso Culto, músico festejo, en aplauso de las felicissimas, y reales bodas, in: Iskrena Yordinova and Paologiovanni Maione (eds.), *Serenata and Festa Teatrale in 18th Century Europe*. Vienna 2018, p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. Kirkendale, see fn. 4, pp. 52f. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. Agostino Zanelli, Elisabetta Cristina di Wolfenbüttel a Brescia (1708), in: *Archivio storico lombardo* 32 (1905) p. 380. Talbot, see fn. 9, p. 14, cites a contemporary document explaining why no libretto for Mancia’s serenata was published: the Venetian authorities were not prepared to recognize Elisabeth Christine as the Queen of Spain on the title page, which would have been the case, if a libretto were published. Could a similar circumstance explain the lack of a printed libretto for *Il più bel nome*? [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. Rossand Arquès, Il più bel nome di Pietro Pariati, poeta cesari i victima dels fills de Momo, in: *Recerca musicològica* 19 (2009) pp. 103–119, discusses other musico-dramatic works based on this myth, often with connections to the Habsburg dynasty. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. Kirkendale, see fn. 4, p. 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. The Elysian Fields are identified as the setting of the serenata on page two of the manuscript with the phrase *La scena rappresenta I Campi Elisi*. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. Something very similar occurred in Alessandro Scarlatti’s serenata *La Gloria di Primavera,* performed near Naples in 1716. This serenata, however, was heard in a small domestic theater where the all-powerful Jove actually descended from on high on a machine. See h[ttp://www.ascarlatti2010.net/main\_page/primavera](http://www.ascarlatti2010.net/main_page/primavera)accessed on 10 October 2019*.* [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. Kirkendale, see fn. 43, p. 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. Lipp, see fn. 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. Laura Bernardini, Teatro e musica a Barcellona alla corte di Carlo III d’Asburgo, in: *Recerca musicològica,* 19 (2009) p. 222. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. Kirkendale, see fn. 4, pp. 55f. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
23. Examples of this phenomenon found in the works of Alessandro Scarlatti are mentioned in Thomas Griffin, Antonio Caldara’s *Il più bel nome*: Concerning its Date and Place of Performance, in: *Antonio Caldara nel suo tempo*. Prague 2017, p. 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
24. An engraving showing the Palazzo Bonelli is reproduced in Kirkendale, see fn. 4, Plate 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
25. Ibidem, Plate 10, shows the title page of the libretto. It is reproduced in its entirety in Google Books, found by searching under the title of the serenata. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
26. Francesco Valesio, *Diario di Roma*, ed. Gaetana Scano. Milan 1977–79, iv p. 323. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
27. Werner Rainer, Fürsterzbischof Harrach und Antonio Caldara – ein Fernbeziehung, in: Milada Jonàs̆ovà and Tomislav Volek (eds.), fn. 3, p. 263. Evidently this performance used Caldara’s autograph score, which has not survived. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
28. For more on these documents see Thomas Griffin, The Avvisi di Roma in Munich, in: Luca Della Libera and Paologiovanni Maione (eds.), *Devozione e Passione: Alessandro Scarlatti nella Napoli e Roma barocca.* Naples 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
29. Reproduced in Thomas Griffin, *The Late Baroque Serenata in Rome and Naples: A Documentary Study with Emphasis on Alessandro Scarlatti*, Ph.D. diss. University of California at Los Angeles, 1983, pp. 510f. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
30. This was prior to the arrival of Handel and the famous singer Durastante, both of whom arrived in December of that year. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
31. Ursula Kirkendale, Handel with Ruspoli: New Documents from the Archivio Secreto Vaticano, 1706–1708, in: *Music and Meaning: Studies in Music History and the Neighbouring Disciplines.* Florence 2007. p. 404. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
32. They are *Fileno, Niso e Doralbo; Serenata a Filli*, “Tacete, aure tacete” and *Sole, Urania e Clio; Le Muse Urania e Clio lodano le bellezze di Filli*,“O mie figlie canore,” discussed by Nicolò Maccavino, La Serenata a Filli Tacete aure, tacete e le altre serenate datate 1706 di Alessandro Scarlatti, in: *La Serenata tra seicento e settecento: musica, poesia, scenotecnica*, ed. Nicolò Maccavino. Reggio Calabria 2007, ii pp. 451–522. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
33. Kirkendale, see fn. 4, p. 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
34. Kirkendale, see fn. 4, pp. 66f, estimates the total cost at 302.86 scudi, which allowed for an orchestra of fourteen violins, four violas, two contrabasses, and two oboes. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
35. Valesio, see fn. 25, iv p. 323. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
36. Printed at London by Simon Waterson in 1602. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
37. Nos. 26 and 38 in *Chi s’arma di virtù.* [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
38. The text of aria no. 22 replaces a longer text found in the libretto. Aria no. 32 was inserted between lines of recitative in the libretto. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
39. Talbot, see fn. 9, p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
40. Kirkendale, see fn. 4, p. 61. For more on *Il trionfo d’amore* see Magdalena Boschung, Antonio Caldaras SerenataIl Trionfo d’Amore: Frankreich Rezeption in Dienst Adliger Selbstdarstellung. in Bertold Over (ed.) *La fortuna di Roma: Italiensche Kantaten und Römische Aristokratie um 1700*. Merseberger, 2016. pp. 295–326. For a modern edition of the serenata and other information see <http://www.ascarlatti2010.net/main_page/trionfo_damore> accessed 29 April 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
41. Although the violin part must play an octave higher than noted and sometimes sounds above the voice. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
42. A technique in which the voice, sometimes doubled *colla parte* by the first violins, is supported by the upper strings without a true *basso continuo* part. Since the *basso continuo* is generally regarded as a hallmark of the baroque era, a movement away from the usage of it in the early eighteenth century should be considered a progressive feature. Dagmar Glüxam, Das Instrumentarium und der Instrumentalstil in den Wiener Opern Antonio Caldaras (1717-1737), in: *Studien zur Musikwissenschaft, 49 (2002) (Festschrift Leopold M. Kantner zum 70. Geburtstag)*, p. 148, characterizes the technique as “*in Wien überaus beliebte.*” These examples show that Caldara employed the *bassetto* well before his appointment at Vienna in 1716. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
43. The Austrian musicologist Konstantin Schneider, who published Caldara’s *Dafne* in the *Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Österreich* (volume 91), rightly apostrophized the composer as “the Italian Handel” in *Geschicht der Musik in Salzburg von den ältesten Zeiten bis zur Gegenwart*, Salzburg 1935, p. 98, cited by Kirkendale, see fn. 4, p. 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
44. Kirkendale, see fn. 4, p. 134, cites Igor Stravinsky’s *Conversations* (p. 767) to the effect that “Vivaldi is greatly overrated— a dull fellow who could compose the same form so many times over . . . Caldara I respect.” [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
45. This is not the same text or music as Alessandro Scarlatti’s aria with the same incipit from the opera *Tutto il mal non vien per nuocere.* [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
46. In *Antonio Caldara nel suo tempo*, pp. 246 and 263. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)