

CILEA Gloria



FONDAZIONE

Ramaz Chikviladze • Anastasia Bartoli Franco Vassallo • Carlo Ventre Orchestra e Coro del Teatro Lirico di Cagliari Francesco Cilluffo, Conductor



Dramma lirico in three acts (1907, revised version 1932) Libretto by Arturo Colautti (1851–1914), revised by Ettore Moschino (1867–1941) based on the play *La Haine* (1874) by Victorien Sardou (1831–1908) First performance of original version: 15 April 1907, Teatro alla Scala, Milan First performance of revised version: 20 April 1932, Teatro di San Carlo, Naples

Aquilante de' Bardi	Ramaz Chikviladze, Bass
Gloria, Aquilante's daughter	Anastasia Bartoli, Soprano
Bardo, Aquilante's son	Franco Vassallo, Baritone
Lionetto de' Ricci (aka Fortebrando)	Carlo Ventre, Tenor
Il Vescovo (Bishop)	Alessandro Abis, Bass
La Senese (Sienese Woman)	Elena Schirru, Soprano
Un Banditore (A Town Crier)	Alessandro Frabotta, Bass

Coro del Teatro Lirico di Cagliari (Giovanni Andreoli, Chorus Master) Orchestra del Teatro Lirico di Cagliari

Francesco Cilluffo, Conductor

Act I

1	Or si rinnovi il bando dell'indulto! (Aquilante, Un Banditore, Chorus, Gloria)	7:18		
2	Fonte muta e profonda (Gloria, Chorus)	5:16		
3	Al Ciel sia lode! (Lionetto, Chorus, Gloria, Bardo)	2:26		
4	Storia ho di sangue! (Lionetto, Aquilante, Bardo, Chorus)	4:43		
5	Vergine, d'astri e di viole adorna (Gloria, Chorus)	2:32		
6	Fuorusciti, è già l'ora del rivarco (Aquilante, Lionetto, Bardo, Gloria, Chorus)	5:13		
Ac	t II			
7	Introduction: Allegro con fuoco	2:16		
8	Prigioniera d'amor! <i>(La Senese, Gloria)</i>	3:04		
9	O mia cuna, fiorita di sogni e di melodi (Gloria)	2:49		
10	Dai verzier dei Monaldeschi (Chorus, Gloria)	3:27		
11	O madonna, traemmo d'Oriente (Bardo, Gloria)	5:18		
12	O mia dolce sorella (Bardo, Gloria, Lionetto)	7:03		
13	Pur dolente son io <i>(Lionetto, Gloria, Chorus)</i>	6:50		
14	Si risveglian raggiando con armonie serene (Gloria, Lionetto, Chorus)	2:28		
Act III				
15	Introduction: Andante religioso – Movimento di marcia	3:24		
16	Popolo esulta! (Lionetto)	2:04		
17	Grazie, Signor, a Te (II Vescovo, Bardo, Chorus)	4:36		
18	Il mio fratello ov'è, Bardo de' Bardi? (Lionetto, Bardo, Chorus, Gloria)	4:54		
19	Gloria, ove sei? – Qui, presso a te! (Lionetto, Gloria)	6:53		
20	Ah! qui sugli occhi si stende un velo (Lionetto, Gloria)	3:23		



Ramaz Chikviladze (Aquilante de' Bardi), Anastasia Bartoli (Gloria), Carlo Ventre (Lionetto de' Ricci), Franco Vassallo (Bardo), Elena Schirru (La Senese)

Francesco Cilea (1866–1950)

Gloria

The European Vocation of an Italian Musician

A conversation with Francesco Cilluffo

Francesco Cilluffo, people say that you have a secret predilection for operas that are – let us say – less popular.

This is probably due to my consolidated association with the Wexford Festival, in Ireland, which has made the rediscovery of unusual repertoire the foundation of its artistic mission. But yes, it is an inclination of mine, something I like.

Cilea's Gloria, indeed, is not a famous title.

It is certainly a fine work, all the more interesting when it can be contextualised in our day and epoch. Now that we have shaken off that sort of 'Darmstadt' syndrome, as a result of which much music of the past was uncritically removed, certain operations of reassessment have become possible.

Gloria was premiered at La Scala in 1907, four months after Salome by Strauss and, moreover, with the same female protagonist (Ukrainian soprano Solomija Krušel'nyc'ka). One of the two, perhaps, had to appear old-fashioned.

Cilea lags a little behind, with respect to the trend of those first years of the 1900s when the intimist vein was coming to an end. And the author of *Gloria* does not identify himself through – or at least he does not feel comfortable with – the rules dictated by Mascagni, which were perhaps dear even to the young Puccini.

Could we then speak of a, perhaps proud, outdatedness on Cilea's part?

I would say, rather, that the composer gladly, and not without courage, keeps his distance from some conventions of the time; he rejects the trends and follows his vocation. And in this sense, he ends up placing himself in a very gratifying European light.

Let us talk of this 'European' aspect.

Cilea captures some of the aesthetic trends circulating outside the Italian borders and re-elaborates them in a personal way. He is attracted by Symbolism, which influences his music. He reads Maeterlinck with assiduous interest.

Whereas in Italy, in that period, D'Annunzio was all the rage.

Absolutely. Cilea, at a certain point in his career, wanted to set *Francesca da Rimini* to music, but he understood that decadent Gothicism was not for him and effectively left the task to Zandonai, who was decidedly more suitable for it. Cilea prefers the intimist portrait to the epic fresco.

Yet Gloria, set in medieval Siena against the backdrop of the conflicts between Guelphs and Ghibellines, does not hide having some dramatic ambitions. This is true, and back then it was even staged at the Castello Sforzesco, in a grand way. But unlike Mascagni's *Isabeau* (which I am mentioning because I conducted it in London), *Gloria* has neither the structure of nor the ambitions to be a 'kolossal'. Indeed, Cilea kept insisting that conductors should take great care over the details, not just concentrate on the surface of the story.

Let us look at the orchestral writing, then.

It is rich and refined. Cilea draws inspiration from the great Russian school of orchestration, headed by Rimsky-Korsakov – the school that also influenced another important Italian operatic composer, Alfano. The symphonic choice in *Gloria* is original instrumental textures and dainty tone-colouring. But Cilea's European vocation is not limited to that.

By all means, go on.

As a southerner, the composer puts to good use a very specific melodic vein, with echoes of traditional folk dirges. And yet it cannot be denied that this score, as if in pursuit of a vaguely epic tone, at the same time adopts some ploys that seem Wagnerian: think, for instance, of the frequent use of an off-stage orchestra.

Cilea was certainly not a pro-German musician.

No, far from it. The German and Austrian worlds were mainly in the sights of the young authors from the Milanese context, raised in the wake of the Scapigliatura movement. Cilea belonged to another milieu, had been raised in late 19th-century Naples and was attracted by the elegant suggestions of French flavour, especially those evoked by Massenet. But he was a curious author, intellectually speaking.

Yet Gloria, despite all its great premises, has had no success in over one hundred years: why is that?

Difficult to say. It is often a set of circumstances, chance included, that determines the success or failure of an opera. If Maria Callas, to whom Cilea had sent the score in 1950 (as we learnt from a letter from the musician to the editor Ostali), had shown an interest in it, the fate of *Gloria* would probably have been different. Pity.

To this work, in any case, Cilea would repeatedly return: after its lukewarm 1907 debut, he would make a second version for the San Carlo theatre in 1932. Which of the two will be staged in Cagliari?

The second, and rightly so, it being the one definitively licensed by the author. Cilea stopped composing early, but in the last 30 years of his life he felt the need to rework some of his operas, to get them closer to his sensitivity. The same – in another field – would be done by Sibelius, who had a solid relationship of mutual esteem with Cilea. *Gloria* and *L'Arlesiana* underwent profound changes, while *Adriana Lecouvreur* remained untouched.

How does the 1932 version of Gloria differ from the original?

Over the years, the composer felt the pressing need to find an affectionate dimension that got rid of magniloquent temptations: Cilea is perfectly aware of the fact that, for his nature and style, on the grounds of the so-called '*kolossal*' he could not be competitive compared to other colleagues. And so he changes, for example, a high C into a G, conscious of the fact that such a ringing note would betray the sense of his music; or he moves a scene from the sumptuous Siena cathedral to the more intimate space of a chapel, to stage the characters' private drama, which is what he specifically has at heart.

Can we speak, in terms of the vocal writing of Gloria, of a chamber style?

In the love duets, indeed, the chamber dimension prevails. The tenor writing, instead, has often heroic accents. The title role is quite complex, requiring both imperiousness and sweetness. One wonders what Callas would have made of it, if only she had taken Cilea's score into consideration. But there is no point in speculating.

Yet Maria Callas was capable of daring choices.

At the time, singers were more prone to making courageous choices, they decided more often to perform rare titles. Today, things do not work like that, because the market rules have changed and become rigid. People often speak of the audiences as lazy, but I believe, instead, that they are still intrigued by original proposals. The problem is, rather, that many theatre managers do not like to take risks, preferring the certainty of a 'blockbuster'.

Let us return to Gloria: the libretto, admittedly, is not an unforgettable one.

For sure it does not perfectly adhere to the spirit of Cilea, who is naturally inclined towards crepuscular hues. I believe that someone like Guido Gozzano would have been the right librettist for him: the two discussed working together on a project, *La culla vuota*, but nothing came of it.

Cilea was a famous teacher: how much of his teaching lives in an opera like Gloria?

I would say little or nothing if we refer to the pedagogic, or even pedantic, aspect. Nevertheless, *Gloria* would be an excellent example of orchestral and choral writing to be given as an object of study to students. On a technical level, indeed, it is the work of a musician who knows all the rules and how to convey this to the reader.

After conducting L'Arlesiana, Gloria marks your second encounter with Cilea.

Well, in between these two operas, chronologically, there is *Adriana Lecouvreur*. I will certainly get to what is undoubtedly Cilea's most famous work in the future, having already got the precious experience gained through this double, stimulating approach under my belt.

Stefano Valanzuolo

Synopsis

Siena, end of the 14th century

Act I

On an April afternoon, a monumental new fountain is being unveiled in the main square of the city ruled by the Guelphs. The old *priore*, Aquilante de' Bardi, who oversees the ceremony from the tribune of the Signoria, announces a grace period: all Sienese citizens, even Ghibelline exiles, will be able to take part in the festivity, provided they come unarmed and leave before sunset. A chorus of girls sings a hymn to springtime, and among them is Gloria, Aquilante's daughter, who extols the fountain as a symbol of peace and love **1**–**2**. Arriving in the square, Lionetto de' Ricci, an exile, asks Gloria for some water. The two youths, who were childhood playmates, meet again after many years. Bardo, Gloria's brother, annoyed by the attention Lionetto is paying to the girl, questions the stranger **3**. Lionetto recalls the massacre of his family, slain one night by armed men. Aquilante recognises him as the son of the Ricci who, as a *priore*, had been accused of treason for surrendering Montalcino to the Ghibellines **4**. The day is coming to an end **5** and sunset marks the moment when exiles must leave Siena; Lionetto, however, refuses to go, unless he can take Gloria with him as his bride. When Aquilante, Bardo and the other noblemen protest, Lionetto drops his cloak, revealing that he has come armed, and declares to be Fortebrando, the famous Ghibelline captain. Brandishing their own hidden weapons, Lionetto's followers rush to his support, and they all flee the city carrying Gloria with them **6**.

Act II

While the Ghibellines besiege Siena, Gloria is being kept in a villa on top of a hill near the camp of the army led by Fortebrando, in the care of a Sienese woman. The Sienese urges Gloria to accept Lionetto's marriage proposal, as it is the only way in which she can prevent the destruction of Siena and reconcile the two warring factions B - 10. Disguised as a merchant, Bardo arrives in Gloria's room and accuses his sister of betraying their people and causing the death of their father, killed in the fighting. The young woman informs her brother that she intends to restore the peace by sacrificing herself and marrying Lionetto 11. When Bardo hands Gloria a dagger, demanding that she kill the enemy leader, horrified by blood she refuses, but pledges to poison his goblet of wine. Bardo leaves, and Gloria, prey to contrasting feelings of love – for her family and for Lionetto – addresses a prayer to the Madonna. Returning from the battlefield, Lionetto tells the young woman that he has ended the siege out of love for her 12. Moved by Fortebrando's feelings, Gloria decides to save him and drink the poisoned wine herself, but Lionetto, guessing her intentions, stops her and throws the wine away 13. The two lovers finally declare their mutual feelings 14.

Act III

In the chapel of the Bardi, where Aquilante is buried, the marriage rite between Gloria and Lionetto has just concluded 16. The bishop and the choir sing the *Magnificat*, while Bardo, kneeling before the tomb of his father, contemplates revenge 17. At the end of the ceremony, Lionetto embraces Bardo in an impulse of brotherly affection, but the Guelph plunges his dagger into him, wounding him to death. Bardo attempts to drag Gloria away, but the distraught woman refuses to follow him 18. Left alone, the newlyweds exchange their last, desperate words of love 19. After Lionetto has drawn his last breath, Gloria picks up his weapon and stabs herself, dying beside her beloved while the city burns in the fires of the still raging conflict 20.

Booklet notes and synopsis courtesy of the Teatro Lirico di Cagliari. English translation: Daniela Pilarz



Ramaz Chikviladze



Born in Georgia, Ramaz Chikviladze has appeared in opera houses across Russia, Italy and in his home country. He made his debut as the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni* at the Osimo festival and Festival della Valle d'Itria, and in 2002 he received a scholarship from the Centre national d'insertion professionnelle d'artistes lyriques, giving recitals in Marseille and Avignon. The following year he participated in the Bayerische Staatsoper Opera Studio teaching programme. Chikviladze appeared as Don Prudenzio in *II viaggio a Reims* conducted by Alberto Zedda at the Rossini Opera Festival, and his vast operatic repertoire also includes the roles of Banco (*Macbeth*), Prince Gremin (*Eugene Onegin*) and Don Bartolo (*II barbiere di Siviglia*), among others.

www.ramazchikviladze.com

Anastasia Bartoli



After graduating from the Conservatorio di Verona, Anastasia Bartoli participated in projects with Teatro Ristori in Verona and the Gulbenkian Foundation. She was awarded First Prize (ex aequo) at the Concorso Internazionale Voci Verdiane 'Città di Busseto', and was a guest performer at the Lugo Prize concert. She has appeared on opera and concert stages worldwide, with highlights including the Claudio Scimone memorial concert with I Solisti Veneti in Padua, and a Verdi gala alongside Leo Nucci in Parma. She recently made her debut in *Nabucco* in Bari, and as Maria in *Simon Boccanegra* in Palermo alongside Plácido Domingo. She has collaborated with conductors such as Carlo Rizzi, Sergio Alapont and Riccardo Muti.

Franco Vassallo



A regular guest of prestigious theatres across Italy, including Teatro alla Scala in Milan, Teatro La Fenice in Venice and Teatro di San Carlo in Naples, Franco Vassallo has also appeared internationally, including at The Metropolitan Opera in New York, the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in London and the Bayerische Staatsoper, among many others. In past seasons he has appeared in the title roles in *Rigoletto* in Munich, Geneva, Moscow, Paris and Frankfurt, *Simon Boccanegra* in Genoa and *Macbeth* in Milan, and performed at the Puccini and Verdi festivals. Recent engagements include Miller (*Luisa Miller*) and Iago (*Otello*) in Bologna, and the title role in *Roberto Devereux* in Seville.

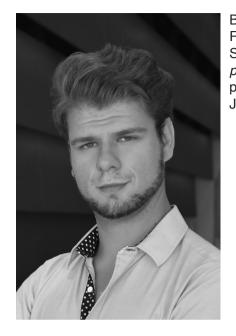
www.francovassallo.com

Carlo Ventre



Born in Montevideo, Carlo Ventre studied in his home city and later in Milan, where he made his debut at Teatro alla Scala as the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto* conducted by Riccardo Muti. He has since embarked on an international career that has taken him to prestigious theatres worldwide. Recent engagements include *Aida* at the Arena di Verona, *Pagliacci* at the Deutsche Oper am Rhein, and productions at the Teatro Massimo in Palermo, Prinzregententheater in Munich, Staatsoper Hannover and Teatru Astra in Malta. A winner of the 'Gino Bechi' prize at the Concurso Tenor Viñas in Barcelona, he also won the Luciano Pavarotti International Voice Competition in Philadelphia.

Alessandro Abis



Born in Cagliari, Alessandro Abis studied with Elisabetta Scano before furthering his education at the Accademia Rossiniana with Alberto Zedda. He also attended the Rossini Opera Academy in Canada, and the Young Singers Project in Salzburg. He made his debut at the Teatro Lirico di Cagliari as Cesare Angelotti in *Tosca*, and subsequently appeared in *La pietra del paragone, La campana sommersa* and Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, conducted by Gérard Korsten. Abis has performed in major theatres across Italy and abroad, with highlights including *I due Foscari* alongside Plácido Domingo and Joseph Calleja, and *Der Schauspieldirektor* in Salzburg.

Elena Schirru



Following a career in popular music, award-winning soprano Elena Schirru graduated with top marks from Cagliari conservatoire. She specialised at the Centro Plácido Domingo, making her debut in Haydn's *II mondo della luna*. She has since performed in Christian Cassinelli's *Alah* (premiered on Radio Vaticana), concerts with Andrea Schirru, and a gala in Pisa at the invitation of Enrico Stinchelli, alongside numerous opera productions. At Teatro Lirico di Cagliari she has appeared in *Petite Messe solennelle*, Nicola Campogrande's *Le felicità* and *Don Giovanni*, among others. Schirru has collaborated with conductors such as Jonathan Brandani, Gérard Korsten and Giuseppe Grazioli, and directors Emilio Sagi and Daniela Zedda.

Alessandro Frabotta



Alessandro Frabotta studied at the conservatory in his hometown of Udine. After graduating, he devoted himself to concert activity in Italy and abroad, both as a soloist and in chamber music groups. He has sung the roles of Count Monterone (*Rigoletto*), Sciarrone (*Tosca*) and Don Bartolo (*II barbiere di Siviglia*), among many others, across Italy. A member of the Coro del Teatro Lirico di Cagliari, he has performed as a soloist in numerous opera productions, as well as Mozart's *Requiem* and *Coronation Mass* and Delius's *Appalachia*, and also appeared in a performance marking the 150th anniversary of the Unification of Italy.

Giovanni Andreoli



Originally from Brescia, Giovanni Andreoli began working in theatre at a very young age. After gaining experience at prestigious theatres and festivals, including Rossini Opera Festival, Maggio Musicale Fiorentino and Festival Puccini, he served as choirmaster of numerous prestigious institutions such as the Rai in Milan, Teatro La Fenice in Venice and the Arena di Verona. He has also been artistic director of opera at the Teatro Grande di Brescia and principal conductor of the Op – Companhia Portuguesa de Ópera orchestra. Andreoli has collaborated with the Biennale Musica in Venice, overseeing the preparation of world premiere compositions, and has conducted Mozart's *Coronation Mass*, Haydn's *Nelson Mass* and Rossini's *Petite Messe solennelle* in São Paulo; *L'elisir d'amore* in Reykjavík; Liszt's *Via Crucis* in Orvieto; Orff's *Carmina Burana* in Granada with the Fenice ensembles; and Rossini's *Otello* at the Theater an der Wien. He has been choirmaster of the Teatro Lirico di Cagliari since 2020.

Orchestra e Coro del Teatro Lirico di Cagliari



Founded in 1933, the Orchestra del Teatro Lirico has cultivated an international reputation since its inception, collaborating with leading Italian conductors including Tullio Serafin, Vittorio Gui and Antonino Votto, and composers such as Ottorino Respighi, Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari and Alfredo Casella. The orchestra has also been led by Lovro von Matačić, Claudio Abbado, Sergiu Celibidache, Riccardo Muti, Gérard Korsten and George Pehlivanian. More recently, it has collaborated with conductors such as Mstislav Rostropovich, Ton Koopman, Iván Fischer, Carlo Maria Giulini, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, Neville Marriner and Christopher Hogwood, among others. The orchestra also regularly collaborated with Lorin Maazel, touring Europe in 1999. The Coro del Teatro Lirico has appeared in over one hundred operatic productions, and has a wide symphonic repertoire. It is currently led by Giovanni Andreoli. The choir has collaborated with numerous conductors including Ton Koopman, Frans Brüggen and Georges Prêtre, and directors such as Dario Fo, Luca Ronconi and Denis Krief. In 2003, the choir performed excerpts from Gershwin's Porgy and Bess with the New York Philharmonic and Lorin Maazel, and in 2004 appeared in Mahler's Symphony No. 2 with the Philharmonia Orchestra and Esa-Pekka Salonen. Together, the orchestra and choir have undertaken numerous recordings, including for the Naxos and Unitel labels, and in 1998

were featured on a recording of *La Bohème* for Rai, with Andrea Bocelli as Rodolfo, which was broadcast worldwide. They appeared at the 2002 Italienische Nacht in Munich, which was broadcast by Bayerischer Rundfunk, and in *Lucia di Lammermoor* at the 2010 Wiesbaden festival. The choir and orchestra also undertook a tour to New York in 2018, conducted by Donato Renzetti, where they appeared alongside *L'ape musicale* at Columbia University, and performed *Oratorio for the Benefit of the Orphan Asylum* in the Basilica of St Patrick's Old Cathedral. Recent highlights include a performance of *L'elisir d'amore* at the Royal Opera House Muscat conducted by Jordi Bernàcer, and the concert *Opera Hits!* conducted by Gaetano Lo Coco.

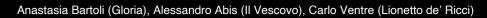
www.teatroliricodicagliari.it

Francesco Cilluffo



Principal conductor of the Wexford Festival Opera, Francesco Cilluffo was born in Turin, where he graduated in conducting and composition from the conservatory, and music history from the university (DAMS). He holds a Master's degree from the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, and a PhD from King's College London. He later collaborated as an assistant with Michael Tilson Thomas, John Eliot Gardiner, Asher Fisch, John Mauceri and Lothar Zagrosek. Performances include L'Arlesiana in Jesi (recorded for Dynamic); the world premieres of Marco Tutino's operas Le braci in Florence and Martina Franca and Miseria e nobiltà in Genoa: Tosca in Tulsa; Macbeth, Falstaff, Verdi's Requiem and Manon Lescaut at The Grange Festival with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra; numerous opera productions for OperaLombardia, Opera Holland Park as well as in Tel Aviv; symphonic concerts with the Bremer Philharmoniker, the orchestras of the Arena di Verona and the Teatro Lirico di Cagliari; and the first Italian performance of Absolute Jest by John Adams with the Filarmonica Arturo Toscanini of Parma.

www.francescocilluffo.com







Francesco Cilea is best remembered for his operas *L'Arlesiana* and *Adriana Lecouvreur*, but his final opera *Gloria* is a genuine rarity. Set in medieval Siena against the backdrop of conflicts between the Guelphs and Ghibellines, *Gloria* is a tragic tale of love and revenge that can be seen as a variation on the story of Romeo and Juliet. Filled with beautiful melodies accompanied by rich and refined orchestral sonorities, *Gloria* reveals itself after years of neglect as a precious masterpiece in this acclaimed production from the Teatro Lirico di Cagliari.





TEATRO LIRICO DI CAGLIARI FONDAZIONE

Dramma lirico in three acts (1907, revised version 1932) Libretto by Arturo Colautti (1851–1914), revised by Ettore Moschino (1867–1941) based on the play *La Haine* (1874) by Victorien Sardou (1831–1908)

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Coro del Teatro Lirico di Cagliari

Giovanni Andreoli, Chorus Master

Orchestra del Teatro Lirico di Cagliari

Francesco Cilluffo, Conductor

1–6 Act I 27:28 **7**–4 Act II 33:15 **15**–20 Act III 25:14

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet.

The Italian libretto and an English translation can be accessed at www.naxos.com/libretti/660568.htm Recorded live: 15, 17 and 19 February 2023 at the Teatro Lirico di Cagliari, Italy Producer: Alberto Dellepiane • Engineer: Antonio Ferraro • Editor: Rino Trasi Publisher: Casa Musicale Sonzogno di Piero Ostali, Milano • Cover photo: Priamo Tolu

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