

Editor's Preface


This setting of *Dixit Dominus* (Psalm 110; Vulgate 109) is one of the more than twenty extant choral works written by Baldassare Galuppi for the girls at the Conservatory of the Ospedale degli Incurabili in Venice. The Incurabili was one of four hospitals founded in the sixteenth century to care for the ill, destitute, orphans, and girls having no dowry. By the eighteenth century the Ospedale degli Incurabili, the Ospedale dei Mendicanti, the Ospedaleto, and the Ospedale della Pietà had developed and maintained substantial music conservatories which were acclaimed to be among the most outstanding in Europe.¹

Baldassare Galuppi (1706-1785), a native Venetian born on the small nearby island of Burano – hence his nickname “Il Buranello” – was engaged as *Maestro di Musica* at the Ospedale dei Mendicanti, 1740-1753, and as *Maestro di Coro* at the Ospedale degli Incurabili, ca. 1762-1765, and 1768-1776. He also had a long association with San Marco in Venice, as *Vice-Maestro*, 1748-1762, and as *Maestro di Cappella*, 1762 until his death in 1785. Galuppi won fame throughout Europe as a composer of comic operas. He traveled to London in 1741, and to Russia at the invitation of Catherine the Great in 1766.

Dixit Dominus is one of Galuppi's shorter works written for his “nightingales,” as he referred to them, at the Incurabili. On the title page of the manuscript he writes, *Dixit Dominus. Pieno/con 1st. ti/1775/Galuppi*, indicating that it is a work for chorus and instruments without soloists.² It is one of his few choral works which does not contain extended solo movements. The opening instrumental material, in light opera buffa style, recurs in each of the three movements, giving the entire work the form and spirit of a large rondo.

In 1781, Galuppi desired to use a short setting of *Dixit Dominus* at San Marco, and arranged his 1775 setting for women's voices for four mixed voices, adding a pair of oboes and horns to the orchestra and excising ten measures from the second movement. His title page mentions the setting's brevity, “*DIXIT. Pieno, Brevisimo.*” The whereabouts of the vocal and instrumental parts are unknown and they are presumed to no longer exist. The only manuscript of the score

is the composer's holograph which is to be found in the library of the Seminario Arcivescovile in Udine, Italy.³

The cello part is unfigured in the SSAA setting, but is quite fully figured in the SATB setting for San Marco. In the present edition all bracketed material [] is editorial, as are all the breath marks. In addition to the composer's slurs and articulation marks, the editor has included slurs and articulation marks in parallel passages where Galuppi does not bother to do so. All such editorial additions are marked  or are bracketed []. Galuppi's superfluous accidentals are retained, and ones apparently overlooked are added in brackets.

Galuppi can be delightfully inconsistent in his notation. In the first movement, measures 3, 7, 18, 22, 69, 73; second movement, measures 52 and 56; and third movement, measure 48; he writes eighth notes and eighth rests for the violins on the third and fourth beats but quarter notes for the celli, whereas in the first movement, measures 50 and 53, and the third movement, measure 52, he writes quarter notes for all parts. His notation is the same in the SATB setting.

It is not uncommon in this period for the violas to double the cello part one octave higher. Except where it significantly contributes to the overall texture, this doubling has been omitted in the piano reduction. Likewise, the contrabass customarily doubles the cello part at the lower octave. This doubling has been entirely omitted from the piano reduction but may, of course, be added where desired.

The piano reduction is for use in rehearsal or in a performance when a string orchestra is not available. It is not to be used as a continuo realization. A continuo realization for organ or harpsichord, to be used in orchestral performance, has been prepared by the editor and is available separately.

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1 Information concerning the Venetian Ospedali can be found in Kathi Meyer's *Der chorische Gesang der Frauen*, Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1917; Denis Arnold's “Orphans and Ladies: the Venetian Conservatories (1680-1790)” in *Proceedings of the Royal Music Association*, 89th Session, 1962-63, pp. 31-47; and Sven Hansell's “Sacred Music at the *Incurabili*” in *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, XXIII Nos. 2 and 3, (1970) pp. 282-301, 505-521.

2 Two measures marked “Solo” appear in the third movement.

3 A facsimile edition of the manuscript, prepared by Siro Cisilino, was published by the Seminary in 1964.