

The Fandango Scene in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*

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IN his examination of early copies of the score of *Le nozze di Figaro*, Alan Tyson was puzzled by something he observed about the third-act finale.¹ The fandango survives in some scores but is missing from others. In its longer version, which is the one performed today, the finale consists of five sections. The first is a march, which commences the wedding ceremony for Figaro and Susanna. The second is a duet for two maidens and chorus, which accompanies the Count's placing of the bridal veil on Susanna's head. The third is the fandango, where the Count reads the note Susanna has slipped him. The fourth consists of accompanied recitative, in which the Count invites everyone to the festivities. The fifth and final section consists of a reprise of the chorus. In the version of the finale from which the fandango is missing, the second section leads directly into the fourth section via an altered cadence that makes the appropriate key change (see Figure 1).² What puzzled Tyson about the two versions is that scores deriving from Vienna, where the opera was given its première on 1 May 1786, do not contain the fandango, while those originating in Prague, the site of the second production, do. In an attempt to explain the absence of the scene in Viennese scores, Tyson falls back on the conspiracy theory promoted by Lorenzo Da Ponte and concludes that 'the Fandango was suppressed in Vienna'.³ In his memoirs, Da Ponte blamed the

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¹ Alan Tyson, *Mozart: Studies of the Autograph Scores* (Cambridge, MA, and London, 1987), 311–12.

² Cf. Figure 18.7 in Tyson, *Mozart*, 313, for another score (Budapest, Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, MS mus. OK-11/a-3) that omits the fandango. This is the score (of Acts 3 and 4 only) Haydn ordered from Vienna no later than 1789 for a planned but never realized production of the opera at Eszterháza. It shows the same page layout for the join between the chorus and the recitative as KT 315 (Figure 1).

³ *Ibid.*, 311.

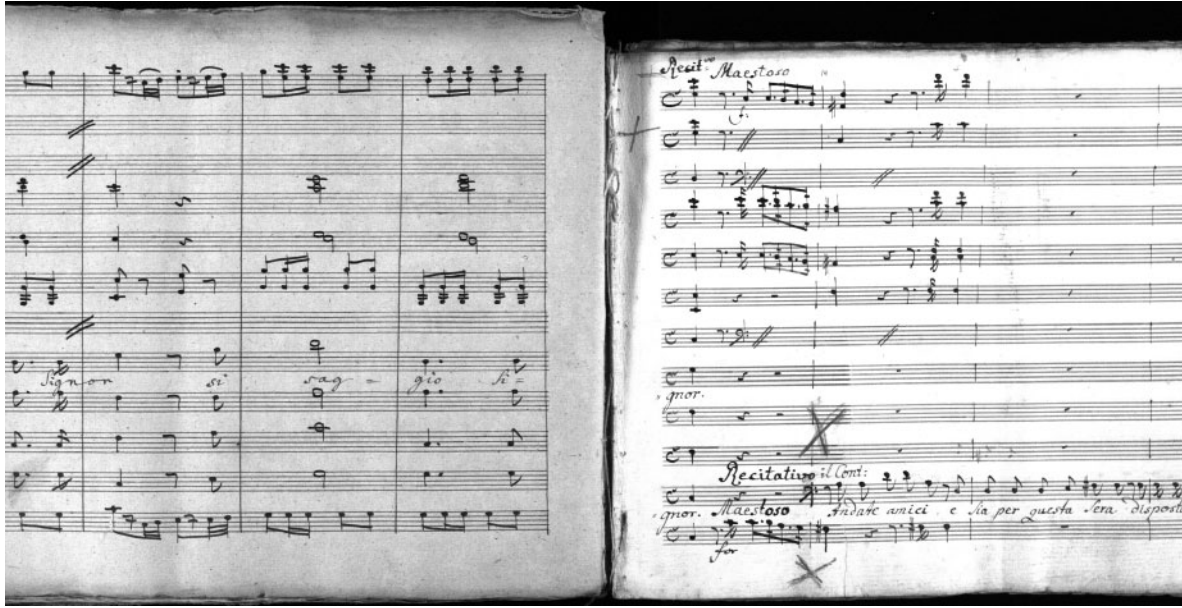


Figure 1. The Vienna score with the fandango removed. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Musiksammlung, KT 315, vol. 3, fols. 102^v–103^f. Reproduced with permission from the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek. Fol. 103^f is part of the original performance score.

Italians, who were supposedly always intriguing against himself and Mozart.⁴ According to Da Ponte, Francesco Bussani, the Bartolo in the original cast as well as superintendent of costumes and stage properties, pointed out to the theatre director Count Franz Orsini Rosenberg that the libretto contained a dance scene. As Rosenberg explained to Da Ponte when he tore the offending pages from the libretto, ‘the Emperor won’t have ballets in his theatres’.⁵ In desperation, Da Ponte asked Emperor Joseph II to attend the dress rehearsal.⁶ When Joseph saw the mutilated scene, he instructed Rosenberg to engage dancers from a suburban theatre, after which the scene was performed as Mozart and Da Ponte had written it. Thus far, Da Ponte.⁷ In what follows, I would like to throw light on the incident by bringing together a number of sources hitherto unexamined in relationship to each other.

Da Ponte’s claim that the fandango was performed in Vienna can, in fact, be substantiated. The account books of the court theatre contain, under the rubric ‘Musique, Composition u[nd] Copiatur Spesen’ (‘Music, composition and copying expenses’), a payment to Jean Huber Decamp for a thrice-performed small ballet in *Le nozze di Figaro* (see Figure 2).⁸ While known to scholars who have

⁴ Lorenzo Da Ponte, *Memorie*, ed. Giovanni Gambini and Fausto Nicolini, 2 vols. (Bari, 1918), i, 118–20; *Memoirs of Lorenzo Da Ponte, Mozart’s Librettist*, trans. Leslie Alfred Sheppard (Boston, MA, 1929), 138–41.

⁵ ‘Il signor poeta non sa che l’imperadore non vuol balli nel suo teatro?’, Da Ponte, *Memorie*, ed. Gambini and Nicolini, i, 118. ‘Doesn’t the Signor poet know that the Emperor won’t have ballets in his theatre?’, *Memoirs*, trans. Sheppard, 139. The more widely used translation by Elisabeth Abbott has the infelicitous choice of the word ‘forbidden’ – ‘The *signore poeta* does not know that the Emperor has forbidden dancing in his theatre?’, *Memoirs of Lorenzo da Ponte, Mozart’s Librettist*, trans. Elisabeth Abbott (Philadelphia, 1929; repr. New York, 1967), 160.

⁶ Confirmed in the diary of Count Karl Zinzendorf, 29 April 1786, as first noted by H. C. Robbins Landon, *Mozart: The Golden Years 1781–1791* (London and New York, 1989), 156–7. The diary entry reads: ‘Après 11:00 I je cherchois l’Empereur a l’Augarten. Il etoit en ville, il etoit a la repetition del’opera’ (‘After 11:00 I looked for the emperor in the Augarten. He was in town, he was at the opera rehearsal’). Transcribed in Dorothea Link, *The National Court Theatre in Mozart’s Vienna: Sources and Documents 1783–1792* (Oxford, 1998), 270. Zinzendorf clearly expected to find the emperor at home in his Augarten residence, which suggests that his attending a rehearsal in the morning was not his usual practice. Nor was it convenient, since the Augarten was situated outside the city walls. It appears the emperor responded to what he was persuaded was an emergency requiring his presence.

⁷ While the reliability of Da Ponte’s memoirs is repeatedly questioned, his facts, where they can be substantiated, are by and large correct, allowing for his penchant for telling a good story and his desire to present himself in a good light. Therein lies the problem. Concerning his relationship with Mozart, Da Ponte reveals more by what he does not say than by what he does. On the one hand, he proudly claims co-authorship of the three great operas he created with Mozart. On the other, he is noticeably less forthcoming about his collaboration with Mozart than about that with his favourite composer, Vicente Martín y Soler. Martín seems to have been far more acquiescent with regard to Da Ponte’s artistic decisions than Mozart, who, as we know from the family correspondence, routinely demanded changes in the libretto once he started setting it to music.

⁸ Vienna, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Hofarchiv: Generalintendanz der Hoftheater, Sonderreihe 18–27 (1781–94): Rechnungen der k. k. Theatral- Hof- Directions Cassae (hereafter HHStA, Hoftheater, S.R.), 23 (1786–7), p. 60, no. 175.

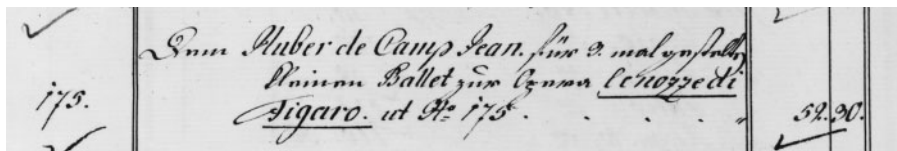


Figure 2. Payment to Jean Huber Decamp for services in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Vienna, HHStA, Hoftheater, S.R. 23, p. 60, no. 175. Reproduced with permission from the Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv. ('Dem Huber de Camp Jean für 3. mal gestellten kleinen Ballet zur Opera *le nozze di Figaro*. ut No. 175. 52 [fl.] 30 [x]'; 'To Huber de Camp Jean for the small ballet presented three times in the opera *le nozze di Figaro*. as no. 175. 52 [fl.] 30 [x].')

worked with the account books, this payment record has never received extended scholarly attention in print, nor is it included in Otto Erich Deutsch's *Mozart: Die Dokumente seines Lebens* (1961) or any of the supplements, including the most recent (1997).⁹ I will examine the implications of this payment record below.

Further evidence to support Da Ponte's claim that the fandango was performed in Vienna can be found in the performance score and orchestral parts used for the première. These sources came to light only a few years ago. In 1987 Tyson published the results of his investigation of early copies of the opera, which include two Viennese scores in the Austrian National Library bearing the shelf numbers KT 315 and OA 295. He observed that both scores contain, in part, paper that dates from the 1780s and thus 'merit investigation'.¹⁰ Although Tyson never returned to them, Dexter Edge followed up his tip in 1993.¹¹ He found that the entire performance score of 1786, except for the second-act finale, survives. At some point its acts became separated and were bound with a motley of nineteenth-century performance materials into the sets of books that make up KT 315 and OA 295. Furthermore, most of the original orchestral parts survive alongside OA 295. Never assigned a separate shelf number – they are referred to as 'OA 295, Stimmen' – they had lain unnoticed for a century until Edge looked at them.

⁹ Otto Erich Deutsch, *Mozart: Die Dokumente seines Lebens*, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Neue Ausgabe sämtliche Werke (hereafter NMA), X/34 (Kassel, 1961); trans. and ed. Eric Blom, Peter Branscombe and Jeremy Noble as *Mozart: A Documentary Biography* (2nd edn, London and Stanford, 1966); Joseph Heinz Eibl, *Mozart: Die Dokumente seines Lebens. Addenda und Corrigenda*, NMA, X/31, vol. 1 (Kassel, 1978); Cliff Eisen, *Mozart: Die Dokumente seines Lebens. Addenda, Neue Folge*, NMA, X/31, vol. 2 (Kassel, 1997). Dexter Edge transcribes the payment, without discussion, in a footnote in his article 'Mozart's Fee for *Così fan tutte*', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 116 (1991), 211–35 (p. 214, n. 7). He has since examined it briefly within a discussion of the third-act finale in his dissertation, 'Mozart's Viennese Copyists' (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Southern California, 2001), 1549–51, available from University Microfilms (2003). His discussion of the third-act finale focuses mainly on the discovery that the finale at one time ended with a reprise of the march instead of the chorus.

¹⁰ Tyson, *Mozart*, 295.

¹¹ See Edge, 'Mozart's Viennese Copyists', 1469–83, for a description of the original performance score; 1483–1515, for a discussion of the parts; and 1546–60, for a discussion of the third-act finale.

Edge's examination of the foliation of KT 315 reveals that the fandango was once part of the score before the pages were removed. The orchestral parts tell a similar story: some parts retain the fandango with the telltale marks of having once been sewn up.

There is no questioning, then, that the fandango was performed in Vienna, but there clearly was some sort of problem, somehow connected to Rosenberg's statement that 'the Emperor won't have ballets in his theatre'. Some scholars have interpreted his statement to mean that Joseph had actually forbidden ballets,¹² but no such edict has ever come to light, nor would one have been necessary. The very fact that the court theatre employed no dancers would have automatically resulted in a lack of dance scenes in operas produced on its stage. The last permanent ballet company at court had been dissolved by Joseph in 1776. Since that time, the court had employed dancers only once, for a six-month period in 1781–2, to permit special productions of three operas by Christoph Willibald Gluck for the state visit of the Russian Grand Duke and his wife. All three operas, *Iphigenie auf Tauris* (original French, 1779), *Alceste* (1767) and *Orfeo ed Euridice* (1762), included extensive dance scenes.

If the court theatre had no dancers, why then did Mozart write a scene that he knew full well could not be performed by its opera company? Such audacity or lack of professionalism would quite rightly have irritated Bussani, Rosenberg and the rest of the company. They probably hoped that this time he had gone too far and that the emperor, economical and disciplinarian, would reprimand him. Already when deciding upon the libretto, Mozart had made a fuss, choosing a banned play as the subject for his opera and then requiring special dispensation from the emperor to be allowed to set it.¹³ The strategy was clever: solicit the emperor's complicity, offer the public the allure of forbidden fruit, and fasten on to the success of Giovanni Paisiello's *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, to which his *Figaro* was a sequel. Mozart had used the strategy of associating a new opera of his with an existing successful opera once before. His *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (1782) has noticeable similarities to Gluck's popular opera *Die Pilgrime von Mecca* (originally *La rencontre imprévue*, 1764), revived at the Burgtheater in July 1780. Gluck graciously interpreted the similarities as homage, which he accepted publicly by requesting the performance on 6 August 1782 and privately by praising the opera and inviting Mozart for dinner on the 8th.¹⁴ On top of all this Mozart was now

¹² For example, Landon, *Mozart*, 243, n. 13, quoting Otto Michtner, *Das alte Burgtheater als Opernbühne: Von der Einrichtung des deutschen Singspiels (1778) bis zum Tod Kaiser Leopolds II. (1792)* (Vienna, 1970), 401, n. 15.

¹³ 'Both Da Ponte and tenor Michael Kelly (the first Don Curzio) claim that it was Mozart's idea to turn Beaumarchais's play into an opera, but there is no indication in Mozart's correspondence one way or the other.' Mary Hunter, 'Le nozze di Figaro', *The Cambridge Mozart Encyclopedia*, ed. Cliff Eisen and Simon P. Keefe (Cambridge, 2006), 353–64 (p. 356).

¹⁴ 'Meine oper ist gestern wieder | und zwar auf begehren des glucks:| gegeben worden; – gluck hat mir viele Complimente darüber gemacht. Morgen speise ich bey ihm.' Mozart to his father, 7 August 1782; *Mozart, Briefe und Aufzeichnungen: Gesamtausgabe*, ed. Wilhelm A. Bauer, Otto Erich Deutsch and Joseph Heinz Eibl, 7 vols. (Kassel, 1962–75), iii, 219.

demanding dancers. The idea of including a fandango seems to have been Mozart's and not Da Ponte's, because the stage directions for it occur only in the musical sources, as will be shown below. But Mozart knew what he was doing. The theatre account books show that, in expecting the court to provide dancers for his opera, he was merely following a precedent set a few months earlier by Antonio Salieri.

Mozart's case rested on an anomalous event that had occurred in the 1785–6 opera season. Salieri's *La fiera di Venezia*, which had first been performed at the Burgtheater in 1772, was revived on 12 September 1785 and played for another nine performances on 14, 16 and 23 September, 7 and 26 October, 2 November, 12 December, and 9 and 30 January 1786. The revival of such an old opera by a company that otherwise performed contemporary repertory was in itself unusual.¹⁵ Equally unusual was the fact that the second-act finale includes a large ballroom scene, in which several minuets and a forlana are danced.¹⁶ Although the dancing was executed by the singers, the account book for 1785–6 records two payments to the dancer Fortunato Castaldini for his work in the production. Under the rubric 'Extra Ausgaben. Belohnungen, Geschenke, und Gnadengaben' ('Additional expenditures: rewards, gifts and gratuities'), there is a payment (no. 134) for his services in *La fiera di Venezia*:

dem Castaldini Fortunato, für 6. monat[ichen] Unterricht der Prenerin im Tanzen. 52 [fl.]
dann für 8. monat[ichen] Unterricht der Nani im Tanzen. 56 [fl.] 20 [x]
Zusammen vermög 4 Quittungen ut No. 133. 108 [fl.] 20 [x]
demselben für geleiste Dienste im Tanzen bei der Opera. *La Fiera di Venezia*. ut No. 134. 15 [fl.]

(to Castaldini Fortunato, for 6 months of dance instruction to Frau Prener. 52 [fl.]
then for 8 months of dance instruction to Nani. 56 [fl.] 20 [x]
Together in 4 receipts as no. 133. 108 [fl.] 20 [x]
to the same [person] for services rendered in dancing in the opera *La fiera di Venezia*. as no. 134. 15 [fl.])¹⁷

¹⁵ By a curious coincidence, *La fiera di Venezia* was also performed that year in Munich, where Leopold Mozart happened to see it. In a letter of 28 November 1785 to his daughter, he criticized the opera as being old-fashioned and full of worn-out ideas. Quoted in John Rice, *Antonio Salieri and Viennese Opera* (Chicago, 1998), 194.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 220–31, 471–3.

¹⁷ HHStA, Hoftheater, S.R. 22 (1785–6), p. 57, no. 134. In elucidation of payment no. 133, to which reference will be made below, 'Die Prennerin' (Frau Prenner) was a singer in the German opera company, in 1782–3, and in the Italian opera, 1784–6, and was paid 400 gulden a year. In 1785–6 she was given singing lessons for six months by Vincenzo Righini at the court company's expense. Giovanna Nani was an apprentice singer taken on by Joseph when he heard her in Milan in June 1785. She received a salary of 600 gulden a year from 1 August 1786 to the end of the theatre year 1787–8. She is known to have sung on 22 and 23 December 1785 in a concert of the Tonkünstler-Societät (in which Mozart also performed) and on 14 March 1787 in the academy of the visiting oboist Friedrich Ramm. Link, *The National Court Theatre, passim*.

A second payment can be found to both him and his dancing partner Signora Salamoni under the rubric ‘Music=Compositionen, und Copiatur=Spesen’ (‘Music composition, and copying expenses’):

dem Castaldini, und Salamoni Tänzerin für geleiste Dienste bei der Opera
La Fiera di Venezia. ut No. 180. 18 [fl.]

(to Castaldini, and Salamoni, female dancer, for services rendered in the opera
La fiera di Venezia. as no. 180. 18 [fl.])¹⁸

The expression ‘geleiste Dienste’ (‘services rendered’), frequently encountered in the account books, does not tell us exactly what Castaldini and his partner did. Most likely he devised the choreography and coached the singers, for which he would have needed a partner.

Since the dance scene in *La fiera di Venezia* entailed the expense of engaging a choreographer, and since the opera was considerably out of date, why was it revived? The prima donna buffa, Nancy Storace, had been more or less continually ill since giving birth in January 1785. She sang on and off until 1 June, when she performed, not entirely successfully, in the première of her brother’s *Gli sposi malcontenti*. After that she stopped singing entirely. Because Storace could not sing, the company was short of repertory. Salieri’s new opera, *La grotta di Trofonio*, for example, which had been in rehearsal in May, had to be put on hold until she recovered.¹⁹ The disruption to the opera schedule was not confined to new productions. As the only leading lady in the opera buffa company in the first two years of its existence, 1783–5, Nancy sang in most of the operas in the company’s repertory. To give her some relief the company acquired for the third season, 1785–6, a second leading lady in Celeste Coltellini. But at the beginning of her engagement she was as yet building her own repertory, for she did not take over any of Storace’s roles. *La fiera di Venezia* presumably suited her and could easily be got up, despite the need for the two dancers. As it turned out, the expedient of reviving *La fiera di Venezia* was not necessary, for Storace resumed singing on 19 September, a week after the first performance of *La fiera di Venezia*. The opera, however, continued to play for as long as Coltellini was in the company, to the end of the season the following spring.

It was this dance scene, then, that provided Mozart with a precedent for including dancing in *Le nozze di Figaro*. His dance scene, however, cost somewhat more than Salieri’s. While Castaldini and Salamoni together received 33 gulden, Decamp received 52 gulden 30 kreuzer for providing dancing three times. The larger fee to Decamp is explained in the payment record, which is unusually precise in stating that he provided a small ballet. This means that he did not

¹⁸ HHStA, Hoftheater, S.R. 22 (1785–6), p. 63, no. 180.

¹⁹ The première of *La grotta di Trofonio* was scheduled for the beginning of June, but the opera was not performed until 12 October 1785. Link, *The National Court Theatre*, 247.

just devise the choreography but also supplied dancers – 24, according to Da Ponte. ‘In less than half-an-hour, twenty-four dancers or figuranti arrived.’²⁰

Twenty-four dancers could apparently be procured at a moment’s notice. From where? When in Da Ponte’s narrative the emperor asks, ‘Are there none at the other theatres?’,²¹ he would have been referring to the commercial theatres that had sprung up outside the city walls since 1776, when Joseph had lifted the court’s monopoly on theatre. This was part of the general reorganization of the court theatre that included disbanding the ballet company, which has already been referred to. The leading dancers of that company, Jean-Georges Noverre, Gasparo Angiolini and four others, had attempted to carry on with a company of their own at the Kärntnertortheater, but after two months they had given up and left Vienna.²² Some of the dancers in the *ballet de cours* (or *figuranti*), among them Decamp and Castaldini, stayed on and tried to make their living freelance. Decamp had been a member of the court theatre ballet company since 1767, Castaldini from at least 1771.²³ The dancers found employment in the numerous short-lived companies founded by local or visiting ballet masters.²⁴ Decamp himself founded one of the longer-standing troupes that performed at the *Zum weißen Fasan*, an all-purpose hall (*Saaltheater*) located on the Neustiftgasse in the seventh district.²⁵ This hall provided a stage for ballet from 1776 to 1795, hosting, in addition to Decamp’s, other troupes as well. From 1776 to 1781 ballet was also performed at the Bauernfeindscher Saal in the Josefstadt by Franz Scherzer’s troupe, which for a time was financially assisted by Prince Johann Adam Auersperg.²⁶ Scherzer’s and the Fasantheater’s companies also occasionally performed in the Kärntnertortheater until it was annexed by the court theatre in the spring of 1785. Decamp produced there on 6 February 1784 the ballet *Leben und Tod Marlboroughs*,²⁷ and on 4 January 1785 the ballet *Die Subordination, oder Graf Waldron* with an ‘orchestra of 50 players’.²⁸ None of the three licensed, permanent theatres, the Leopoldstädtertheater (founded 1781), the Wiednertheater (1787) and the Josefstädtertheater (1788), produced ballet, although the last was granted permission to do so in 1791 by Joseph’s successor, Leopold II.

²⁰ *Memoirs*, trans. Sheppard, 140. ‘In men di mezz’ora giunsero ventiquattro ballerini, ossia figuranti’, Da Ponte, *Memorie*, ed. Gambini and Nicolini, i, 120.

²¹ *Memoirs*, trans. Sheppard, 140. ‘Ve ne sono – diss’egli – negli altri teatri?’, Da Ponte, *Memorie*, ed. Gambini and Nicolini, i, 119.

²² Franz Hadamowsky, *Wien Theater Geschichte: Von den Anfängen bis zum Ende des Ersten Weltkriegs* (Vienna, 1994), 458.

²³ Gustav Zechmeister, *Die Wiener Theater Nächst der Burg und Nächst dem Kärntnerthor von 1747 bis 1776* (Vienna, 1971), 329, 332–3.

²⁴ For a description of the numerous small theatre companies and ballet troupes, see Hadamowsky, *Wien Theater Geschichte*, 455–82.

²⁵ Zechmeister, *Die Wiener Theater*, 332.

²⁶ Dorothea Link, ‘Vienna’s Private Theatrical and Musical Life, 1783–92, as Reported by Count Karl Zinzendorf’, *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 122 (1997), 205–33 (p. 220).

²⁷ Edge, ‘Mozart’s Viennese Copyists’, 1550.

²⁸ *Wiener Zeitung*, 1 January 1785, 9–10.

In April 1786, however, when Joseph commanded that dancers be found for *Le nozze di Figaro*, the choice seems to have been limited to the *Saaltheater* companies, and at that time Decamp was apparently the best or perhaps the only candidate.

Although Decamp and Castaldini survived freelance in the commercial companies, they still maintained ties with the court theatre. Both were engaged as *figuranti* in the temporary ballet company that was created for six months in 1781–2. In the following years the account books for the court theatre show that both Decamp and Castaldini were hired on several occasions to give dance instruction to actors and singers. In 1783–4, Decamp taught dancing to the actor Friedrich Wilhelm Ziegler.²⁹ Castaldini's coaching of the singers Frau Prenner and Giovanna Nani in 1785–6 has already been mentioned. Castaldini was later taken on as one of the *figuranti* for the court ballet company created by Leopold on 1 November 1791.³⁰ It seems that the court's calling upon Castaldini and Decamp for their services in *La fiera di Venezia* and *Le nozze di Figaro* took place within an ongoing relationship.³¹

Decamp's company was contracted for only three performances. Why only three performances? A review of various practices connected with the premières of operas and plays at the court theatre seems to suggest that in Josephine theatre a première normally consisted of three performances. To begin with, the theatre posters for the first three performances of a work consistently include above the title of the work the phrases '(zum erstenmal)' ('for the first time'), '(zum zweytenmal)' ('for the second time'), '(zum drittenmal)' ('for the third time'), respectively, putting no special emphasis on the first. At that time, the composer conducted the first three performances of his new opera, after which the opera Kapellmeister took over.³² In the case of plays, the playwright received the box-office receipts of the third performance.³³ Further, the first three performances of a new work were given in as close a succession as possible, that is, on three

²⁹ HHStA, Hoftheater, S.R. 20 (1783–4), p. 51, no. 113: 'Extra Ausgaben . . . No. 113 Dem Decamp, Johann für Instruirung des Acteurs Zieglers im Tanzen ut No. 113. 25 [fl.] 36 [x]'.

³⁰ Link, *The National Court Theatre*, 437, 444.

³¹ Edge, 'Mozart's Viennese Copyists', 1550, reports that Decamp went missing some time in 1786. In the municipal records written at the death of his wife in 1795 Decamp is listed as the surviving spouse 'whose whereabouts have been unknown for nine years'.

³² On the basis of contemporary reports, such as the following by Joseph Weigl, it is generally assumed that Vienna followed the Italian practice of having the composer conduct the first three performances of his opera. 'Thus it was that I accompanied Mozart's *Figaro*, *D. Juan* etc. for all rehearsals & to his satisfaction, & after the first 3 performances, which Mozart himself directed from the keyboard, I had to take over his place for all subsequent performances.' Quoted in Deutsch, *Mozart: A Documentary Biography*, 519.

³³ The policy is spelled out by Joseph on 8 February 1782 in the 'Punkten für die Theatral-Direction', nos. 3 and 12, transcribed in Rudolph Payer von Thurn, *Joseph II. als Theaterdirektor: Ungedruckte Briefe und Aktenstücke aus den Kinderjahren des Burgtheaters* (Vienna, 1920), 28–30. The practice was observed until spring 1789, when the theatre was reorganized. See also Edge, 'Mozart's Fee', 225–6.

consecutive playing nights of the company.³⁴ *Le nozze di Figaro*, for example, was given on 1, 3 and 8 May and then not again until the 24th.³⁵ Finally, with few exceptions, a piece that appeared to be a failure on the first night was nonetheless given two more times before it was withdrawn.³⁶

The fandango, then, was performed for the three performances constituting the première, after which the scene was cut. How are we to understand this? I suggest that Mozart's arguing from precedent won him the concession of being provided with dancers for the première. However, in recognition of the fact that the dancing in *La fiera di Venezia* was exceptional, permission to include the fandango was limited to three performances, and the music for it was not retained in the theatre's performance score or, of course, any of the copies made from it. Tyson does not speculate where the Prague performance score might have come from. Normally it would have been ordered from, and copied in, Vienna. Indeed, the events proposed here do allow for the possibility that the Prague score was copied from the Viennese score before it was cut. With that, Tyson's puzzle has been solved.

But there is more to the story. As feared, the dancing in *La fiera di Venezia* did become somewhat of a precedent. Between the founding of the opera buffa company at Easter 1783 and the performance of *La fiera di Venezia* on 12 September 1785 there appears to have been no dancing on the operatic stage. But on 12 October, one month after the première of *La fiera di Venezia*, Storace, in her role of Ofelia, danced the minuet while singing her aria 'La ra la ra, che filosofo buffon' in the première of *La grotta di Trofonio*. Her dancing was apparently a huge success, for a printed vocal score of the aria was issued with an engraving of her dancing and 'Menuetto' engraved prominently at the top of the title page (see Figure 3).³⁷ Engravings on title pages of single numbers published in Vienna are extremely rare; in fact, this is the only one I have seen.

³⁴ This policy, too, is laid out in the 'Punkten', no. 12 (Payer, *Joseph II. als Theaterdirektor*, 29–30). See also Dexter Edge, 'Mozart's Reception in Vienna, 1787–1791', *Wolfgang Amadè Mozart: Essays on his Life and his Music*, ed. Stanley Sadie (Oxford, 1996), 66–117 (p. 79). Since the spoken theatre and opera companies alternated on the stage of the court theatre, neither company normally performed three nights in a row.

³⁵ The policy of scheduling the first three performances as closely as possible could not be followed as rigorously for opera as for the spoken theatre, owing to the frequent indisposition of the singers (Link, *The National Court Theatre*, 486). By rights, *Le nozze di Figaro* should have been performed on 1, 3 and 5 May, but for some reason the third performance was deferred to 8 May, the next evening allocated to opera.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 486–7.

³⁷ Storace repeated her success with this aria in London in 1791, when she inserted it into the opera *The Siege of Belgrade*. The *Gazetteer*, 4 January 1791, reported that 'Storace danced her favourite air with much grace – it was encoded' (Rice, *Antonio Salieri*, 372–3). The aria is included in Dorothea Link, *Arias for Nancy Storace, Mozart's First Susanna*, Recent Researches in the Music of the Classical Era, 66 (Middleton, WI, 2002), 58–60.



Figure 3. Title page of the engraved score of Antonio Salieri, 'La ra la ra, che filosofo buffon', from *La grotta di Trofonio*. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Musiksammlung, MS 27121-qu4. Reproduced with permission from the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.

If Storace was taking liberties with her dancing in an attempt to reclaim the stage from Coltellini after her illness, she met with no censure. On the contrary, her return to the stage was widely celebrated and even occasioned the composition of the song of rejoicing (*Freudenlied*) 'Per la ricuperata salute di Ophelia' by Salieri, Mozart and the mysterious Cornetti. The fandango in *Le nozze di Figaro* was performed the following spring. Later that year, on 17 November, a dance was performed in the second-act finale of *Una cosa rara*. The dance there was a seguidilla, sung and danced by Storace and Dorothea Bussani. Offered as a farewell gift to the opera's Queen Isabella by the two peasant women, the folk dance stands outside the action and may have been intended to honour the Spanish ambassadress, who had donated the Spanish folk costumes to the production. One year later Mozart wrote *Don Giovanni* for Prague. As he could be fairly certain that the opera would be performed in Vienna, as it then was on 7 May 1788, Mozart once again brushed up against the limits when he wrote the ballroom scene in the first-act finale. However, with this dance scene, he seems not to have encountered any resistance in Vienna, as it was apparently performed without the assistance of any dancers. At least, the account books contain no payment to any dancer. In this financially lean year, with Austria having just gone to war with Turkey, any additional expense would in any case have been entirely out of the question. Even trombones, which were not part of the regular orchestra and had to be paid for separately, were cut from the budget.³⁸ The ballroom scene in *Don Giovanni*, as John Rice convincingly demonstrates, was closely modelled on that in *La fiera di Venezia*.³⁹ As in the model, the scene contains three dances, the dancing was dramatically integrated into the action, and the dancing was done by the singers.⁴⁰ The main difference is that, whereas Salieri presented the dances successively, Mozart presented all three dances simultaneously in a characteristic bid to outdo his model.⁴¹

In all the instances I have enumerated, the dancing was done by the singers.⁴² What was so different about the fandango scene in *Le nozze di Figaro* that required

³⁸ Edge, 'Mozart's Viennese Copyists', 1828.

³⁹ Rice, *Antonio Salieri*, 220–31, 471–3.

⁴⁰ *La fiera di Venezia* contains a minuet, a second minuet with two trios, and a forlana, a dance performed by the common people of Venice. *Don Giovanni* presents a minuet, a contredanse and a teitsch or Deutscher, the last two dances representing the lower classes, although by 1787 they were also danced by the nobility.

⁴¹ Rice, *Antonio Salieri*, 200, points out that Mozart had known Salieri's ballroom scene already in the autumn of 1773, when he wrote variations on the theme of its Minuet in G, 'Mio caro Adone', K.180. The variations were advertised by the music copyist Lorenz Lausch in the *Wiener Zeitung* on 5 October 1785, at the time of the opera's revival. Deutsch, *Mozart: Die Dokumente seines Lebens*, 223.

⁴² In a first attempt to contextualize Mozart's dance scenes in opera within operatic practice elsewhere, Daniel Brandenburg surveyed a number of opere buffe, mainly from Naples. He found very few dance scenes in multi-act operas. Those that he found occur mainly within finales, were performed by the singers, either the soloists or the chorus, and were sometimes accompanied by onstage musicians. Very rarely did the dancing involve the participation of professional dancers. Brandenburg suggests that the repertory of operatic centres that had ballet companies, such as

costly professional dancers? Why could the chorus who played the peasants not have danced the fandango? If for some reason they could not do so, could Mozart not have substituted another dance? Was the fandango really all that necessary?

A vivid description of the dance can be found in the correspondence of Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais, the playwright on whose play *Le mariage de Figaro* the opera was based. Beaumarchais had obtained first-hand knowledge of the dance from a visit to Madrid two decades earlier and describes the powerful effect it had on him:

La danse est absolument inconnue ici, je parle de la figurée, car je ne puis honorer de ce nom les mouvements grotesques et souvent indécents des danses grenadines et mauresques qui font les délices du peuple; la plus estimée ici est celle qu'on appelle *fandango*, dont la musique est d'une vivacité extrême, et dont tout l'agrément consiste en quelques pas ou figures lascives, [...] représentant assez bien [...] pour que moi, qui ne suis pas le plus pudique des hommes, j'en aie rougi jusqu'aux yeux. Une jeune Espagnole, sans lever les yeux et avec la physionomie la plus modeste, se lève pour aller figurer devant un hardi sauteur; elle débute par étendre les bras, faire claquer ses doigts; ce qu'elle continue pendant tout le *fandango* pour en marquer la mesure; l'homme la tourne, il va, revient avec des mouvements violents auxquels elle répond par des gestes pareils, mais un peu plus doux, et toujours ce claquement de doigts qui semble dire: Je m'en moque, vas tant que tu pourras, je ne serai pas lasse la première.

(Dance is completely unknown here. I'm speaking of figured dance, for I cannot dignify with that name the grotesque and often indecent movements of the grenadine and Moresque dances that so delight these people. The most highly esteemed dance here is called the fandango, the music of which is extremely vivacious, and in which all pleasure consists of a few steps or lascivious body positions, [...] portraying well enough [...] so that I, who am not the most prudish of men, blushed to the roots of my hair. A young Spanish woman, without raising her eyes and with the most modest countenance, gets up to start moving her body in front of an impudent vaulter; she begins by stretching her arms and snapping her fingers; which she continues to do throughout the entire fandango to mark the beat; the man turns her around, moves away, comes back with violent movements, to which she responds with similar gestures, only a little more gently, and always the snapping of the fingers, which seems to say: what do I care, go on as long as you can, I will not be the first to tire.)⁴³

In place of the steps and figures characteristic of French court dances, the fandango featured gyrating hips and suggestive body movements, accompanied by

Florence, might reveal a different picture. See his 'Zu Tanz und Bewegungsphänomenen in der Opera buffa des 18. Jahrhunderts', *Tanz und Bewegung in der Barocken Oper*, ed. Sibylle Dahms and Stephanie Schroedter (Vienna, 1996), 159–73.

⁴³ Letter of 24 December 1764 in *Beaumarchais: Correspondance*, ed. Brian Morton, 4 vols. (Paris, 1969), i, 129; my translation.

the continuous snapping of the fingers.⁴⁴ Giacomo Casanova, too, has left a detailed description of the dance, in two separate passages:

Quelle danse! Elle brûle, elle enflamme, elle enlève. Malgré cela, on a voulu m'assurer que la plus grande partie des Espagnols et des Espagnoles qui la dansent n'y entendent pas malice. J'ai fait semblant de le croire.⁴⁵

(What a dance! It burns, enflames, ravishes. Yet in spite of this, many have tried to tell me that most Spanish men and women who dance it do so without mischievous intention. And I have pretended to believe them.)⁴⁶

It was not just the movements, then, but also the ethos of the dance that made it culturally alien to the rest of Europe. Casanova provides greater detail in the second passage:

Le grand spectacle qui m'a ravi fut vers la fin du bal, lorsque au son de l'orchestre, après un claquement de mains général, on commença une danse de deux à deux, dont je n'avais jamais vu la plus folle et la plus intéressante. C'était le *Fandango*, dont je croyais d'avoir une idée juste, mais je me trompais très fort. Je ne l'avais vu danser qu'en Italie et en France sur le théâtre où les danseurs n'y faisaient le moindre des gestes de la nation qui rendent cette danse véritablement séduisante. Je ne saurais en faire la description. Chacun avec sa chacune dansait face à face, ne faisant jamais que trois pas, frappant des castagnettes qu'on tien entre les doigts, et accompagnant l'harmonie avec des attitudes dont on ne pouvait voir rien de plus lascif. Celles de l'homme indiquaient visiblement l'action de l'amour heureux, celles de la femme le consentement, le ravissement, l'extase du plaisir. Il me paraissait qu'une femme quelconque ne pouvait plus rien refuser à un homme avec lequel elle aurait dansé le *fandango*.⁴⁷

(Towards the end of the ball I became entranced by a grand spectacle when, to the sound of the orchestra, after general applause, a dance for couples began, wilder and more fascinating than any I had ever seen. It was the *fandango*, of which I thought I had a proper idea. But I was quite mistaken. I had only seen it performed on the stage in Italy and France, where the dancers did not make even the slightest of the gestures the Spanish made, which render this dance truly seductive. I could never properly describe it. Each man and woman danced face to face, taking only three steps at a time, clicking castanets between their fingers and accompanying the music with poses as lascivious as anything one could ever see. The man's motions visibly represented the action of satisfied love, those of the woman, consent, ravishment, and the ecstasy of pleasure. I was under the impression that no woman could refuse anything to a man with whom she had danced the *Fandango*.)⁴⁸

⁴⁴ The dance differed radically from the French court dances not only in its bodily gestures but also in the harmonic and motivic construction of the music. See Wye Jamison Allanbrook, *Rhythmic Gesture in Mozart: 'Le nozze di Figaro' and 'Don Giovanni'* (Chicago, 1983), 153–4, for a close analysis of Mozart's fandango.

⁴⁵ Jacques Casanova de Seingalt, *Histoire de ma vie*, xi, Chapter 1; ed. Francis Lacassin (Paris, 1993), iii, 594.

⁴⁶ Giacomo Casanova, *The Story of my Life*, trans. Stephen Sartarelli and Sophie Hawkes, selections by Gilberto Pizzamiglio (New York, 2000), 473.

⁴⁷ Casanova de Seingalt, *Histoire de ma vie*, x, Chapter 12; ed. Lacassin, iii, 581–2.

⁴⁸ Casanova, *The Story of my Life*, trans. Sartarelli and Hawkes, 462.

While Casanova so delighted in the dance that he immediately set about to learn it, Henry Swinburne, an art connoisseur from Bristol, viewed it with some astonishment and amusement:

Our evening [in Barcelona] ended with a ball, where we had for the first time the pleasure of seeing the Fandango danced. It is odd and entertaining enough, when they execute with precision and agility all the various footings, wheelings of the arms, and cracking of the fingers; but it exceeds in wantonness all the dances I ever beheld. Such motions, such writhings of the body and positions of the limbs, as no modest eye can look upon without a blush! A good Fandango lady will stand five minutes in one spot, wriggling like a worm that has just been cut into two.⁴⁹

The degree of sexual explicitness varied according to class and whether it was danced on the dance floor or in the theatre. Another English traveller, Joseph Townsend, witnessed the dance in at least two social milieux:

As danced by the vulgar, it is most disgusting; as refined in higher life, covered with a most elegant yet transparent veil, it ceases to disgust; and, from that very circumstance, excites those passions in the youthful breast, which wisdom finds it difficult to curb.⁵⁰

Carlo Blasis similarly distinguishes between refined and vulgar renditions of the dance:

[The fandango] was formerly danced much more generally by persons of quality, after the regulations enacted for the theatre, which introduced more dignity, more formality, and unaccompanied by the slightest movement that could give offence to modesty, or shock good taste. The lower orders, amongst whom this dance is in high request, accompany it with attitudes which savour of the vulgarity of the principal performers, and their extravagant movements never slacken, never cease, till they are airily tired out.⁵¹

From first-hand accounts of the dance such as these there emerged the codification of the dance and its character in dictionaries and histories, such as John Hawkins's capsule description: '[The fandango] is danced by a man and a woman, and consists in a variety of the most indecent gesticulations that can

⁴⁹ Henry Swinburne, *Travels through Spain in the Years 1775 and 1776* (London, 1787), cited in Judith Etzion, 'The Spanish Fandango: From Eighteenth-Century "Lasciviousness" to Nineteenth-Century Exoticism', *Anuario musical*, 48 (1993), 229–50 (p. 234).

⁵⁰ Joseph Townsend, *A Journey through Spain in the Years 1786 and 1787* (2nd edn, London, 1792), cited *ibid.*, 234. Edward Clarke confirms that the dance was performed by all levels of society: '[The Fundungo (*sic*) is] danced by the first of the nobility, as well as by the common people.' *Letters Concerning the Spanish Nation: Written at Madrid during the Years 1760 and 1761* (London, 1763), cited *ibid.*, 233.

⁵¹ Carlo Blasis, *The Code of Terpsichore* (London, 1828), cited in Monika Woitas, "... Bewegungen von unvergleichlicher Sinnlichkeit . . .": Auf den Spuren des berühmt-berüchtigten Fandango', *De editione musices: Festschrift Gerhard Croll zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Wolfgang Gratzner and Andrea Lindmayr (Laaber, 1992), 203–18 (p. 205).

be conceived.⁵² The dance's affect clung to it well into the nineteenth century, as illustrated by the *Universal-Lexicon der Tonkunst*:

Daß dieser spanische Nationaltanz im höchsten Grade sinnereizend ist, wird Niemand bestreiten, der ihn mit uns von Spanien wirklich ausführen sah, und es kann daher nur gut geheißen werden, daß den in Deutschland reisenden spanischen Kunsttäzern an mehreren Orten untersagt wurde, ihn öffentlich zu tanzen.

(That this Spanish national dance is sensually provocative to the highest degree is not disputed by anyone who, like us, has actually seen it performed in Spain, and one therefore can only approve when the authorities in several places have forbidden Spanish dance troupes travelling through Germany from performing it in public.)⁵³

The Viennese had seen a fandango performed by the court theatre dance company in 1761 in Gluck's ballet *Don Juan*.⁵⁴ Mozart's choristers in *Le nozze di Figaro* may even have seen a fandango on stage, but obviously they could not be called upon to perform it. The dance clearly had to be left to professional dancers.

A dance so quintessentially Spanish and overtly sexual, then, had no substitute. Since Beaumarchais specified it in the play, the librettist and the composer had to choose between omitting it or including it with all the attendant problems. The decision depended ultimately on what purpose the fandango served, whether it had a dramatic function or whether it merely provided local colour. As will be seen, in the play it was the latter, but in the opera it became the former. Like many other plays staged by the Comédie Française, *Le mariage de Figaro* was performed with incidental music in the form of popular songs arranged by the theatre's house composer. The fandango scene came in for especially elaborate treatment, with continuous music and dancing in the manner of an operatic divertissement.⁵⁵ The melodies of the three popular songs that the music comprised were identified by name and printed complete in the text of the play's first edition. Beaumarchais's detailed stage directions for this scene are well worth examining for what they reveal about how Da Ponte and Mozart adapted this scene for their opera:

Le comte, la comtesse, assis; l'on joue les 'Folies d'Espagne' d'un mouvement de marche. (Symphonie notée). . . . Les Paysans et Paysannes s'étant rangés sur deux colonnes à chaque côté du salon, on danse une reprise du fandango (air noté) avec des castagnettes; puis on joue la ritournelle du duo, pendant laquelle Antonio conduit Suzanne au comte; elle se met

⁵² John Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music* (London, 1776), cited in Etzion, 'The Spanish Fandango', 235.

⁵³ *Encyclopädie der gesammten musikalischen Wissenschaften, oder Universal-Lexicon der Tonkunst*, ed. Gustav Schilling, 6 vols. (Stuttgart, 1835), ii, 652, as quoted in Woitas, "' . . . Bewegungen von unvergleichlicher Sinnlichkeit . . .'", 212; my translation.

⁵⁴ This fandango is usually thought to have served as the model for Mozart.

⁵⁵ Bruce Alan Brown, 'Beaumarchais, Mozart and the Vaudeville', *Musical Times*, 127 (1986), 261–5 (pp. 261–2).

à genoux devant lui. Pendant que le comte lui pose la toque, le viole, et lui donne le bouquet, deux jeunes filles chantent le duo suivant (air noté): 'Jeune épouse...'. Suzanne est à genoux, et, pendant les derniers vers du duo, elle tire le comte par son manteau et lui montre le billet qu'elle tient; puis elle porte la main qu'elle a du côté des spectateurs à sa tête, où le comte a l'air d'ajuster sa toque; elle lui donne le billet. Le comte le met furtivement dans son sein; on achève de chanter le duo; la fiancée se relève et lui fait une grande révérence. Figaro vient la recevoir des mains du comte et se retire avec elle, à l'autre côté du salon, près de Marceline. (On danse une autre reprise du fandango, pendant ce temps.) Le comte, pressé de lire ce qu'il a reçu, s'avance au bord du théâtre et tire le papier de son sein; mais en la sortant il fait le geste d'un homme qui s'est cruellement piqué le doigt; il le secoue, le presse, le suce, et regardant le papier cacheté d'une épingle, il dit: (Pendant qu'il parle, ainsi que Figaro, l'orchestre joue pianissimo.): 'Diantre soit des femmes, qui fourrent des épingles partout'. (Il la jette à terre, puis il lit le billet et le baise.) Figaro, qui a tout vu, dit à sa mère et à Suzanne: 'C'est un billet doux, qu'une fillette aura glissé dans sa main en passant. Il était cacheté d'une épingle, qui l'a outrageusement piqué'. (La danse reprend: le comte qui a lu le billet le retourne; il y voit l'invitation de renvoyer le cachet pour réponse. Il cherche à terre et retrouve enfin l'épingle qu'il attache à sa manche.) Figaro, à Suzanne et à Marceline: 'D'une objet aimé tout est cher. Le voilà qui ramasse l'épingle. Ah, c'est une drôle de tête!'. (Pendant ce temps, Suzanne a des signes d'intelligence avec la comtesse. La danse finit, la ritournelle du duo recommence.) Figaro conduit Marceline au comte, ainsi qu'on a conduit Suzanne; à l'instant où le comte prend la toque et où l'on va chanter le duo, on est interrompu par les cris suivants . . .

(The Count and Countess, seated; the 'Folies d'Espagne' is played in the tempo of a march [musical insert], to which the bridal couples and guests file in and take their places. The peasants and their wives, having lined up in two columns on either side of the room, dance one statement of the fandango [musical insert] with castanets. Then the ritornello of the ensuing duet is played, during which Antonio leads Suzanne to the Count. She kneels before him. While he places the bridal crown and veil on her head and gives her the bouquet, two girls sing the duet [musical insert]. During the final lines of the duet, Suzanne, still on her knees, tugs at the Count's coat and shows him the note she is holding. She then raises the hand nearest the audience to her head, where the Count appears to adjust her bridal crown, and gives him the note. The Count furtively tucks it into his breast pocket. The duet comes to an end. Suzanne rises and makes a deep curtsy. Figaro comes forward to receive her from the Count's hand and withdraws with her to the other side of the room, next to Marceline. Meanwhile the fandango is danced again. The Count, eager to read the note, moves to one side of the stage and takes it from his breast pocket. As he does so, he makes the gesture of someone who has just pricked his finger. He shakes it, squeezes and sucks it, and looking at the note fastened by a pin, says, 'The deuce take women, who stick pins everywhere.' While he speaks, and similarly later Figaro, the orchestra plays pianissimo. The Count throws the pin on the ground, then reads the note and kisses it. Figaro, who has observed everything, says to his mother and Suzanne, 'That's a love-note, which some young woman slipped into his hand in passing. It was fastened with a pin, which has had the audacity to prick him.' The dancing is resumed. The Count, who has read the note, turns it over and sees the request to return the pin. He searches the ground and eventually finds the pin, fastening it to his sleeve. Figaro says to Suzanne, 'Everything from the beloved is precious. Look, he is picking up the pin. What a strange man he is.' Meanwhile, Suzanne exchanges knowing looks with the Countess. The dance completed, the ritornello of the duet begins anew, as Figaro leads Marceline to the Count, just as had

been done with Suzanne. At the moment when the Count takes the bridal crown and the duet is about to be sung, the proceedings are interrupted by cries from outside . . .)⁵⁶

On the whole Da Ponte and Mozart adhere closely to the play, but they make several changes to focus the action. They present the two marriages simultaneously and omit Beaumarchais's first fandango, which the peasants perform between the march and the first duet, retaining only the second fandango, which begins after Figaro receives Susanna from the Count. Here is where they depart – or perhaps just Mozart departs, since this stage direction can be found only in the musical sources – most significantly from Beaumarchais: Figaro dances the fandango.

The dramatic function of Figaro's dancing, however, is not at all obvious, as the stage directions are not clearly spelt out in any source, including Mozart's autograph. Mozart's conception of the dramatic action can nonetheless be tentatively pieced together. My reconstruction of the dance scene begins with the libretto. The description of the action leading up to the dancing reads as follows:

Susanna essendo in ginocchio durante il duo tira il Conte par l'abito, gli mostra il bigliettino, dopo passa la mano dal lato degli spettatori alla testa, dove pare che il Conte le aggiusti il cappello, e le dà il biglietto. Il Conte se lo mette furtivamente in seno, Sus[anna] s'alza, e gli fa una riverenza. Figaro viene a riceverla; e si balla il fandango.

(Susanna, on her knees during the duo, tugs the Count's coat, shows him the little note, then moves the hand on the side of the audience to her head, where the Count appears to adjust her headpiece, and gives him the note. The Count puts it furtively into his breast pocket, Susanna rises and curtsies to him. Figaro comes to receive her; and a fandango is danced.)⁵⁷

The libretto has for the moment nothing further to say, and we turn to the autograph to follow the cues there (see Figure 4).⁵⁸ Only bars 15–22 of the fandango (bars 146–53 of the finale) from the autograph are shown, since they contain the markings that are of interest here. This passage can be compared with bars 148–56 in the *Neue Mozart Ausgabe* (see Example 1). In bar 1 of the dance (bar 132 of the finale) Mozart has written 'Figuranti ballano' ('The figuranti dance'). At the beginning of the second phrase of the dance (bar 9; bar 140) he writes 'Figaro balla' ('Figaro dances'). At the third phrase (bar 21; bar 152) he once again cues in the 'figuranti'. Mozart places the stage direction 'Il Conte cava il biglietto, e nel

⁵⁶ Act 4, scene ix, of Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais, *Le mariage de Figaro*, *Oeuvres*, ed. Pierre Larthomas with Jacqueline Larthomas (Paris, 1988), 459–60; my translation.

⁵⁷ *Le nozze di Figaro* (Vienna, 1786), facsimile in *The Librettos of Mozart's Operas*, introduction by Ernest Warburton (New York, 1992), iii, 81.

⁵⁸ The autograph's fandango has been in part discussed by Gerhard Croll, 'Figaro und Don Juan: Über das spanische Kolorit bei Mozart', *Internationaler Musikwissenschaftlicher Kongreß zum Mozartjahr 1991, Baden-Wien*, ed. Ingrid Fuchs, 2 vols. (Tutzing, 1993), ii, 515–19 (p. 517), and Malkiewicz, "Frames and Fringes", 81. I am grateful to Michael Malkiewicz for sending me a copy of his article in advance of its publication. He is the first scholar to point out that the direction 'Il Conte cava il biglietto . . .' occurs in bar 18 in the autograph.

Handwritten musical score for Act 3, page 119. The page features several staves of music. The word "Figuranti:" is written above the first staff. The number "119" is written in the top right corner. The bottom staff contains the handwritten text: "il conte cava il biglietto, e nel aprirlo si punge il ditto." The number "119" is also written in the bottom right corner.

Figure 4. Page 119 of the Act 3 autograph, showing Mozart's placement of 'figuranti' and 'il conte cava il biglietto, e nel aprirlo si punge il ditto'. Reproduced with permission from the Biblioteka Jagiellońska, Kraków.

Example 1. Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, Act 3 finale, Andante, bars 148–56, NMA, II/5, vol. 16, part ii, p. 452. Reproduced from www.nma.at with permission from the Internationale Stiftung Mozarteum Salzburg.

148 *1mo*

Fl.

Ob.

Fag.

V. I

V. II

Va.

Vc. e B.

(Figuranti)

152 *1mo*

Fl.

Fag.

V. I

V. II

Va.

H. C.

IL CONTE (cava il biglietto e nel aprirlo si punge il dito.)
Eh... già so-li-ta u-san-za, le don-nefic-can

Vc. e B.

aprirlo si punge il ditto' ('The Count pulls out the note and in opening it pricks his finger') over the Count's part in bars 18–20 (bars 149–51). In bar 23 (bar 154) the Count begins to sing 'Eh già solita usanza'. Between pricking his finger and singing he has time (five bars) to shake, squeeze and suck his bleeding finger.

Although the markings in the autograph are clear enough, editors, not understanding the dramatic action, have been reluctant to reproduce what they saw. This is particularly remarkable in the case of the scholarly editions that claim to be based on the autograph. The four that will be examined below consist of the edition made for the first complete works (1879),⁵⁹ those of Hermann Abert (1926)⁶⁰ and Georg Schünemann (1941),⁶¹ and that in the second complete works, the NMA (1973).⁶² In their decisions about what to do with the markings in the autograph, the editors may have been influenced by the performance tradition that had evolved over the course of the nineteenth century. Some idea of this performance tradition in its incipient stages may be obtained by examining three early editions: the vocal score made by Johann Baptist Kucharz in Prague in 1786 or 1787 and sold in manuscript copies,⁶³ the first printed vocal score made by C. G. Neefe and published by Simrock in 1796,⁶⁴ and a printed orchestral score published by Simrock in 1819 (see Table 1).⁶⁵ Kucharz's is the only edition among those examined here to place the stage direction for the Count to open the note and prick his finger in bar 18, where Mozart places it. The edition also contains the first two cues for the dancing, 'figuranti ballano' and 'Figaro balla' in bars 1 and 9 respectively, but omits the second cue for the 'Figuranti' at bar 21. The Simrock vocal score reproduces only the stage direction 'Figuranti ballano' in bar 1; it does not cue in 'Figaro balla' in bar 9, or the 'Figuranti' at bar 21. This edition moves the stage direction for the Count, 'Il Conte cava il biglietto, e nel aprirlo si punge il dito', to his vocal entry in bar 23, 'Eh già solita usanza', where all the later editions examined here place it. The Simrock orchestral score of 1819 restores the instruction for Figaro to begin dancing at bar 9, but otherwise follows the earlier Simrock vocal score. Turning to the scholarly editions listed

⁵⁹ Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozarts Werke, ser. 5, vol. 17 (Leipzig, 1879), 303–5; hereafter MW.

⁶⁰ Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro (Figaros Hochzeit)*, ed. Hermann Abert (Mainz, London and New York, 1926), 541–6.

⁶¹ Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Die Hochzeit des Figaro: Le nozze di Figaro*, ed. Georg Schünemann (Leipzig, 1941; repr. New York, 1979), 331–2.

⁶² Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, ed. Ludwig Finscher, NMA, II/5, vol. 16, part ii (Kassel, Basle, etc., 1973), 450–5. As explained in the Vorwort, Finscher had no access to the Mozart autograph of Acts 3 and 4, which disappeared during the Second World War, and he consequently relied for those acts on the MW, Abert and Schünemann editions.

⁶³ The title page of the copy in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek (hereafter A–Wn) states 'Rappresentata nel Teatro di Praga l'Anno 1786'; an advertisement by Kucharz appeared in the *Wiener Zeitung* on 6 June 1787 (Tyson, *Mozart*, 297, 299). This score reflected the Prague version of the opera (*ibid.*, 311).

⁶⁴ Copy in A–Wn, MS 10220-qu4, identified as the seventh printing, made after 1799, in Gertraut Haberkamp, *Die Erstdrucke der Werke von Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Bibliographie*, 2 vols. (Tutzing, 1986), i, 259.

⁶⁵ Plate number 1603; mentioned in Haberkamp, *Die Erstdrucke*, 261, and Ludwig von Köchel, *Chronologisch-thematisches Verzeichnis sämtlicher Tonwerke Wolfgang Amadé Mozarts*, ed. Franz Giegling, Alexander Weinmann and Gerd Sievers (6th edn, Wiesbaden, 1964), 545.

TABLE 1

STAGE DIRECTIONS IN MOZART'S AUTOGRAPH AND SELECTED EDITIONS

source	bar 1	bar 9	bar 18	bar 20	bar 21	bar 23
autograph	Figuranti ballano	Figaro balla	Il conte . . . si punge		figuranti	Il con: [sings]
Kucharz	figuranti ballano	Figaro balla	Il conte . . . si punge			
Simrock vocal score	Figuranti ballano					Il conte . . . si punge
Simrock orch. score	I figuranti ballano	Figaro balla				Il conte . . . si punge
MW, Abert	I Figuranti ballona	Figaro balla				Il conte . . . si punge
Schünemann	Figuranti ballano	Figaro balla		Figuranti		Il conte . . . si punge
NMA	I figuranti ballano	Figaro balla		Figuranti		Il conte . . . si punge

above, we find that the MW edition contains the directions 'I Figuranti ballona' (*sic*) and 'Figaro balla' in bars 1 and 9 respectively, and, like all the editions seen so far, omits the second cue for the 'Figuranti' at bar 21. It also places the direction for the Count to read the note and prick his finger at his vocal entry in bar 23. The Abert edition replicates the scene from the MW unchanged. Schünemann follows the previous two editions in providing the directions 'Figuranti ballano' and 'Figaro balla' in bars 1 and 9, and combining the Count's action with his vocal entry in bar 23, but for the first time in the scores examined here he restores Mozart's second stage direction, 'Figuranti'. However, presumably as a conducting aid, he places the cue not at the beginning of bar 21 where it applies, but on the last beat of the previous bar. The NMA follows Schünemann, only changing the orthography of the first stage direction to 'I figuranti ballano'.

That the uncertainty over how to perform this scene plagued productions from early on is confirmed in some German librettos, in the stage directions leading up to the dancing. In the dual-texted (Italian and German) libretto of the Berlin production of 1790, for example, 'Figaro viene a receverla: e si balla il fandango' is translated as 'Figaro kommt nun auf sie zu, und fängt an, den Fandango mit ihr zu tanzen' ('Figaro approaches her and starts to dance the fandango with her').⁶⁶ Schünemann, in his dual-texted (German and English) edition, in a similar sense translates the sentence as 'Figaro empfängt sie vom Grafen, und sie tanzen

⁶⁶ *Le nozze di Figaro: Figaro's Hochzeit* (Berlin, 1790), 128–9; copy in Washington, Library of Congress, Schatz 6827.

Fandango' ('Figaro receives her from the Count and they dance the fandango').⁶⁷ Both translations are correct readings of the stage directions supplied by Da Ponte. But anyone familiar with Beaumarchais's more detailed stage instructions or the production at the première would translate 'e si balla il fandango' as 'and a fandango is danced', as was indeed the case in the German-language production in Vienna in 1798, where the stage direction reads 'Figaro kommt nun, sie von dem Grafen zu empfangen, und man tanzt das Fandango' ('Figaro comes to receive her from the Count, and a fandango is danced').⁶⁸ This libretto also shows that the fandango was restored to the opera in Vienna in 1798, the next production after the 1789 revival.

The first-desk part for the first violin from the OA 295 Stimmen, mentioned earlier, contains a real surprise. Someone has written into the music the same cues for the dancing as in the autograph, but reworded in clear musician's language: bar 1 'Ballo Tutti' ('dance [for] everyone'), bar 9 'Ballo Solo', bar 21 'Ballo Tutti'. What is surprising here is not that the choreography is notated in the first-desk first-violin part, which is standard practice for ballets, but that the cues make use of concerto terminology. While it apparently clarified the stage action for the violinist, it does not tell us whether the *figuranti* and Figaro alternate or whether the *figuranti* carry on dancing after Figaro starts to dance. The latter alternative more closely resembles what actually happens in the performance of a concerto, where some of the orchestral players continue to play after the soloist enters. I prefer this reading, especially in light of the dramatic action I am going to propose. I suggest, then, that Figaro dances in the foreground against a background of dancing *figuranti*. Rather oddly, though, he dances a couples dance alone. Something is missing. To review the scene: the *figuranti* start dancing, Figaro joins them in the second phrase, 11 bars later the Count pulls out the note and pricks his finger, and three bars after that Figaro drops out of the dance.⁶⁹ What has Figaro been doing?

The answer came to me when I happened upon a little-known piece of biographical information about Francesco Benucci, the singer who created Figaro. Benucci spent at least three years in the early part of his career, 1774–7, in Madrid.⁷⁰ It is hard to imagine that Benucci would not have learnt the

⁶⁷ Croll may be thinking of this translation when he states that 'Selbstverständlich tanzt Figaro mit Susanna (die Regie-Anweisung Da Pontes macht dazu präzise Angaben)' ('Of course Figaro dances with Susanna (Da Ponte's stage directions are precise on that)'), even though the marking 'Figaro balla' in the autograph, which he discusses several sentences later, is clearly in the singular (Croll, *Figaro und Don Juan*, 517).

⁶⁸ *Die Hochzeit des Figaro* (Vienna, 1798), 81; copy in A–Wn, shelf number MS 1724-A TB.

⁶⁹ The cue 'Figuranti' at bar 21 signals the end of Figaro's dancing and the re-emergence of the *figuranti* into the foreground.

⁷⁰ *Un almanaco drammatico: L'indice de' teatrali spettacoli, 1764–1823*, facsimile reprint with an introduction by Roberto Verti, 2 vols. (Pesaro, 1996), i, 108, 155, 211. Also, D. Emilio Cotarelo y Mori, *Orígenes y establecimiento de la ópera en España hasta 1800* (Madrid, 1917), 206.

fandango, if not for social, then certainly for professional reasons, for at this time the dance had already begun its migration from the dance floor to the stage.⁷¹

Thus it seems that when Mozart learnt of Benucci's unexpected skill, he made his dancing central to the scene. In an opera seething with sexual tension, this scene is the point of sharpest confrontation between the two competing males, Figaro and the Count. The *figuranti* have no sooner begun the fandango than Figaro, with characteristic nimbleness of mind, seizes on the dancing to engage the momentarily stunned Count in a perverse coupling. The sexual implications of Figaro's danced gestures hardly needed to be spelt out for an eighteenth-century audience, but they were in any case immediately confirmed in the pin-prick, a widely understood symbol for sexual penetration. Brief though the moment is, it is a delicious triumph for Figaro. It also casts the spotlight on the singer Benucci by allowing him to display his unexpected dancing skills. It is now obvious to us, as it must have been to the emperor, that the *figuranti* were absolutely essential. It speaks well of Joseph that he made a concession on the point of the dancers in recognition of the brilliance of this little *coup de théâtre*, quite apart from the fact that he could hardly deny Benucci a dance scene after the prima donna had had one six months earlier. What an extraordinarily exquisite tailoring of a scene to a singer's talents. The real dramatic significance of the fandango scene, then, lies not in the Count's reading of the note but in Figaro's bodily retort to the Count's attempts to destroy his and Susanna's marital happiness by means of the dance.

ABSTRACT

This article concerns the use of dance in the Act 3 finale of Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, starting from the problem articulated by Alan Tyson in his *Mozart: Studies of the Autograph Scores*. Tyson points out that the absence of the fandango from the Viennese musical sources is at odds with Da Ponte's statement that the dance scene was restored at the emperor's command. New evidence shows that the fandango was performed for the three performances that constituted a première at this time in Vienna and was then removed from the score. However, before its removal, the score with the fandango intact was copied for at least one other theatre, hence accounting for the two versions that circulated through Europe. The article goes on to consider the dramatic function of the fandango by exploring the nature of the dance itself and examining the stage directions in the autograph in combination with those in Beaumarchais's play, several early librettos and editions, and the original first-desk first-violin part.

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⁷¹ By 1820, the stage is the only place where the fandango can still be found, according to Antonio Cairon, *Compendio de las principales reglas del baile* (Madrid, 1820), 100, quoted in Woitas, "... Bewegungen von unvergleichlicher Sinnlichkeit ...", 204.