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## THE ORIGINS OF THE CLASSICAL ORCHESTRA

by NEAL ZASLAW

„Definitions are hazardous,“ the great eighteenth-century lexicographer Dr. Samuel Johnson cautions. In working on the early history of the orchestra, I have had more than one occasion to meditate upon this dictum. The difficulty in defining „the classical orchestra“ arises not merely from our close familiarity with orchestras but from their changeable nature: over the centuries the orchestra has assumed as many forms as Proteus. We feel we know what an orchestra is and that we can recognize one when we see or hear it. Yet explaining precisely what an orchestra is and how it differs from other groups of instrumentalists proves a daunting task.

I have looked up „orchestra“ in dozens of dictionaries and encyclopedias, but the definitions I found disappoint me. I wish to know not only what an orchestra is, but how it functions. In this paper I will, therefore, attempt to examine as many of the characteristics of this central institution of Western music as I can.<sup>1</sup> This will not be an etymological investigation of the various meanings of the word „orchestra“ over the centuries, a task that has already been ably undertaken by the Swiss scholar Martin Staehelin.<sup>2</sup> Rather, I am seeking an acceptable description of what we consider an orchestra to be, no matter by what name it may have been called at the time. And what were those names? Speaking primarily of the second half of the seventeenth and first half of the eighteenth centuries, we find the following. In Italy large ensembles of instrumentalists were sometimes called *la capella*, *il coro*, *il concerto*, *il concerto grosso*, *la sinfonia*, or *gli stromenti*. And the doubling of parts was called for by the instruction „radoppiati.“

In France large ensembles of instrumentalists were sometimes called *les violons*, *les grands violons*, *les petits violons*, *les concertan[t]s*, *les instrumen[t]s*, *les joueurs d'instrumen[t]s*, and, from 1672 at the latest, *l'orquestre*.<sup>3</sup>

In Germany we find *die Kapelle*, *der Chor*, *die Musik*, *eine starke Musik*, *eine grosse Musik*, and *die Instrumenten*. In England we have *consort*, *band*, *grand band*, *the violins*, and *the gentlemen of the music room*. Many of these expressions in all four languages were sometimes also used to refer to mixed groups of voices and instruments. And two cognate groups of them (*capella*/

<sup>1</sup> The present essay enlarges upon an earlier effort: „When is an Orchestra not an Orchestra?,“ *Early Music* 16 (1988) pp. 483–95.

<sup>2</sup> „Orchester,“ *Handwörterbuch der musikalischen Terminologie*, ed. H. H. Eggebrecht (Wiesbaden, 1971–).

<sup>3</sup> „Ordonnance portant défenses aux Comédiens de se servir dans leurs représentations de plus de deux voix et de six violons“ (22 April 1672). Paris: Archives de la Bastille, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, MS 10,295, published in Pierre Mélése, *Le théâtre et le public à Paris sous Louis XIV, 1659–1715* (Paris, 1934), pp. 417–18.



*Kapelle/chapel, orchestre/orchestra*) and possibly a third (*coro/Chor/chœur/choir*) are metonymic in origin – that is, they acquired their names from the venues with which they are associated.

Let us put terminology aside and turn now to defining, describing and explaining what the classical orchestra was. My research suggests that the following dozen interlocking and overlapping characteristics must be considered in examining what is necessary and sufficient to the existence and functioning of early orchestras.

(1) *Violin-family instruments*. The string band had been known in many parts of Europe from at least the early-sixteenth century, sometimes made up of viols, sometimes violins, sometimes doubled, often one on a part.<sup>4</sup> But it was the brilliance and prestige of the proto-orchestral *Vingt-quatre violons du roi* at the French court in the mid-seventeenth century that led eventually to emulation in Germany, Italy and England in the last third of the century. An orchestra is based on a core group of bowed stringed instruments of the violin family. The core group of violin-family instruments is a defining characteristic.

(2) *Strings doubled but unequally*. In a five-part Renaissance string consort, doubling (when used) could mean ten players, two per part; larger forces could mean fifteen players, three per part; and so on. In Monteverdi's *Orfeo* of 1607, for instance, the ten violin-family instruments are divided into two five-part consorts that play sometimes separately and sometimes doubling. In an orchestra, however, the stringed instruments are multiplied, but seldom equally – that is, there will almost always be more violins than lower strings. The presence of violin „sections“ is defining for the orchestra. Violas, on the other hand, may be only one or two, or sometimes even absent entirely.

As for the bassline, it will almost always be played by several instruments but not necessarily by anything resembling cello or double bass „sections.“ Consider, for instance, Haydn's instructions in 1768 to an unknown orchestra:

... the bassoon can be omitted if absolutely necessary, but I would rather have it, especially since the bass is obligato throughout. And I prefer an orchestra [*Music*] with three bass instruments – cello, bassoon and double bass – to one with six double basses and three cellos, because [in the latter scoring] certain passages cannot be heard clearly.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Peter Holman, *Four and Twenty Fiddlers': The Violin at the English Court 1540–1690* (Oxford, 1993); François Lesure, „Les orchestres populaires à Paris vers la fin du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle“, *Revue de musicologie* 36 (1954), pp. 39–54.

<sup>5</sup> H. C. Robbins Landon and Dénes Bartha (eds.), *Joseph Haydn: Gesammelte Briefe und Aufzeichnungen* (Kassel, 1965), p. 60; trans. H. C. Robbins Landon, *Joseph Haydn: Collected Correspondence and London Notebooks* (London, 1959), pp. 10–11, as modified by James Webster. „In der Sopran Aria kan allenfalls der Fagot ausbleiben, jedoch wäre es mir lieber, wan selber zugegen wäre, zu mahlen der Bass durchaus obligat, und schätze jene Music mit denen 3 Bassen, als Violoncello, Fagot und Violon höher, als 6 Violon mit 3 Violoncello, weil sich gewisse Passagen hart distinguiren.“



(3) *Winds*. Orchestras include wind instruments whose functions usually extend beyond *colla parte* doubling of (or substituting for) the strings. The presence of wind instruments, most often in smaller numbers than the violin-family instruments, is a defining characteristic of the so-called symphony orchestra, although string orchestras can and do exist. Woodwind instruments may or may not be doubled, depending upon the splendor of the occasion, the musical genre, local traditions, the number of strings, and the size and acoustic of the venue. Whether or not doubled, these woodwinds are not Renaissance recorders, shawms and curtals or *dulcians*, but Baroque oboes, bassoons, recorders and transverse flutes. For most of the eighteenth century, flutes and clarinets were oboe substitutes handled by the oboe players. Bassoons, when they lacked obbligato parts, usually played along on the bassline.

The availability of pairs of horns was defining for the Classical orchestra, although not for the Baroque orchestra. Trumpets and timpani were optional instruments, for festive music; the players were sometimes not regular members of the orchestra but belonged to the local waits, cavalry or military band. The rise of orchestras in Europe at the end of the seventeenth or beginning of the eighteenth century coincides with the spread of the new „Baroque“ woodwind instruments as well as the domestication of the hunting horn. Most studies of the new woodwinds have attributed their development to makers and players associated with the French court in Paris and Versailles. But there was apparently an important Dutch connection, because the clearest surviving evidence for the evolution of the Baroque oboe comes from surviving Dutch instruments, and the earliest evidence for the Baroque bassoon comes from a Dutch painting of the 1660s.<sup>6</sup> The transverse flute, the clarinet and orchestral horns emerged a few decades after the double reeds.

The introduction of horns into the orchestra resulted from a journey by Count Franz Anton Sporck, who in 1681 brought French hunting horns and players from Paris to his estate in Bohemia, where others were taught to play the instruments. Within two decades horns began to be used for art music.<sup>7</sup>

(4) *Stable instrumentation*. Certainly in the Middle Ages and Renaissance there were favored instruments and groupings of instruments for church, chamber and theater music, but these were rarely specified and almost any work, and each new production of the same work, could be freely re-instrumented. The orchestral idea maintained the basics of instrumentation relatively constant for a given period and repertory, however much composers

<sup>6</sup> Lyndesay G. Langwill, *The Bassoon and Contrabassoon* (London, 1965), pl. 9, fig. 1; James B. Kopp, „Notes on the Bassoon in Seventeenth-Century France,“ *Journal of the American Musical Instrument Society* 17 (1991), pp. 85–114; Bruce Haynes, „Lully and the Rise of the Oboe as Seen in Works of Art,“ *Early Music* 16 (1988), pp. 324–38; William Waterhouse, „A Newly Discovered Seventeenth-Century Bassoon by Haka,“ *Early Music* 16 (1988), pp. 407–10.

<sup>7</sup> Horace Fitzpatrick, *The Horn and Horn Playing and the Austro-Bohemian Tradition from 1680 to 1830* (London, 1970), pp. 9–25.



and performers may have adjusted for special effects or local preferences and even though orchestras existed in many different sizes and configurations. It was this fact that permitted the international diffusion of French *ouvertures*, Italian operas and concertos, and German symphonies in the eighteenth century.

The „invention“ of the orchestra has often been attributed to Jean-Baptiste Lully. But when we attempt to investigate „Lully's orchestra,“ we are faced with severe problems. Lully's early music – the repertory contemporaneous with his orchestral innovations – survives only in very late and even posthumous sources, which appear to have been cleaned up and modernized by his followers, who apparently refined the partwriting, eliminated modal harmonies, and may even have tampered with the instrumentation. It was in any case mostly the music and performance practices of the later Lully – the Lully of the famous operas – that were imitated in Germany and Italy. And then, more often than not, when Lully's music left France, the five-part string texture with oboes doubling the top part and bassoons the bottom part was altered. This meant any of the following: changing the five-part scoring from violin, three violas and cello to a different five-part scoring comprising two violins, two violas and cello; or reducing the five parts to four, either violin, 2 violas and cello or 2 violins, 1 viola and cello; or doubling the cellos in the 16' register with violone(s) or contrabass viol(s).<sup>8</sup>

(5) *Chordal continuo instruments*. More often in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries than has usually been recognized, orchestral melody instruments and chordal continuo instruments occupied the same or adjacent locations in theaters while maintaining their separate functions: that is, overtures, dances and entr'actes were rendered by the orchestra, vocal solos by the continuo group. (What happened during the orchestral ritornellos of arias is an interesting question that, to my mind, has not yet been satisfactorily answered.) Chordal continuo instruments were present in many times, places and genres, but by no means all, and when present, they did not necessarily play all the time.<sup>9</sup>

(6) *16' bassline*. Prior to the rise of orchestras, contrabass bowed stringed instruments were occasionally used in concerted music in Italy and Germany as an ad hoc means of enlarging basslines into the 16' register. As already mentioned, Lully's much imitated string groups apparently never used 16'

<sup>8</sup> Neal Zaslaw, „Lully's Orchestra,“ in Jérôme de La Gorce and Herbert Schneider (eds.), *Jean-Baptiste Lully: Actes du colloque/Kongreßbericht, Saint-Germain-en-Laye – Heidelberg 1987* (Laaber, 1989), pp. 539–79; H. Schneider, „The Amsterdam Editions of Lully's Orchestral Suites,“ in J. H. Heyer (ed.), *Jean-Baptiste Lully and the Music of the French Baroque: Essays in Honour of James R. Anthony* (Cambridge, England, 1989), pp. 113–30; Rebecca Harris-Warrick, „A Few Thoughts on Lully's *Hautbois*,“ *Early Music* 18 (1990) pp. 97–106.

<sup>9</sup> Graham Sadler, „The Role of the Keyboard Continuo in French Opera 1673–1776,“ *Early Music* 8 (1980), pp. 148–57; Peter Holman, „Reluctant Continuo,“ *Early Music* 9 (1981) pp. 75–78.



instruments of any sort. It was with Lully's emulators in Italy and Germany that these instruments began to be added in a systematic way to the bassline of string bands. The interest in using 16' string basses came in the wake of a crucial technological advance: the introduction of wound or overspun strings (*les cordes filés; die umsponnenen Saiten*) in the last part of the 17th century.<sup>10</sup> In orchestras the 8' bassline was usually doubled in the 16' register by one or more violones or contrabass viols.

For a comparison touching upon several of these points, one may listen to the following recordings; this comparison concerns the first international orchestral repertory – the repertory of French ouvertures:

Jean-Baptiste Lully, Overture to *Atys* (Paris, 1676), William Christie, *Les arts florissants* (Harmonia Mundi HMC 901257–59).

Johann Kusser (John Cousser), Overture to the Suite No. 4 in C major (Stuttgart, 1682), Michi Gaigg, *L'Arpa Festante München* (Amati SRR 9012/1).

Georg Muffat, Overture to the Suite in G major „Laeta poesis“ (Passau 1692). Sigiswald Kuijken, *La Petite Bande* (Deutsche Harmonia Mundi 77074-2-RG).

Henry Purcell, Overture to *Abdelazer, or the Moor's Revenge* (London, 1695), Christopher Hogwood, *The Academy of Ancient Music* (L'Oiseau-Lyre DSLO 504).

George Frideric Handel, Overture to *Clori, Tirsi e Fileno* (Rome, 1707), Nicholas McGegan, *Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra of San Francisco* (Harmonia Mundi HMU 907045).

In Lully and Purcell there should be neither 16' bass nor harpsichord continuo; in Muffat and Cousser either is optional; in Handel both are mandatory. Lully and Muffat called for violin, 3 violas and cello (although the „cellos“ were actually the larger *basses de violon*, tuned a whole step lower), Cousser for 2 violins, 2 violas and cello, Purcell and Handel for 2 violins, 1 viola and cello, and Handel also expected double bass. Handel and Bach belong to only the third generation of orchestral composers.

(7) *Stable personnel / hierarchical structure*. Reading the personnel records from those long-standing orchestras for which we have extensive lists, one is struck by how seldom family names change over the decades. Men apparently frequently acquired their positions early in life from a father, or uncle, kept them for long years, and more often than not finally yielded them to a son or nephew. In this regard early orchestras functioned like medieval guilds. The famous, admired, and imitated orchestras were usually recognized institutions with stable membership, fixed functions, statutory operating rules, and hierarchical administrative structures.

(8) *Idiomatic orchestration*. Late-Renaissance instrumental music, for example, the French dances for four, five or six parts by François Caroubel published in Michael Praetorius's collection *Terpsichore* (1612), instrumented

<sup>10</sup> Stephen Bonta, „From Violone to Violoncello: A Question of Strings?“, *Journal of the American Musical Instrument Society* 3 (1977), pp. 64–99.



according to Praetorius's advice, would be, by my definition, non-orchestral no matter how many instruments of whatever sort were employed. In orchestras instrumentation or orchestration was idiomatic rather than generic. That is, in place of contrapuntal parts, each roughly equally clothed in instruments, we find a predominantly homophonic texture divided into melody instruments, fundament or harmony instruments, and frequently also what may be called „inner parts.“ The performance of repertories with idiomatic orchestration provides a defining characteristic of the orchestra. To begin to comprehend the difference between Renaissance, generic instrumentation and classical, idiomatic orchestration, one need only compare some Caroubel-Praetorius dances of 1612 played by a band of Renaissance violins<sup>11</sup> with sixteenth-century tunes orchestrated by Ottorino Respighi (e.g., the Suite No. 3 from his *Ancient Airs and Dances*, 1931). As for wind instruments, in orchestral writing the combination of the string section with winds works somewhat as if a seventeenth-century concertante or polychoral piece intended for performance from several balconies were compressed into a single location. Idiomatic orchestration creates illusions of space, of depth and of movement despite the single location. The occasional fugato aside, the layers of melody by which Renaissance textures are achieved were replaced in orchestral music by layers of, or alternations between, contrasting timbres and stratified functions. How this was accomplished is suggested by the next point.

(9) *Flexibly divided forces*. This refers not only to standing subdivisions, as between the tutti and double-reed trio in a pair of dances, or between the concertino and ripieno in concerti grossi, or between the soloists and orchestra in sinfonie concertante or in solo concertos, but also to the flexibly changing combinations of instruments found in orchestral suites and in concertos for orchestra of the first half of the eighteenth century as well as in symphonies, overtures and dances of the second half of the century. Orchestration is not monolithic and unchanging during the course of a piece. True classical orchestration involves alternations among a tutti texture, a wide assortment of soloistic textures, and various subgroupings and mixed textures.

(10) *Orchestral discipline*. Many of us who grew up listening to and playing in orchestras may take orchestral discipline for granted, but we probably shouldn't. To come into existence, orchestral discipline requires considerable training, resources, and social consensus. This may include prescribed dress or livery, hierarchical leadership, fines for absenteeism or insubordination, uniform bowing and nuance, and the suppression of improvised ornamentation among ripienists. Generally the livery of orchestra members was distinguishable from the dress of audience members as well as from the costumes of actors, singers and dancers.

<sup>11</sup> Peter Holman, *Parley of Instruments* (Hyperion CDA 66200).



A number of historical documents contain expressions of wonder at orchestral discipline at a time when it was still a novelty and not yet to be heard everywhere. Here, for instance, is a story published in Paris in 1650, a few years before Lully came on the scene. A beloved wife had fallen into profound melancholy. Her husband, in despair and having exhausted all known remedies, decided to follow the advice of a friend and hired the *Vingt-quatre violons du roi*. The king's band tuned their instruments in advance and then crept noiselessly behind a tapestry suspended in the bedroom where the wife was sleeping.

The violins all began together. The force of these instruments, which twenty-four men made to sound with all their strength and with great intensity, surprised the lady greatly, for it was the last thing she expected. This harmony made such an impact that it instantly banished her baleful melancholy. She recovered her former health and her merry disposition.<sup>12</sup>

This story suggests that when Lully came on the scene in the 1650s, the *Vingt-quatre violons du roi* were already a highly disciplined ensemble. Lully is reputed to have increased that discipline and extended it to the other instruments, the singers and the dancers. Here is a description of his techniques of leadership:

[Lully's] instrumentalists did not take it upon themselves to ornament their parts. He would not have allowed them to do this any more than he allowed it with his singers. He did not think it right when they imagined they knew more than he did and added graces to their parts. When this happened, he grew angry and quickly set them straight. It is a true story that more than once in his life he broke a violin across the back of a musician who was not playing it the way he wanted. When the rehearsal was finished, Lully summoned the violinist, paid him three times what his violin was worth, and took him to dinner. The wine dispelled the ill feelings. In this way Lully had set an example [for the other musicians] while the violinist had earned some money, a meal and a good lesson. But Lully's care to add to his orchestra only instrumentalists of demonstrated ability freed him from having to resort often to these violent punishments.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Jean Denis, *Traité de l'accord de l'espinette*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1650), pp. 24–25; trans. Vincent J. Panetta, Jr., as *Treatise on Harpsichord Tuning* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 82–83. „... les Violons commencerent tous ensemble, la force de ces Instruments, que vingt-quatre hommes font sonner de toutes leur forces, & d'une grande violence, tellement que la Damoiselle surprise, n'attendant rien moins que cette Harmonie, qui eut tant de force que de chasser tout à coup cette meschante melancholie, & reprit sa premiere santé & sa gaillarde humeur.“

This may be viewed as a retelling of the Old Testament story of David's harp playing curing Saul's „evil spirits“ (1 Samuel, XVI:23), which later writers have usually interpreted as melancholy.

<sup>13</sup> Jean Laurent Le Cerf de la Viéville, *Comparaison de la musique italienne et de la musique française*, 2nd ed. (Brussels, 1705–06), Part II, pp. 227–28. „... sur tout les instrumens ne s'avisent gueres de rien broder. Il ne le leur auroit pas plus souffert, qu'il le souffroit aux Chanteuses. Il ne trouvoit point bon qu'ils prétendissent en sçavoir plus que lui, & ajouter des notes d'agrément à leur tablature. C'étoit alors qu'il s'échauffoit, faisant des corrections brusques & vives. Il est vrai que plus d'une fois en sa vie, il a rompu un Violon sur le dos de celui, qui ne le conduisoit pas à son gré. La répétition finie, Lulli l'appelloit, lui payoit son Violon au triple, & le menoit dîner avec lui. Le vin chassoit la rancune, & l'un avoit fait un exemple: l'autre y gaignoit quelques pistoles, un repas & un bon avertissement. Mais le soin qu'avoit Lulli de ne mettre dans son Orchestre que des instruments d'une habilité connue, l'exemptoit d'en venir souvent à ces corrections violents.“



Lully's power over his musicians derived from Louis XIV, who ruled by Divine Right. In the case of Louis XIV's cousin and enemy, the Emperor Leopold I (reigned 1658–1705), who was himself an accomplished composer and performer, the chain of command could sometimes be more direct:

His [Leopold I's] orchestra [*Kapelle*] can doubtless be called the most perfect in the world, and that is certainly no surprise, given that the Emperor auditioned them himself. Whenever an applicant was accepted, he had been judged only on his merit and not out of favoritism. ... One can judge from the great number of the most seasoned musicians [he employed] how much they must have cost the Emperor ... Whenever the Emperor attended a concert of his always incomparable orchestra, he enjoyed himself as much – he listened with such total attention – as if he were hearing it for the very first time; and during an opera he did not turn his eye away for a second, so closely did he watch all the notes of the score he held in his hands. When a passage was performed that particularly pleased him, he closed his eyes in order to listen with greater attention. His ear was so acute that from among fifty players, he could detect one who bowed incorrectly.<sup>14</sup>

The methods of Johann Kusser (John Cousser), as opera composer and Kapellmeister in Wolfenbüttel between 1690 and 1694, were similar to Lully's, at least according to one report:

Cousser possessed a gift [as director] that could not be improved upon ... He was indefatigable in training; he caused all the people who were under his supervision, from the greatest to the least, to come home with him; he sang and played before them every single note as he wanted it performed, and he did this for each individual with such gentleness and charm that everyone loved him and had to be extremely indebted to him for the genuine instruction. But when it came to the point of performance, and to public performance or rehearsal, then nearly everyone trembled and shook before him, not only in the orchestra but on the stage: there he knew how to reproach many a one for their errors in such a severe manner that they often burst into tears. In reaction he calmed back down and purposely sought an opportunity, by means of an

<sup>14</sup> [Eucharius Gottlieb Rinck], *Leopold's des Großen, Röm. Kayzers, wunderwürdigem Leben und Thaten, aus geheimen Nachrichten eröffnet, und in vier Teile getheilt* (Leipzig, 1709), pp. 57–62, as quoted in Guido Adler, „Die Kaiser Ferdinand III., Leopold I., Joseph I. und Karl VI. als Tonsetzer und Förderer der Musik,“ *Vierteljahrschrift für Musikwissenschaft* 8 (1892), pp. 252–74, here 263–64. „Seine Kapelle kann wohl die vollkommenste in der Welt genennet werden, und dieses ist gar kein Wunder, nachdem der Kaiser allemal selbst das Examen anstellte, wenn einer darinnen sollte angenommen werden, da denn bloß nach Meriten, und nicht nach Neigungen, geurtheilet ward. ... Man kann aus der Menge der erfahrendsten Künstler urtheilen, wie hoch sie den Kaiser muß zu stehen kommen. ... Wenn der Kaiser in einem Concert dieser seiner allzeit unvergleichlichen Capelle war, fand er sich so vergnügt dabei, mit einer solchen unendlichen Attention, als wenn er sie dieses Mal zum allerersten hörte; und in einer *Opera* wird er nicht leicht ein Auge von der in Händen habenden Partitur gewendet haben, so genau observirte er alle Noten. Wenn eine besondere Passage kam, die ihm gefiel, drückte er die Augen zu, mit mehr Attention zuzuhören ... Sein Gehör war auch so scharf, daß er unter funfzig denjenigen merken konnte, welcher einen Strich falsch gethan.“



extraordinary courtliness, to bind the wounds thus inflicted. In such manner he worked things out so that nobody dared inpu[n] him. He can serve as a model.<sup>15</sup>

Cousser had studied and worked in Paris for eight years during Lully's ascendancy.

Of Dietrich Buxtehude's famous Abendmusik performances during roughly the same period, an observer wrote,

[T]he incomparable Mr. Buxtehude of Lübeck ... has the strings manned ... by fully twenty, thirty and even more persons; however, all these instrumentalists must not change or add any note or dot to what he writes down for them ... Indeed, they then must be and sound as alike as it was in 2 Chronicles, V:13 ...<sup>16</sup>

2 Chronicles, V:13 reads, „It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord....“

Moving to the first decade of the eighteenth century, Corelli's pupil Geminiani (in part quoting Alessandro Scarlatti) remembered Corelli's

nice management of his band, the uncommon accuracy of whose performance, gave the concertos an amazing effect; and that, even to the eye as well as the ear[; for] Corelli regarded it as essential to the *ensemble* of a band, that their bows should all move exactly together, all up, or all down; so that at his rehearsals, which constantly preceded every public performance of his concertos, he would immediately stop the band if he discovered one irregular bow.<sup>17</sup>

C. P. E. Bach left two rather laconic accounts of his father's gifts as conductor:

<sup>15</sup> Johann Mattheson, *Der vollkommene Capellmeister* (Hamburg, 1739), pp. 480–81. „Der ehemalige Wolffenbüttelsche Capellmeister, J. S. Cousser, besaß in diesem Stücke eine Gabe, die unverbesserlich war .... Er war unermüdet im Unterrichten; ließ alle Leute, vom grössten bis zum kleinsten, die unter seiner Aufsicht stunden, zu sich ins Haus kommen; sang und spielte ihnen eine iede Note vor, wie er sie gern herausgebracht wissen wollte; und solches alles bey einem ieden ins besondere, mit solcher Gelindigkeit und Anmuth, daß ihn iedermann lieben, und für treuen Unterricht höchst verbunden seyn muste. Kam es aber von der Anführung zum Treffen und zur öffentlichen Aufführung, oder Probe, so zitterte und bebte fast alles vor ihm, nicht nur im Orchester, sondern auch auf dem Schauplatze: da wuste er manchem seine Fehler mit solcher empfindlichen Art vorzurücken, daß diesem die Augen dabey oft übergingen. Hergegen besänftigte er sich auch alsofort wieder, und suchte mit Fleiß eine Gelegenheit, die beigebrachte Wunden durch eine ausnehmende Höflichkeit zu verbinden. Auf solche Weise führte er Sachen aus, die vor ihm niemand hatte angreifen dürfen. Er kan zum Muster dienen.“

<sup>16</sup> M. H. Fuhrmann, *Musicalischer Trichter* (Berlin, 1706), pp. 78. „Wem dieses mißfällt/der höre einmal den unvergleichlichen Herrn Buxtehuden zu Lübeck musiciren/der läst die Violinen ... 20. und 30fach und noch wol mit meh Personen besetzen; allein alle diese Instrumentisten müssen ihm auch keine Note oder Punct verrücken und anderst streichen/als ers ihnen vorgeschrieben etc. Ja so solte es seyn/und klinget denn alles so gleich/als wäre es einer 2. Chron. V.13.“ Fuhrmann probably attended and was describing the same 1705 Abendmusik performance attended by J. S. Bach, which included the lost composition *Templum honoris* that, according to the libretto, began with a „Sinfonia all'unisono a 25 violini“ (information kindly supplied by Karela Snyder).

<sup>17</sup> Charles Burney, *A General History of Music from the Earliest Ages to the Present Period*, mod. ed. by Frank Mercer (New York, 1957), vol. II, p. 443.



His hearing was so fine that he was able to detect the slightest error even in the largest ensembles. It is but a pity that it was only seldom he had the good fortune of finding a body of such performers as could have spared him unpleasant discoveries of this nature. In conducting he was very accurate, and of the tempo, which he generally took very lively, he was uncommonly sure.

The exact tuning ... of the whole orchestra had his greatest attention. ... The placing of an orchestra he understood perfectly ... He heard the slightest wrong note even in the largest combinations ... In his youth, and until the approach of old age, he played the violin cleanly and penetratingly, and thus kept the orchestra in better order than he could have done with the harpsichord.<sup>18</sup>

A Leipzig writer, Johann Matthias Gesner, recorded a more colorful description of Bach in action, one which would seem to confirm Bach's lack of „good fortune“ in his orchestras, suggesting that the suavity of Paris, Vienna, Rome, or even Wolfenbüttel and Lübeck, was not given to Bach in Leipzig:

If you could see him ... singing along with one voice and playing his own parts, but watching over everything and bringing back to the rhythm and the beat, out of thirty or even forty musicians, the one with a nod, another by tapping with his foot, the third with a warning finger, giving the right note to one from the top of his voice, to another from the bottom, and to a third from the middle of it – all alone, in the midst of the greatest din made by all the participants, and, although he is executing the most difficult parts himself, noticing at once whenever and wherever a mistake occurs, holding everyone together, taking precautions everywhere, and repairing any unsteadiness, full of rhythm in every part of his body – this one man taking in all these harmonies with his keen ear and emitting with his voice alone the tone of all the voices.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> C. P. E. Bach as translated by Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel (eds.), *The Bach Reader*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1966), pp. 222, 276–77. „Sein Gehör war so fein, daß er bey den vollstimmigsten Musiken, auch den geringsten Fehler zu entdecken vermögend war. Nur Schade, daß er selten das Glück gehabt, lauter solche Ausführe seiner Arbeit zu finden, die ihm diese verdrießlichen Bemerkungen erspart hätten. Im Dirigiren war er sehr accurat, und im Zeitmaaße, welches er gemeiniglich sehr lebhaft nahm, überaus sicher.“ (Hans-Joachim Schultze [ed], *Bach-Dokumente*, vol. 3 (Kassel etc. 1972), p. 87.) „Das reine stimmen seiner Instrumente so wohl, als des ganzen Orchestres war sein vornehmstes Augenmerck. ... Die Rangirung eines Orchestres verstand er ganz vollkommen. ... Er hörte die geringste falsche Note bey der stärcksten Besetzung. ... In seiner Jugend bis zum ziemlich herannahenden Alter spielte er die Violine rein u. durchdringend u. hielt dadurch das Orchester in einer größeren Ordnung, als er mit dem Flügel Ausrichten können.“ (op. cit., 285).

<sup>19</sup> Johann Matthias Gesner as translated by David and Mendel, *The Bach Reader*, p. 231. „Si videres, dum illud agit, quod plures citharistae vestri, & sexcenti tibicines non agerent, non vna forte voce canentem citharoedi instar, suasque peragentem partes, sed omnibus eundem intentum, et de XXX vel XXXX adeo symphoniacis, hunc nutu, alterum supplosione pedis, tertium digito minaci reuocantem ad rhythmos & ictus; huic summa voce, ima alii, tertio media praeuntem tonum, quo vtendum sit, vnumque adeo hominem, in maximo concinentium strepitu, cum difficillimis omnium partibus fungatur, tamen eadem statim animaduertente, si quid & vbi discrepet, & in ordine continere omnes, & occurrere vbique, & si quid titubetur restituere, membris omnibus rhythmicum, harmonias vnum omnes arguta aure metientem, voces vnum omnes, angustis vnus faucibus edentem.“ (Werner Neumann and Hans-Joachim Schultze [ed.], *Bach-Dokumente*, vol 2 (Kassel etc. 1969), pp. 331–332. As Robert L. Marshall has pointed out to me, Gesner's „thirty or even forty musicians“ of 1738 nicely confirms Bach's own „Short but most necessary draft for a well-appointed church music“ of 1730 (*Bach Reader*, pp. 120–24), in which Bach calls for a choir of 16 and an orchestra of no fewer than 18.



Here is the account of a Swiss traveler on a visit to Vienna around 1780:

[A]s far as orchestral music is concerned, one can hardly hear anything more beautiful in the whole world. I have already heard approximately thirty or forty instruments play together, and they produced a tone so true, so pure, and so distinct that one could believe he heard a single, supernaturally powerful instrument. One stroke [of the bow] animated all the violins and one breath, all the wind instruments.<sup>20</sup>

Finally, here is the only contemporary account known to me of Mozart directing an orchestra:

[Mozart] appeared to grow in stature and to take his place among beings of a superior race, as soon as he sat down before a keyboard instrument. . . . The largest orchestra posed no difficulties for him, nor did it prevent him, even in the heat of performance, from observing the least note misplaced; and he would point his finger then and there, with an accuracy that was well-nigh uncanny, at the instrument which was guilty of the fault, and demonstrate which note should have been played instead.<sup>21</sup>

These ten descriptions of orchestral discipline originated from several parts of Europe over more than a century, yet they contain much in common: a strong leader of unquestioned authority with the ability to detect the slightest infractions, training that enabled the rank and file to play as if with a single will, the stunning effects of perfectly coordinated, uniform bowing, and the aura of wealth and power projected by the existence and functioning of such groups of instrumentalists.

(11) *Sightreading / rehearsals / memorization*. Here is a peculiarity – make of it what you will. Operas were usually rehearsed at considerable length; the singers memorized their music, the orchestra members played from parts. Concerts, on the other hand, were almost always performed with but a single rehearsal; both singers and instrumentalists used music. This explains why

<sup>20</sup> Johann Kaspar Riesbeck, *Briefe eines reisenden Franzosen über Deutschland. An seinen Bruder zu Paris* (Zurich, 1783); mod. ed. by Wolfgang Gerlach (Stuttgart, 1967), pp. 139: „... aber was die Orchestermusiken betrifft, so kann man schwerlich etwas Schöneres in der Welt hören. Ich habe schon gegen dreißig bis vierzig Instrumente zusammenspielen gehört, und alle geben einen so richtigen, reinen und bestimmten Ton, daß man glauben sollte, ein einziges übernatürlich starkes Instrument zu hören. Ein Strich belebte alle Violinen und ein Hauch alle blasenden Instrumente.“

<sup>21</sup> Friedrich Schlichtegroll in the *Nekrolog auf das Jahr 1791* (Gotha, 1792), vol. II, pp. 82ff. „Aber eben dieser immer zerstreute, immer tändelnde Mensch schien ein ganz anderes, schien ein höheres Wesen zu werden, sobald er sich an das Klavier setzte. ... Auch bey der vollständigsten Musik bemerkte er den kleinsten Misston, und sagte zugleich mit treffender Genauigkeit, auf welchem Instrumente der Fehler gemacht worden sey und welcher Ton es eigentlich hätte seyn sollen.“ An account by Friedrich Rochlitz of Mozart leading the Leipzig orchestra in 1789 (*Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* [November 7, 1798], vol. I, cols. 85–86) is not trustworthy; see Neal Zaslaw, *Mozart's Symphonies: Context, Performance Practice, Reception* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 423–25, and Maynard Solomon, „The Rochlitz Anecdotes: Issues of Authenticity in Early Mozart Biography,“ in Cliff Eisen (ed.) *Mozart Studies* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 1–59, here 23–40. Further concerning orchestral discipline, see John Spitzer and Neal Zaslaw, „Improvised Ornamentation in Eighteenth-Century Orchestras,“ *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 39 (1986), pp. 524–77.



Quantz, Leopold Mozart and other eighteenth-century writers emphasized the importance of fluent sightreading as a necessary attribute of orchestral musicians. In orchestras assembled for balls, however, the musicians seem to be without music in front of them, at least judging from the rather considerable iconographic evidence, a tiny portion of which is presented below (Figures 18-20). This would have functioned perfectly well for traditional dances, as it still does today, but how it could have worked for the newly composed dance-music commissioned for each carnival season is a mystery.

(12) *Centrality and Symbolism*. My final point I owe to John Spitzer.<sup>22</sup> According to numerous pictures of large-scale Renaissance spectacles, the instrumentalists were often either off in a corner or up in a balcony and difficult to notice, or they were in costume and on the stage as part of the scenery and the action. In portrayals of late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth century operas, oratorios and orchestral concerts, however, the instrumentalists were almost invariably centrally placed. And in opera the orchestra remained visually central until Wagner instituted the sunken pit and darkened theater, by which time, however, orchestral concerts had evolved from their relatively minor role in the eighteenth century to the central role accorded them in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Considerable resources are required to assemble, train and maintain large groups of musicians. From a symbolic point of view, the message of liveried string players bowing in perfect unison is similar to that conveyed by smartly uniformed soldiers marching in perfect lockstep: accumulated wealth and strongly centralized control. Indeed, the metaphors used to describe orchestras in writings of the period are predominantly military. One reason that the chordal continuo was doomed once the idea of the orchestra caught on and developed in Western Europe may be that even the relatively small degree of improvisation it represented was a problem in an ensemble designed to project unity and control.

Whether or not the twelve interlocking traits just enumerated provide all the necessary and sufficient concepts for an adequate definition and description of the functioning of the classical orchestra is difficult to say. Certainly, it is easy to imagine omitting some of the twelve and still feeling comfortable calling the resulting ensemble an orchestra. Reviewing the origins of the twelve, we find that the development of the classical orchestra was a pan-European phenomenon. The double reeds may have come from Holland; the horns from Bohemia; the enlarged violin band from France and England; orchestral discipline, centralized authority, dance, ballet and overture from

<sup>22</sup> „The Birth of the Orchestra in Rome – An Iconographic Study,” *Early Music* 19 (1991), pp. 9–27.



France; opera, continuo practices, 16' bassline doubling, virtuoso fiddling, concertos and sinfonias from Italy; brilliant, flexible wind orchestration and a definitive synthesis of French and Italian practices from Central Europe.

★

John Spitzer and I have for some years been collecting seventeenth- and eighteenth-century pictures of instrumental groups; we now have more than 500 such representations. Reviewing them recently, I was struck by the fact that, despite their great diversity, they show certain frequently recurring placements of the musicians, of which I should like to discuss four. These four placements are: in a balcony, in a pit, in tiers and on the floor. (I will pass over such other placements as out-of-doors serenades, parades, carriages, wagons, floats, barges, triumphal arches, cloud machines, platforms, music pavillions, and others, all of which occur less frequently in our iconography than these four.)

(1) *Balconies*. The placement of musicians in a high balcony at a ball, banquet or civic function represents an archaic practice traceable to the Middle Ages. Very few eighteenth-century pictures of balconies in our iconography seem orchestral in nature; those that do perhaps represent the intersection of a new form of music-making with old architecture and old habits. A picture like that from the *Chronique d'Angleterre* by Jean de Wavrin of three musicians in a balcony playing a *basse danse* (see E. A. Bowles, *Musikleben im 15. Jahrhundert*, Leipzig 1977, Figure 36) shows the old tradition, while Figure 1 illustrates that old tradition carried into the beginning of eighteenth century; Figure 2–3 represent what would seem to be genuine orchestras in balconies, and Figure 4 suggests the survival of this practice in the nineteenth century.

As for musicians in the choir lofts of churches, in our collection of pictures they are mostly in non-orchestral configurations suitable for the seventeenth-century concertato or polychoral styles. Nonetheless, a well-placed balcony or music loft can reflect orchestral (and choral) sound off the ceiling of a hall or church in absolutely extraordinary ways, as anyone who has heard a concerted Mass performed in the Hofkapelle in Vienna can testify. It seems that orchestras were invented and propagated in the first instance for secular functions. They made their way into church music slowly and sporadically – and particularly when popes, emperors, kings, princes or archbishops were present and especially on royal birthdays, namedays and weddings, coronations and victory celebrations, all occasions on which secular wealth and splendor intersected with worship.

Based upon the iconographical evidence for orchestras, I suspect that balconies in general and choir lofts and church music in particular are of little importance to the evolution of the orchestra. (I suggest why this may have been so in my concluding remarks.) I should therefore like to propose for the study of



the orchestra that in place of the traditional sociological distinctions between church music, chamber music and theater music, we substitute another tripartite scheme: in the pit, in tiers and on the floor. These three are the most commonly portrayed placements of orchestral musicians: in the pit for staged events, in tiers for oratorios, public concerts and balls, and on the floor for concerts in chambers, halls and salons. There are of course many possibilities, but the striking frequency of representations of these three placements suggests their importance and possibly even a normative function.

(2) *In the pit*. Long before orchestras existed, in the defining sense of massed violin sections, the instruments accompanying operas, ballets and plays were placed in front of the stage, usually enclosed by a wall or railing. The name given by architects to this location in the theater is of course „orchestra,“ a term that at the end of the seventeenth century began to be attached by association to the musicians who occupied that location. For most of the seventeenth century, the instruments in the architectural „orchestra“ did not form an „orchestra“ in the musical sense I have been proposing. In many cities it is possible to document the period in which there began to be an orchestra (in the musical sense) present in the orchestra (in the architectural sense), often signalled by the arrival of oboes from France, a decrease in the number of lutes and theorboes, and an increase in the number of violins. These developments occurred in many European cities in the last decade of the seventeenth century or the first decade of the eighteenth. Three „in the pit“ pictures, drawn from dozens of such representations, are reproduced in Figures 5-8, and four more may be seen in Figures 9-12 of John Spitzer's article in this volume.

(3) *In tiers*. The tiers prominently placed in so many pictures of oratorios, concerts and balls were most often temporary structures – scaffolding put up for an occasion and then removed. I suspect that there were visual, acoustical and functional reasons for the widespread use of tiers, and I should like to propose that we experiment with reviving the practice. Visually, tiers display the musicians attractively in a kind of tableau, with protocol observed by having every face turned toward the important personages in the audience. Acoustically there was an uninterrupted line from each instrument to every listener and, in many of these setups but not all of them, a hard surface directly behind each player to act as a sound reflector. Functionally, each musician was enabled to see the leader of the group. Pictures of musicians in tiers may be organized by genres: oratorios (Figures 9-13), concerts (Figures 14-16) and balls (Figures 17-18 as well as Spitzer's Figure 2).

(4) *On the floor*. I have left for last the placement that is most difficult to explain. Among representations of concerts on the floors of chambers, halls or salons, many seem to show no more strings than two violins, a viola, a cello, and sometimes a double bass (Figures 19-20 as well as Spitzer's Figure 4-6). In the past this has usually been taken to mean that the music being performed was chamber music in the modern sense, meaning not orchestral. *But there is*



*no repertory of chamber music calling for two violins, one viola, a few winds and keyboard instrument, with or without vocal or instrumental soloists.* The only reasonable conclusion, I think, is that the numerous pictures showing such configurations represent a practice in private concerts of performing non-orchesterally music that we consider orchestral.

Other pictures of concerts on the floors of halls or salons do show orchestral doubling of the strings, although never in the numbers found in some of the larger public venues (Figure 21). Throughout the eighteenth century there were certainly many more private than public concerts, but these are poorly documented except by pictures of this kind.

\*

In the acoustic of a church a motet by, for example, Heinrich Schütz can sound sublime with a small choir, a few vocal soloists, two violins, two cornetti, three sackbuts with organ and perhaps one or more large lutes. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries most churches in which concerted music was regularly performed made do with little more than two violins and organ to accompany the voices. Because of the characteristic church acoustic, this can work beautifully, and larger forces may simply be superfluous.

When it came to creating comparably powerful, moving and sublime sounds in other venues, however, the multiplication of voices and instruments became a necessity, and hence the orchestra came into its own. It is perhaps no coincidence that orchestras in secular venues rose in importance in European culture during precisely the period when sacred music was gradually losing its millenium-long leading role. Doubling began as an ad hoc technique for amplifying sound in large spaces for extraordinary occasions. Eventually it became regularized and exploited as an artistic resource in its own right. Orchestras enabled musicians to project the effects of large-scale concerted music without a church acoustic and to experiment with the grand effects of musical sublimity.

In an important recent book, Michael Forsyth begins by quoting the English acoustician Hope Bagenal to the effect that all auditoriums „fall into two groups: those with the acoustics of the cave and those with the acoustics of the open air. From the former, where music originated, grew the concert hall, and from the latter, where the spoken voice belongs, grew the theater.“<sup>23</sup> In his book Forsyth examines a number of the most famous concert halls and opera houses of various times and places from this, and other, points of view. If we construct a continuum of the venues I have been discussing from most cave-like to least cave-like, we would have: 1) churches, 2) halls like the „shoe-box“

<sup>23</sup> *Buildings for Music: The Architect, the Musician, and the Listener from the Seventeenth Century to the Present Day* (Cambridge, MA, 1985), p3.



halls in which Haydn worked in Eisenstadt and Esterháza, the old hall of the Leipzig Gewandhaus in which Mozart gave a concert in 1789 (Figure 22), the eighteenth-century Holywell Music Room in Oxford or the new hall of the Gewandhaus (1884) and Symphony Hall in Boston modelled on it, 3) opera houses and concert halls in the form of theaters, and 4) the out-of-door festivals, of which we have seen representations from Versailles and Rome. In general, churches do not require orchestras and, in some of them, the extreme echo swamps the sound of one. „Shoe-box“ halls make even a modest orchestra sound grand. Large theaters, however, may require stronger forces to fill their space with adequate tutti sound, and the out-of-doors calls for larger forces still.

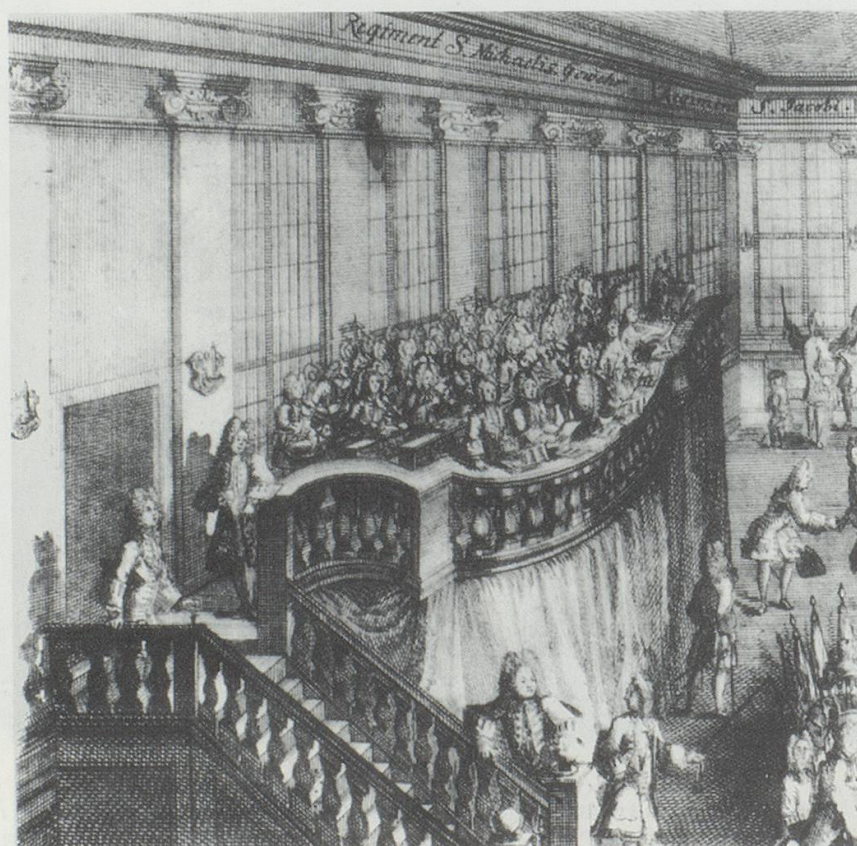
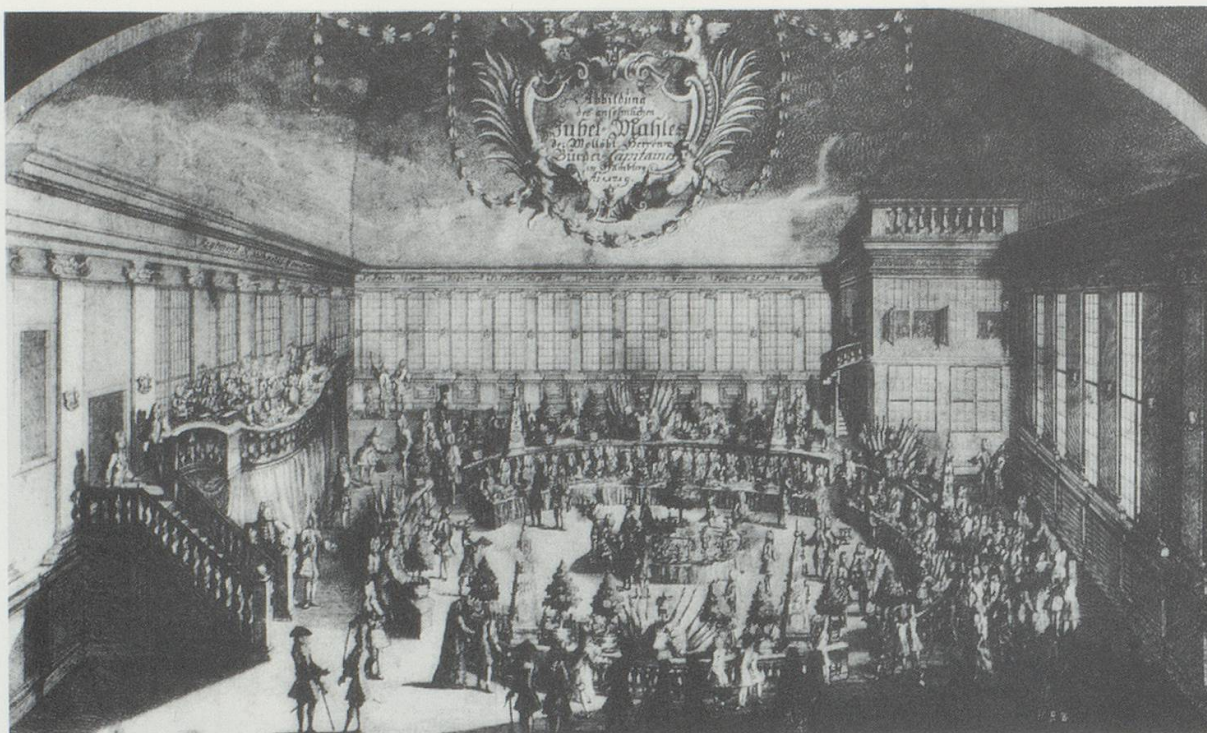
Prior to the practical application of the vacuum tube in the late 1920s, suitable acoustics, careful placement and increased numbers of instrumentalists provided the only amplification possible. Although the classical orchestra was created in the first instance as a means of amplification, it turned out to be not merely a louder version of a Renaissance consort, but a new artistic medium of expression so exquisite in its possibilities that today, when we have much more powerful means of amplification at our fingertips, we reject these new means and remain devoted to this fortunate discovery that we call „the orchestra.“





Figure 1: Detail from „Die Kayserl:Taffel in der Ritterstuben“, engraving by J. A. Pfeffel and C. Engelbrecht after J. C. Hackhofer, from J. B. Mair von Mairsfeld, *Beschreibung, was auf Ableiben weyland Ihrer Keyserl. Majestät Josephi bisz nach vorgengener Erb-Huldigung welche dem ... Römischen Kayser Carolo Dem Sechsten ... als Erzlogen zu Oesterreich* (Vienna, 1712).  
Source: Edmund A. Bowles, *Musical Ensembles in Festival books. 1500–1800: An Iconographic and Documentary Study* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1989), p. 414.





Figures 2a and b: Banquet music under the direction of Matthias Christoph Wiedeburg, in the Drillhaus of the city militia, Hamburg, 1719. Engraving by Christian Fritsch. Source: Heinrich W. Schwab, *Konzert: Öffentliche Musikdarbietung vom 17. bis 19. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig: Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1971), p. 55.



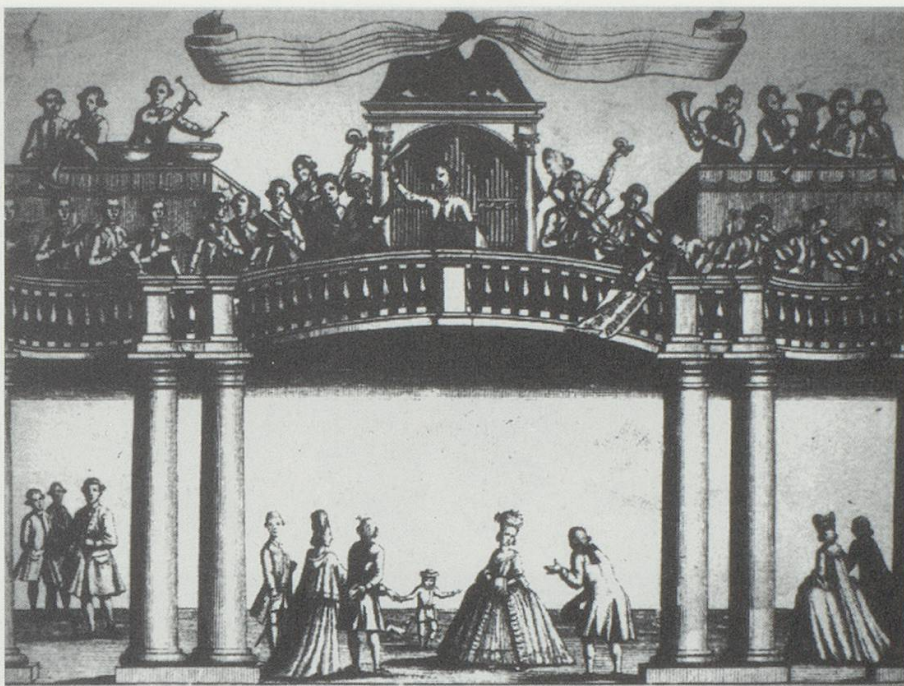


Figure 3: Sacred concert, Florence, c.1780. Engraved passe-partout title page of the publisher Giovanni Chiari.  
Source: Neal Zaslaw, *Mozart's Symphonies: Context, Performance Practice, Reception* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), Plate X.

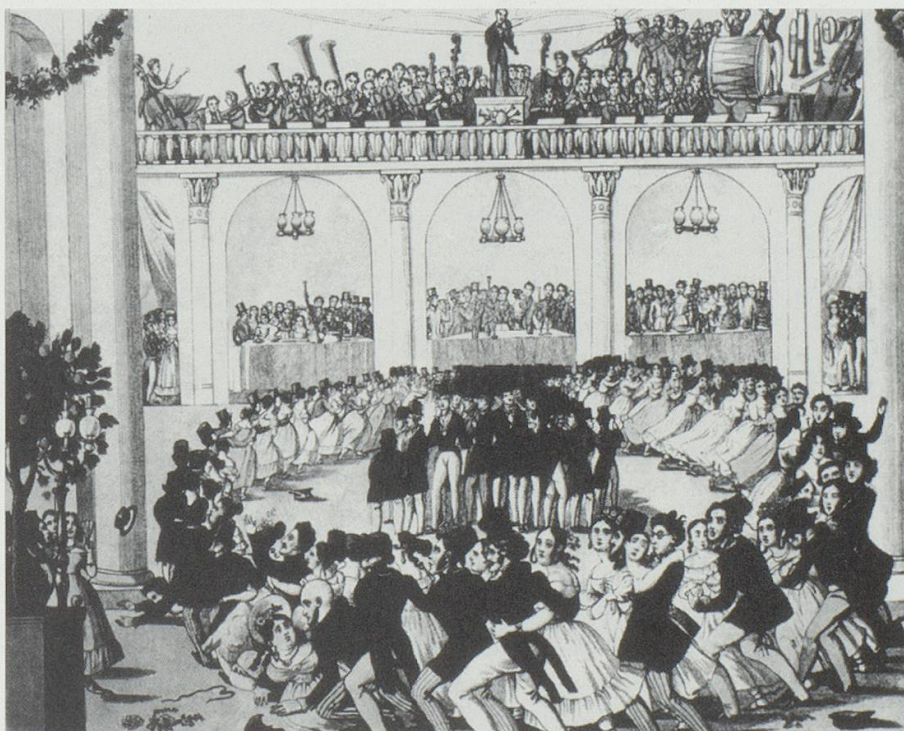


Figure 4: „Wiener Scene. Der große Galopp.“ Johann Strauss, the elder, directing his dance orchestra. Vienna, 1839. Engraving after Johann Christian Schoeller.  
Source: Marcel Prawy, *Johann Strauss: Weltgeschichte im Walzertakt* (Vienna: Fritz Molden, 1975), p. 63.



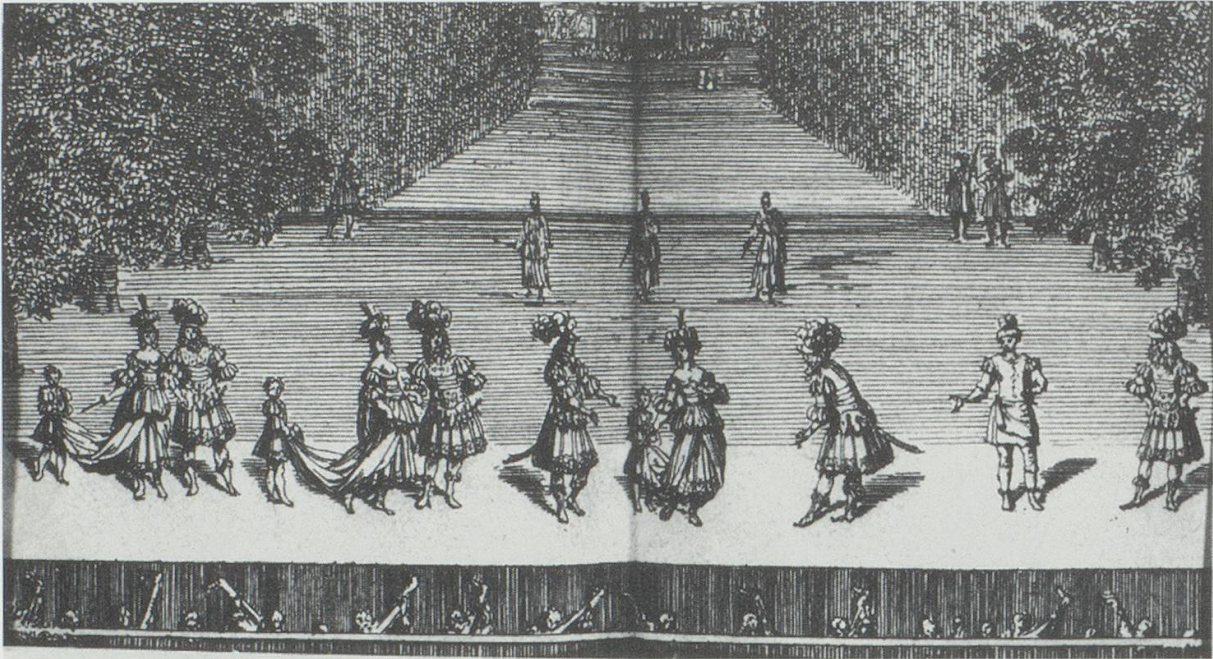


Figure 5: Molière's and Lully's *La princesse d'Elide* (1664) in a temporary theater in the gardens at Versailles. Detail from an engraving by Israël Silvestre. For full information, see Edmond Lemaître, „Les sources des Plaisir de l'Isle enchantée," *Revue de musicologie* 77 (1991), pp.187–200.  
Source: Princeton University Library.

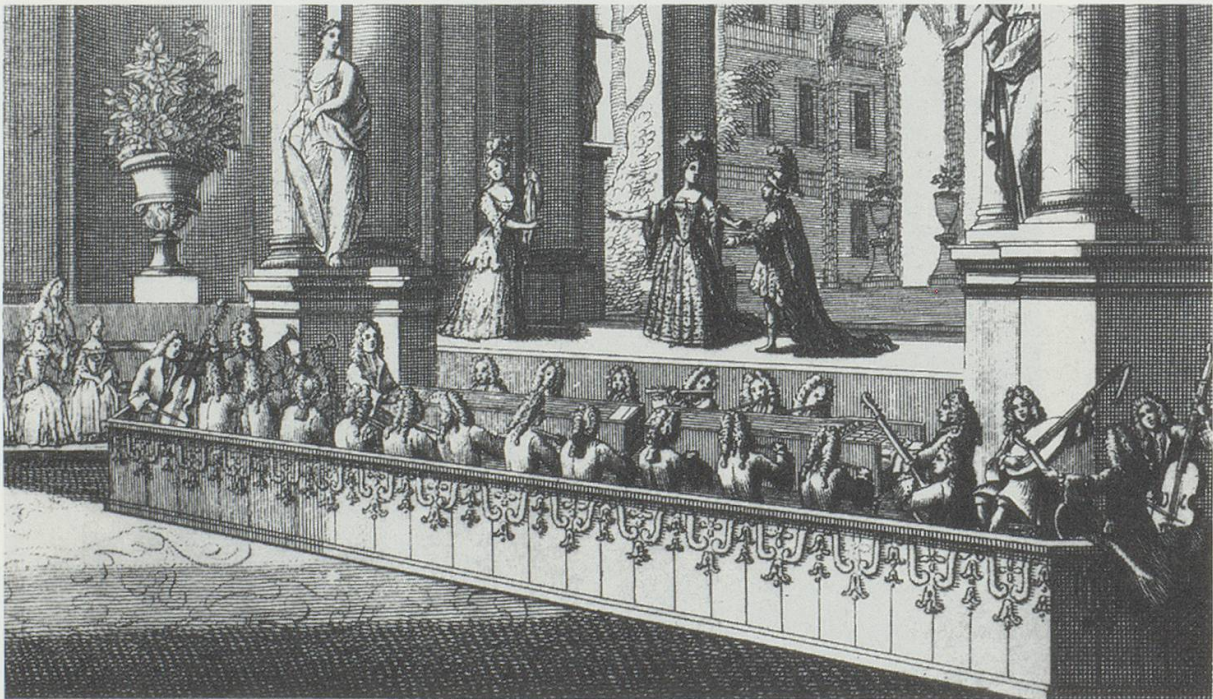


Figure 6: Temporary opera theater („Teatrino del Rondò“ „Teatro delle Feste“) erected in the royal palace by Filippo Juvarra for a performance of *Ricimaro, rè di Vandali*, music by Angelo Maria Fiorè, libretto by Matteo Norris, at the celebration of the wedding of Prince Carlo Emanuele to Anna Cristina of Bavaria. Engraving by A. Aveline, Turin, 1722.  
Source: Marie-Thérèse Bouquet, *Storia del Teatro Regio di Torino I: Il Teatro di Corte dalle Origini al 1788* (Turin: 1976), plate XX.



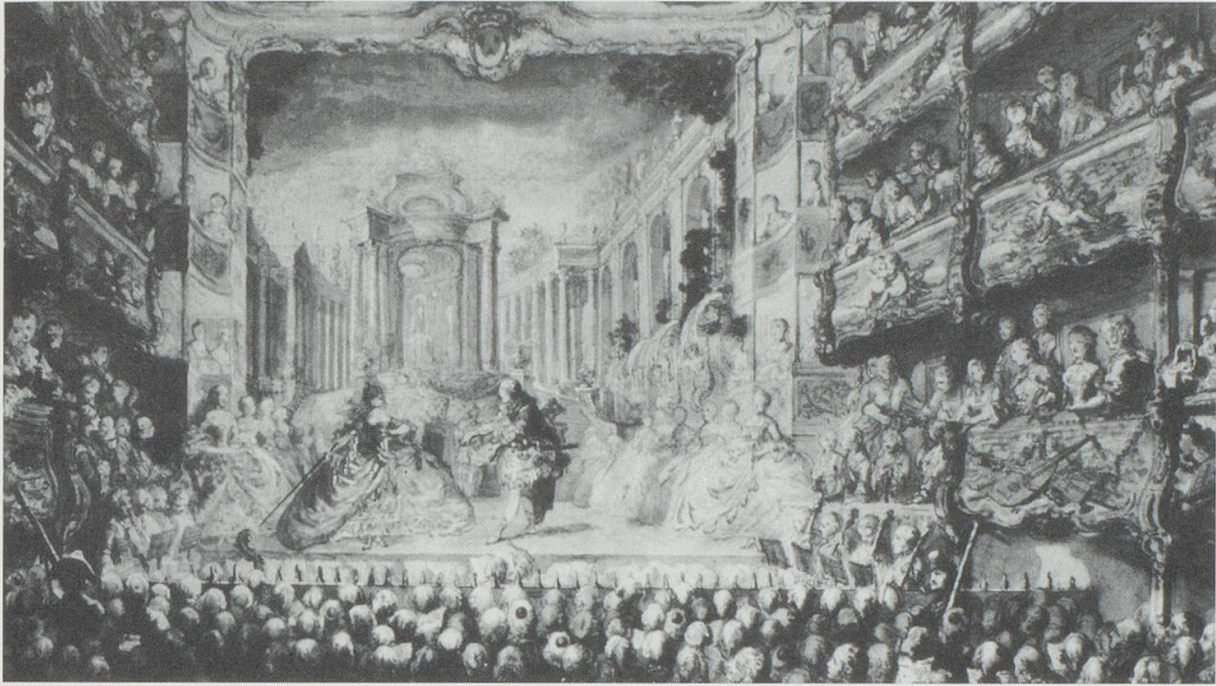


Figure 7: Performance of Lully's *Armide* at the Paris Opéra (Académie royale de musique) in the theater of the Palais royal. Paris, 1747. Pen and ink, watercolor and gouache by Gabriel-Jacques de Saint-Aubin (Boston, Museum of Fine Arts).  
Source: Neal Zaslaw, „At the Paris Opera in 1747,“ *Early Music* 11 (1983), p. 514.

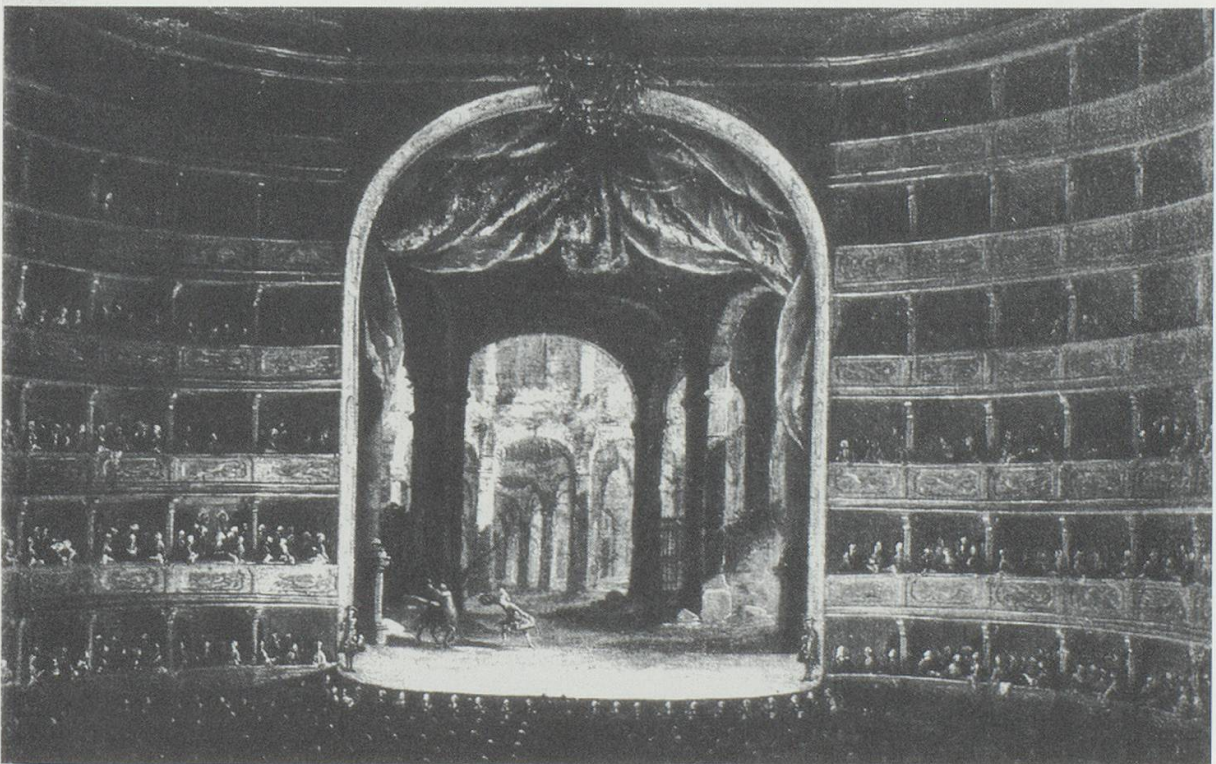


Figure 8: San Carlo Theater, Naples, before 1817. Painting by Michele Foschini (Naples, Museo di San Martino).  
Source: Franco Mancini, *Il Teatro di San Carlo 1737–1987: la storia, la struttura* (Naples: Electa, 1987), p. 64.





Figure 9: Concert in Rome, c. 1660. Pen and ink with watercolor by Peter Paul Sevin (Stockholm, Nationalmuseum).  
Source: John Spitzer, „The birth of the Orchestra in Rome,“ *Early Music* 19 (1991), p. 13.



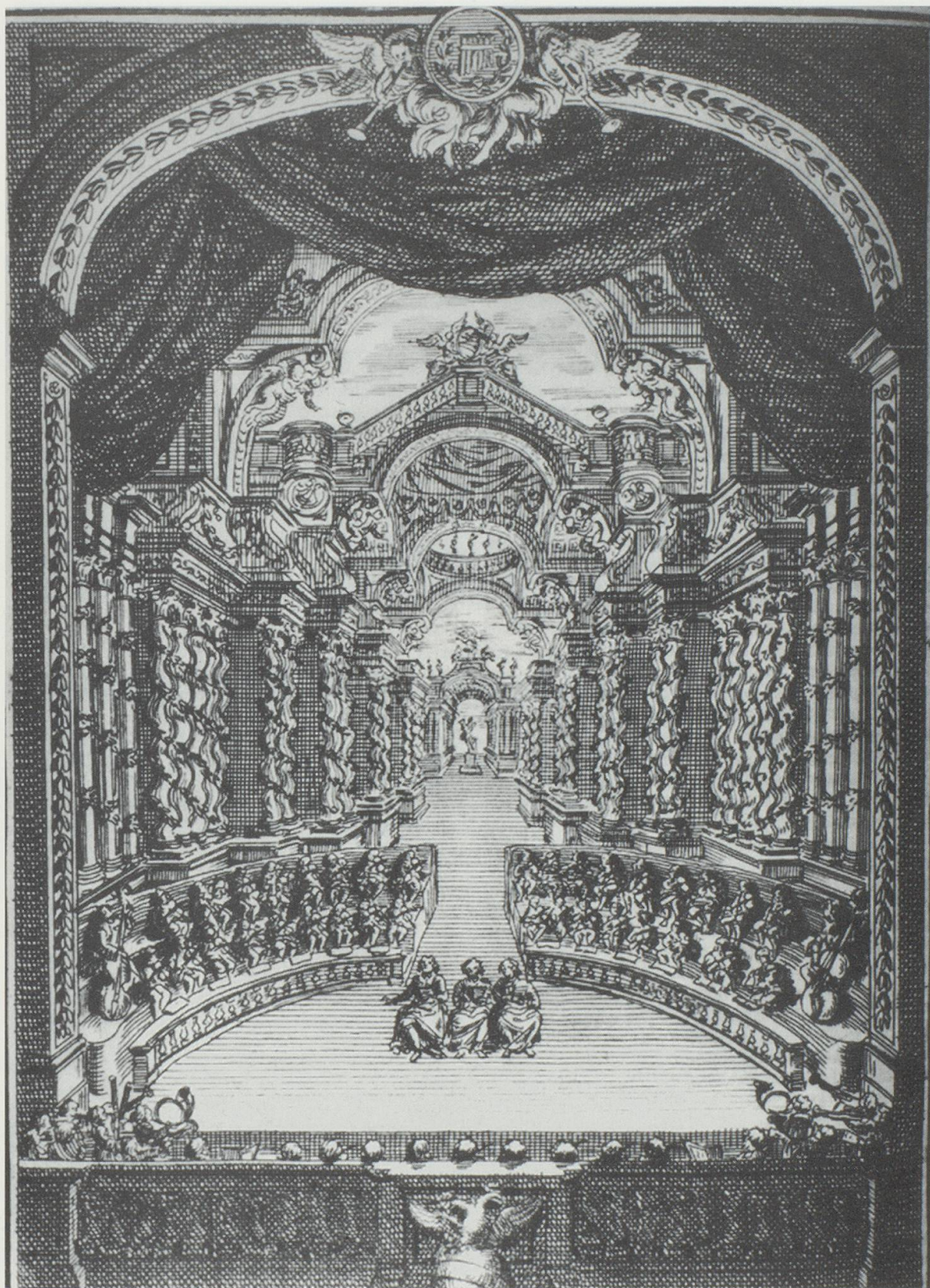
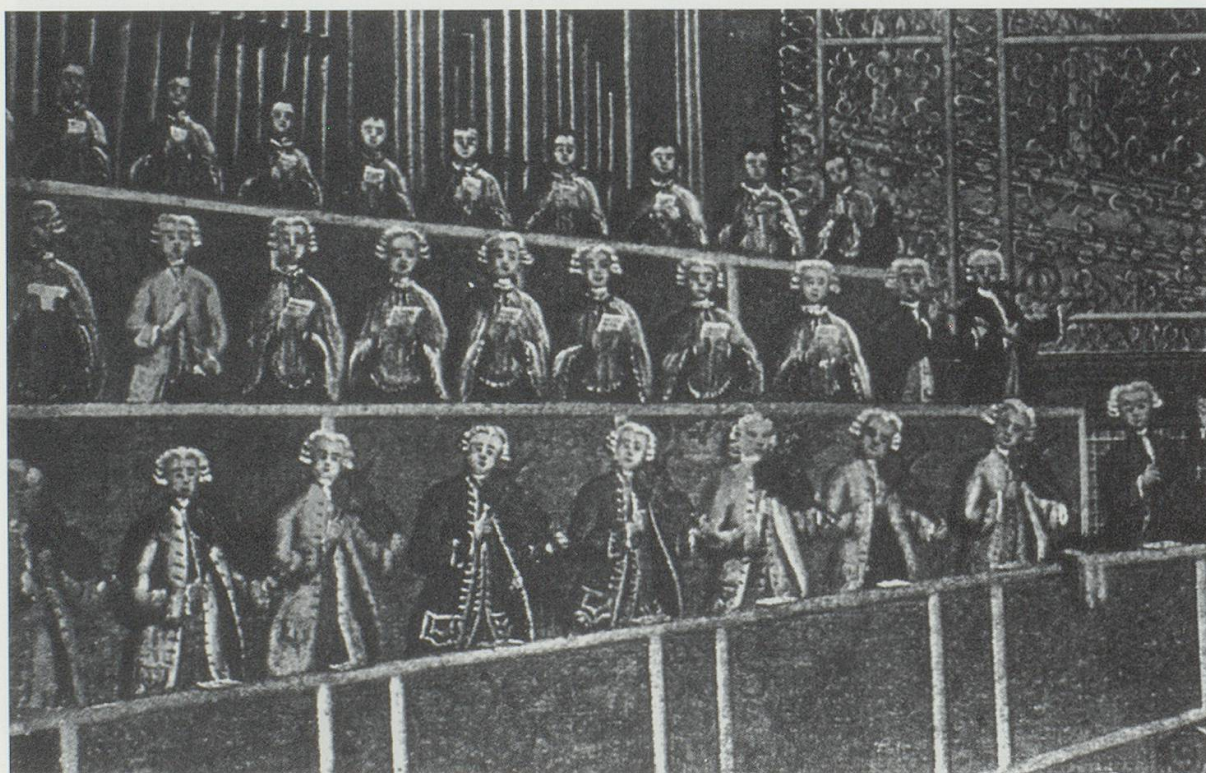
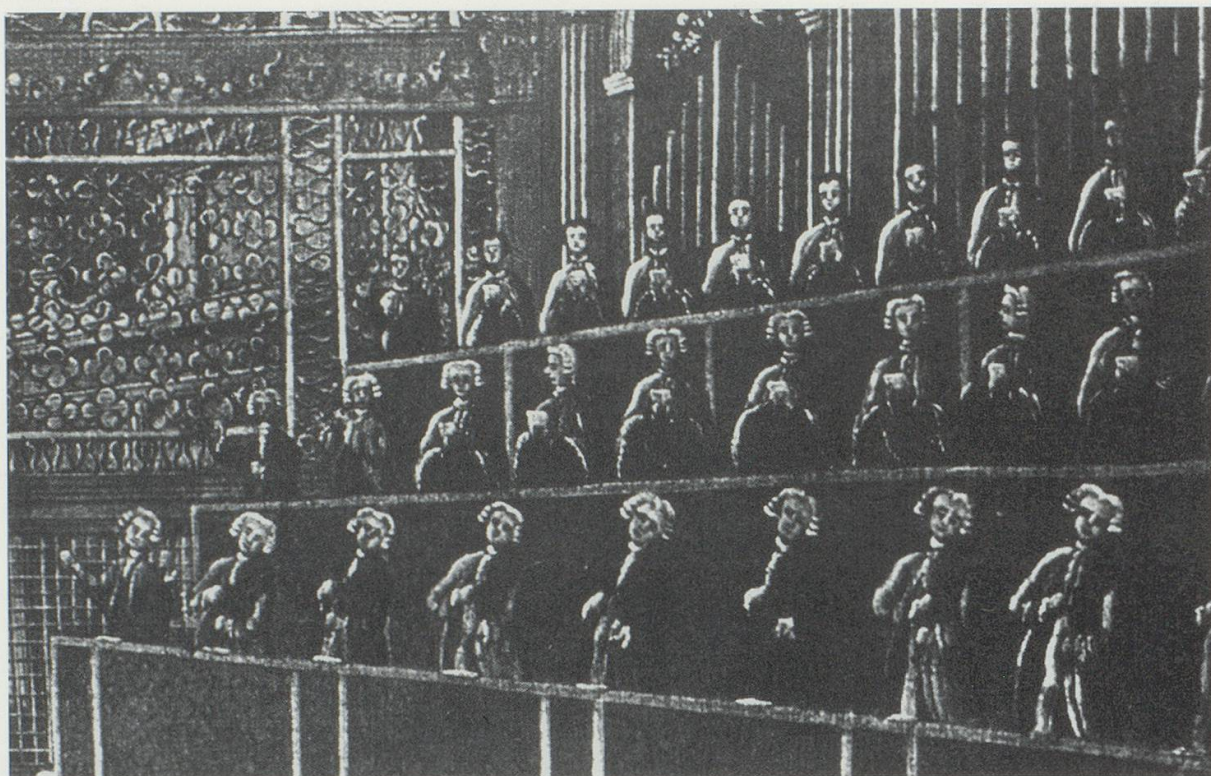


Figure 10: Engraved frontispiece by Franceschini from the libretto of Giovanni Battista Costanzi's and Metastasio's *Componimento sacro* at the Palazzo della Cancelleria, Rome, 1727. Source: *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 1980), vol. XIII, p. 670.





Figures 11a and b: Investiture of a Venetian noblewoman. Venice, mid-18th century. Two details from a painting by Gabriel Bella (Pinacoteca Querini Stampalia, Venice). Source: Richard de Combray, *Venice: Frail Barrier* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975), between pp. 96–97.



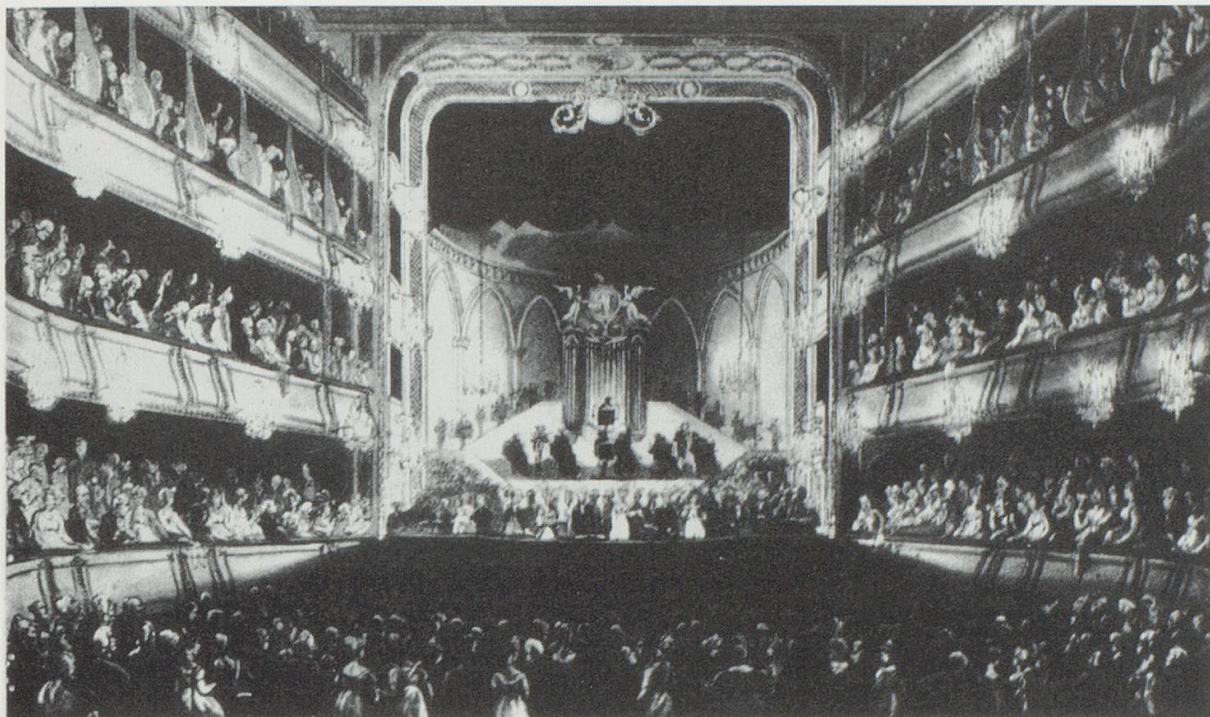


Figure 12: Oratorio performance in Covent Garden, showing Handel's organ. London, before 1808. Colored engraving by Augustus Pugin and Thomas Rowlandson.  
Source: Fiona St. Aubyn, *A Portrait of Georgian London based on Ackermann's „The Microcosm of London“*, published 1808–1810 (Churt: David Leader, 1985), p. 131.

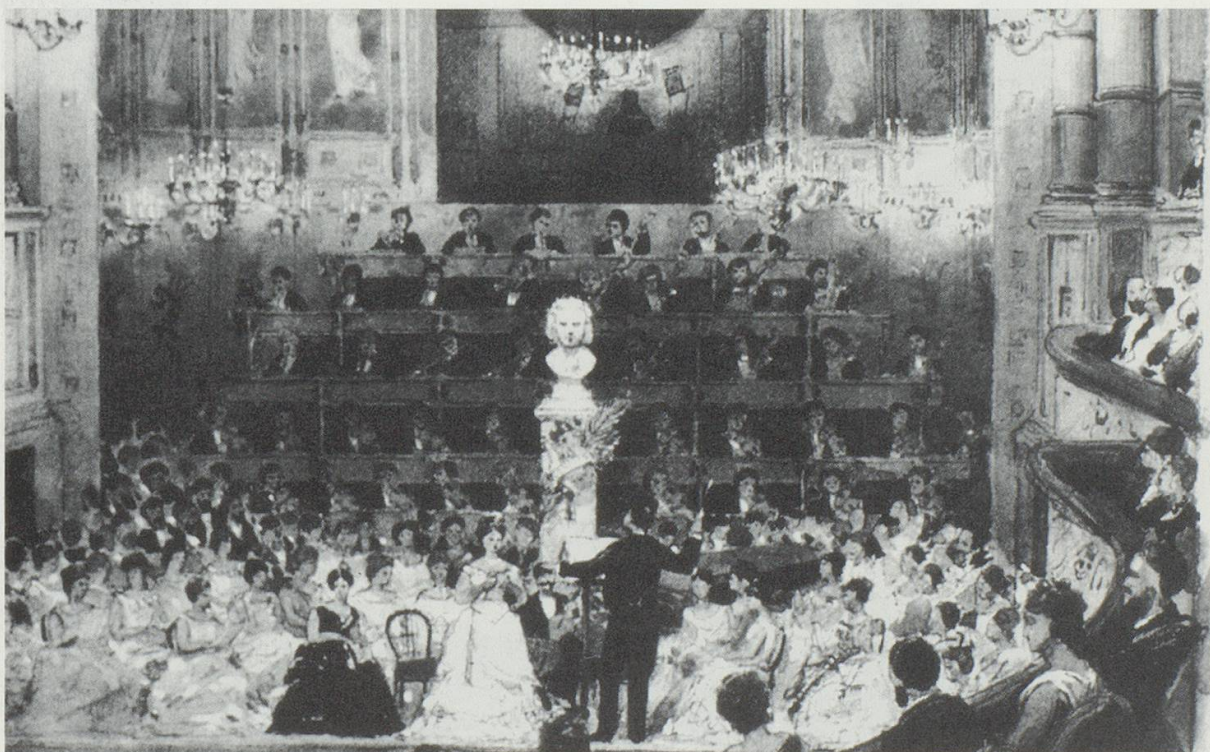


Figure 13: Performance of J.S. Bach's *Saint Matthew Passion* in the Salle du Conservatoire, Paris, 1885. Detail of a watercolor by C. Moyaux.  
Source: *Dictionnaire des œuvres de l'art vocal*, ed. Marc Honegger and Paul Prévost (Paris: Bordas, 1991), vol. II, facing p. 1172.



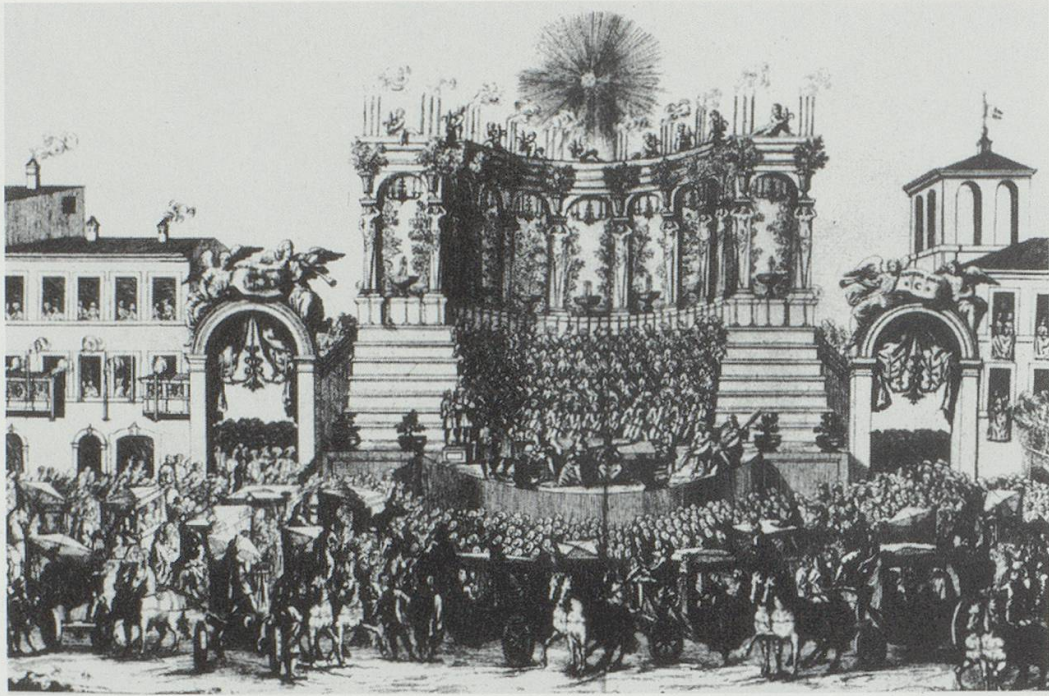


Figure 14: „Festa celebrata dall’ Ambasciadore del Ré Cattolico in Roma ... “ Massed Strings with continuo and vocal soloists, led by Arcangelo Corelli in the Piazza di Spagna, Rome, August 25, 1687. Detail of an engraving by Christofer Schor.  
Source: Per Bjurström, *Feast and Theater in Queen Christina’s Rome* (Stockholm: Nationalmuseum, 1966), p. 148.

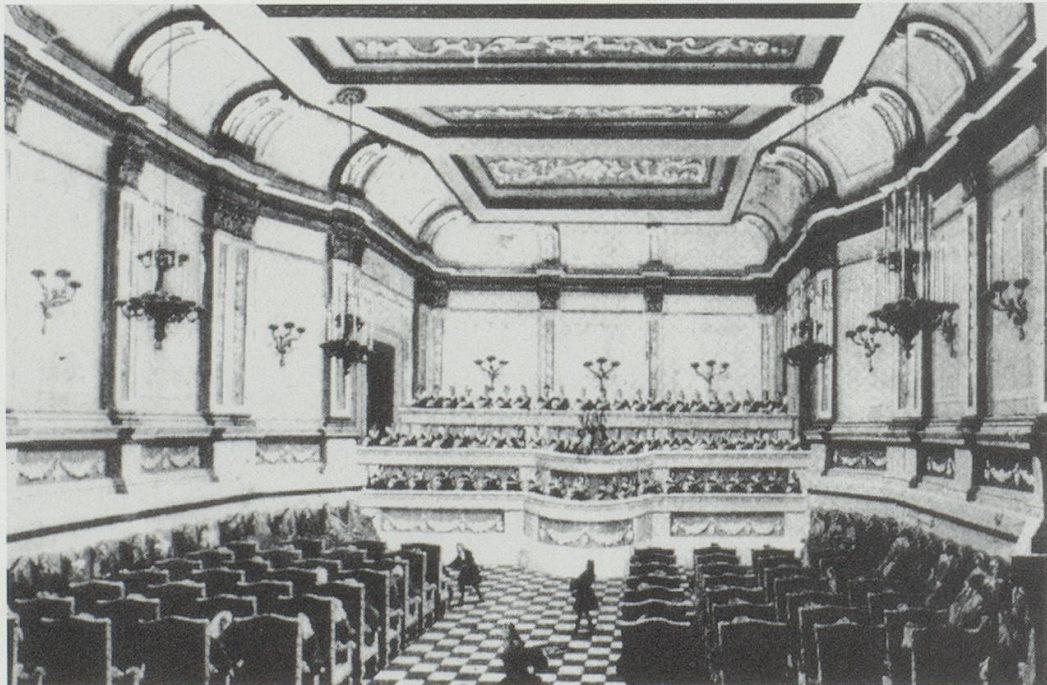


Figure 15: Concert in a Venetian conservatorio. Fresco by Francesco Battagliuoli in the music room of Villa Strà.  
Source: Neal Zaslaw (ed.), *Man and Music: The Classical Era from the 1740s to the End of the 18th Century* (London: Macmillan, 1989), p. 42.



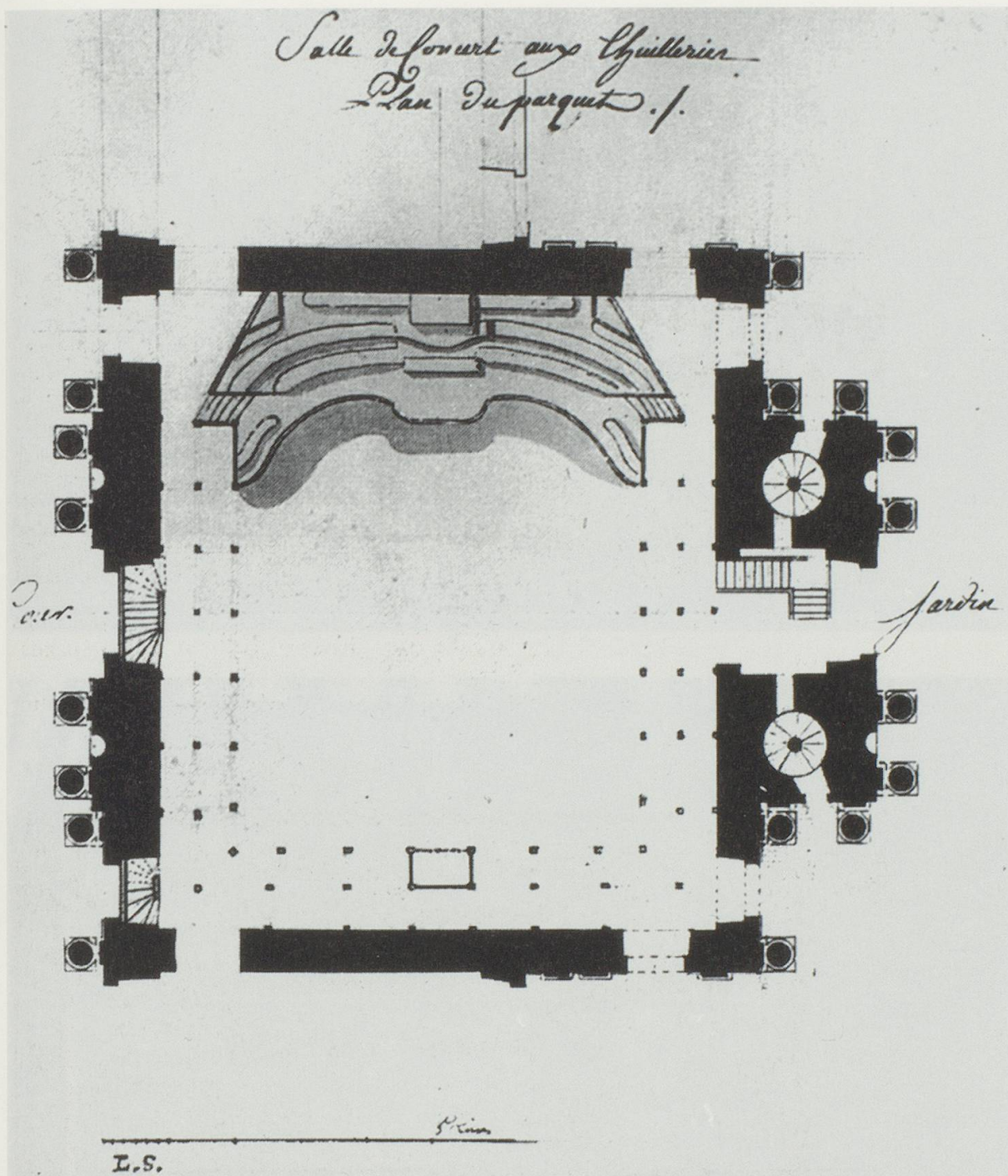
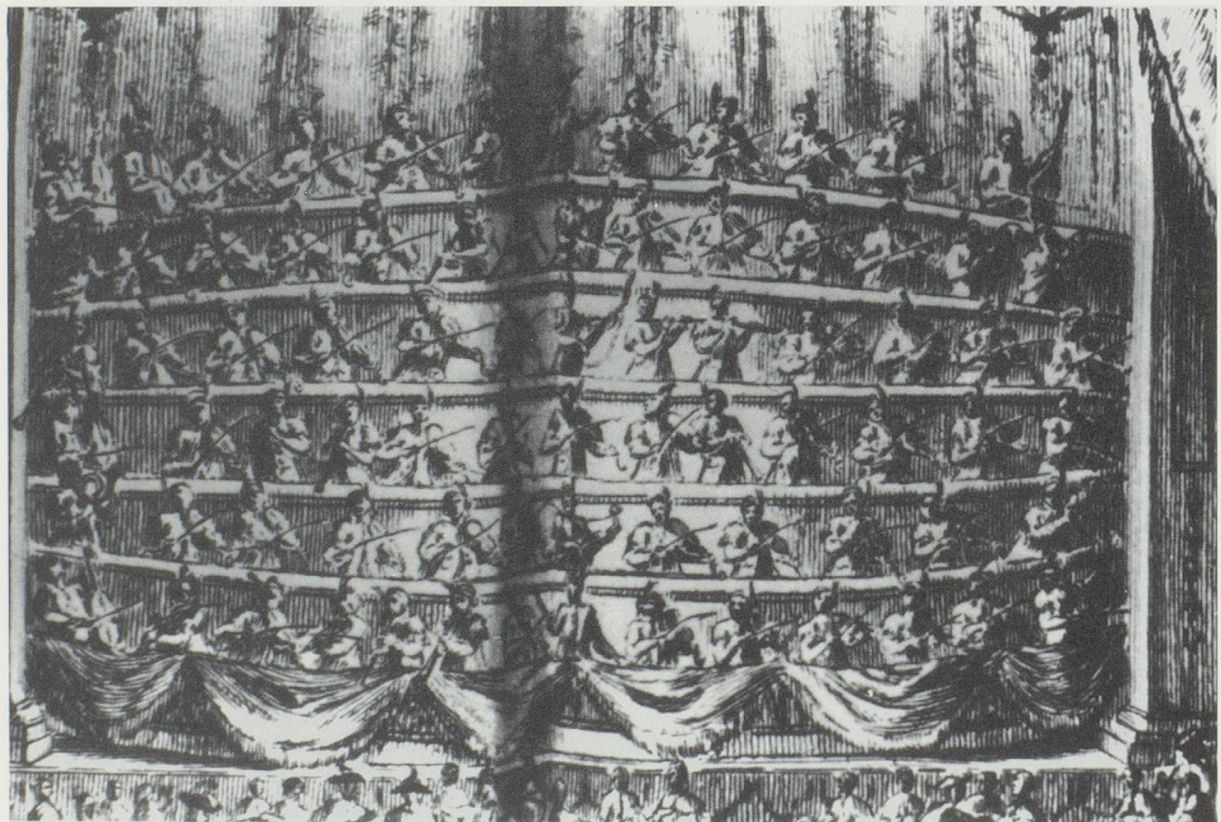
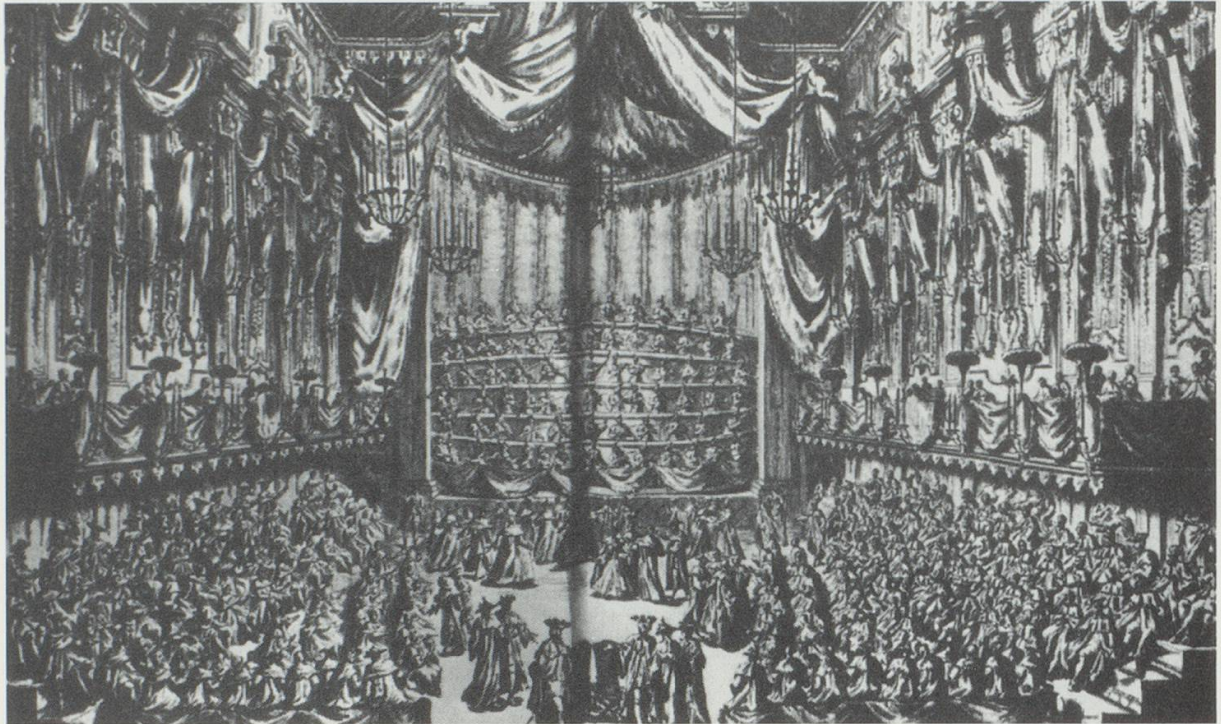


Figure 16: Mid-18th-century plan of the Salle des Cents Suisses in the Tuilleries, showing the temporary tiered structure erected for the orchestra and choir of the Concert spirituel. Source: Emmanuel Jacquin et al., *Les Tuilleries au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Délégation à l'action artistique de la Ville de Paris, 1990), p. 28.

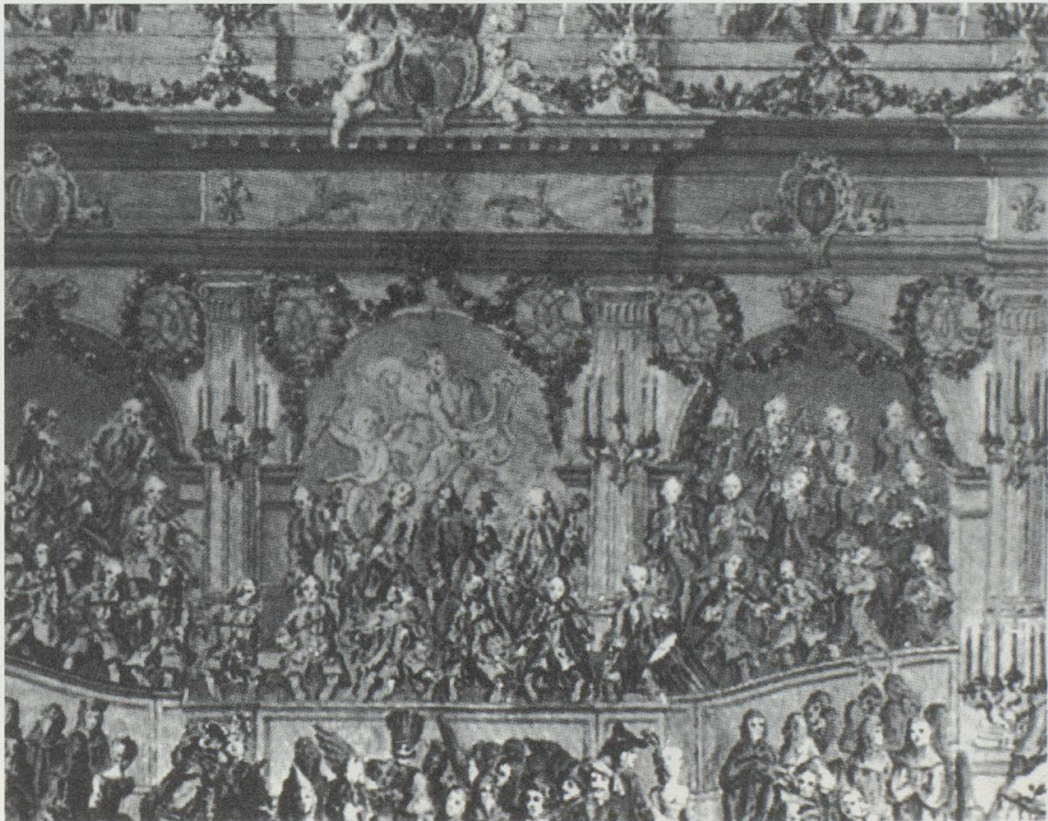
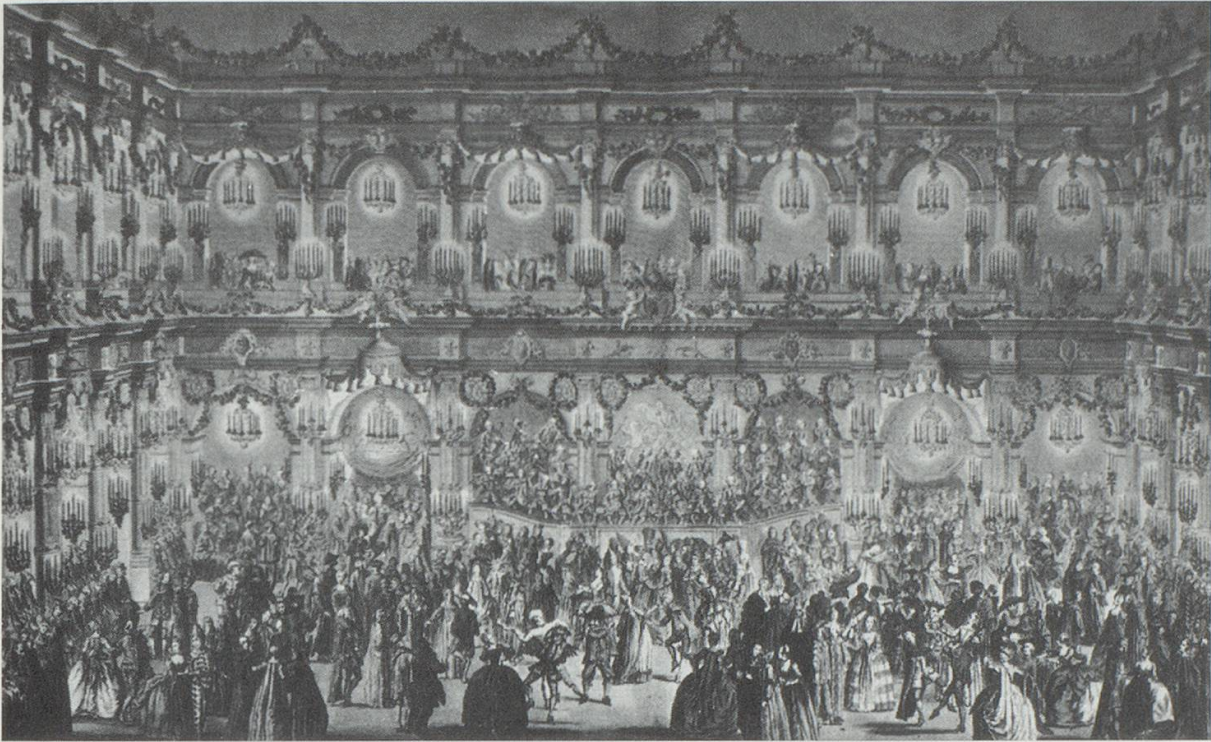




Figures 17a and b: Temporary tiered structure erected in the proscenium arch of the theater in the Royal Palace for a masked ball. Naples, 1747. Engraving by Felice Polanzani after Vincenzo R .

Source: Neal Zaslaw, *Mozart's Symphonies: Context, Performance Practice, Reception* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), Plate XVII.





Figures 18a and b: „Vue Perspective de la Salle du Bal, construite dans la Cour de l'Hôtel de Ville pour le mariage du Dauphin avec Marie-Thérèse d'Espagne.“ Paris, 1745. Colored engraving by Charles-Nicolas Cochin.  
Source: Pierre Gaxotte, *Louis XV* (Paris: Flammarion, 1980), p. 213.





Figure 19: Collegium musicum concert. Zurich, 1777. Engraving by Johann Rudolf Holzhalb after Johann Rudolf Schellenberg, from the *Neujahrsgeſchenk ab dem Muſik-Saal*. Source: Neal Zaslaw, *Mozart's Symphonies: Context, Performance Practice, Reception* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), Plate VI.





Figure 20: Private concert. Engraving by Johann Ernst Mansfeld from J. Richter, *Bildgalerie weltlicher Missbräuche* (Vienna, 1785).  
Source: Neal Zaslaw, *Mozart's Symphonies: Context, Performance Practice, Reception* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), Plate XIII.





Figure 21: Mid-18th-century concert or rehearsal, perhaps from Florence. Drawing attributed to Johann Joseph Zoffany (private collection).  
Source: *Early Music* 19 (1991), p. 501.

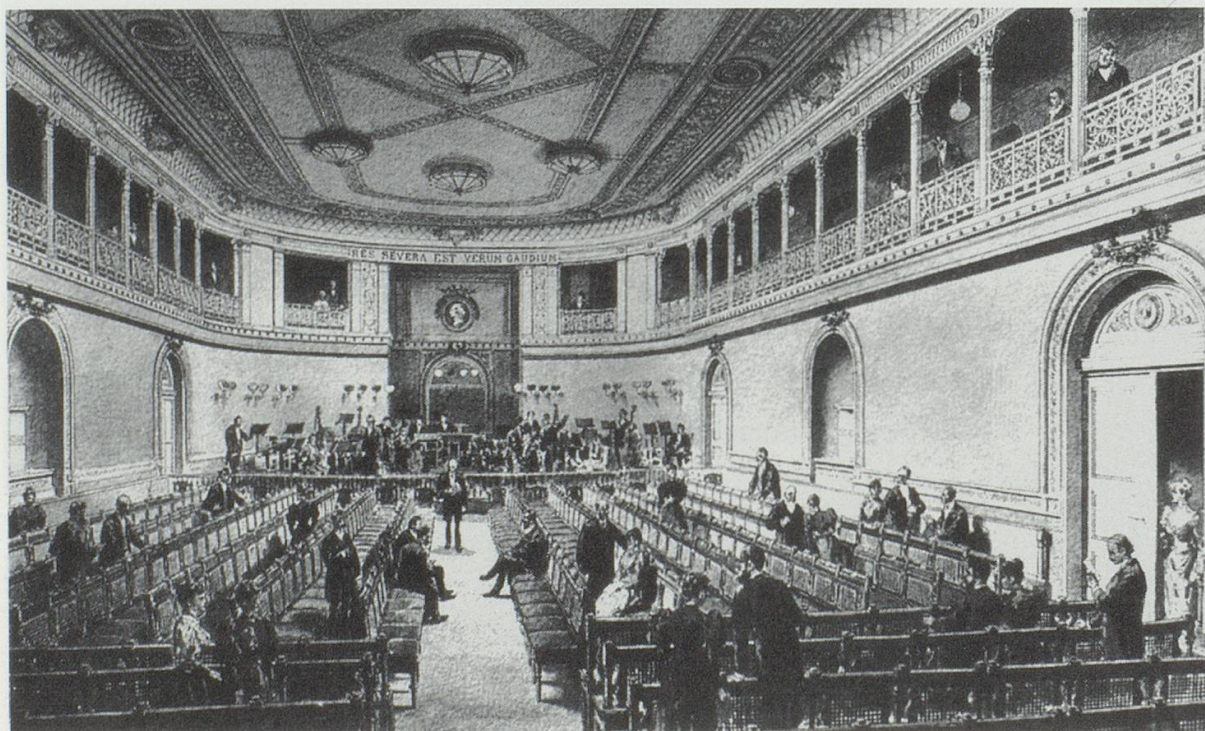


Figure 22: The Old Gewandhaus Concert Hall, Leipzig, built by Johann Friedrich Dauthe, 1780–81. Watercolor by Gotthold Theuerkauf, 1895, a year after the hall's demolition (Museum für Geschichte der Stadt Leipzig).  
Source: Michael Forsyth, *Buildings for Music: The Architect, the Musician and the Listener from the Seventeenth Century to the Present Day* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985), color plate 3.