

The Richness of Rossini: Musical Examples Class No. 2, Sep. 20, 2018
Examples are from YouTube unless otherwise noted

1.	Rossini: <i>L'Equivoco stravagante</i> (<i>The Curious Misunderstanding</i>) (1811)	Sabina Willeit as, Ernestina; Daniele Zanfardino as Ermanno.	Opera of Liège (Belgium), 2012
2.	Rossini: <i>La Pietra del Paragone</i> (<i>The Touch Stone</i>) (1812)	“Ombretta sdegnosa” (Disainful Shadow)	Paolo Bordogna (Pacuvio); Alberto Zedda, conductor; Pierluigi Pizzi, director. Teatro Real (Madrid)
3.	Rossini: <i>Tancredi</i> (1813)	Overture	Prague Symphony Orchestra, Christian Benda, conductor
4.	Rossini: <i>Tancredi</i> (1813) Video Excerpts Arthaus Musik DVD 100207	Bernadette Manca di Nissa (Tancredi) Maria Bayo (Amenaide) Raul Gimenez (Argirio) Ildebrando D'Arcangelo (Orbazzano) Katarzyna Bak (Isaura) Maria Pia Piscitelli (Roggiero)	Conductor: Gianluigi Gelmetti Director: Pier Luigi Pizzi Schwetzinger Festspiele, 2005 Chorus of the Südfunk, Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra Stuttgart/Gianluigi Gelmetti
5.	Rossini: <i>Tancredi</i> (1813)	“Di tanti palpiti” (Of so much heartache)	David Daniels, countertenor Julius Rudel conducting. Richard Tucker Foundation Gala, Avery Fisher Hall, New York, 1997.
6.	Niccolò Paganini (1782-1840)	Variations on “Di tanti palpiti”	
7.	Rossini: <i>Tancredi</i>	Substitute aria: “Dolci d’amor parole . . . Voce che tenera” (Sweet words of love . . . Tender voice”)	Marilyn Horne, mezzo-soprano
8.	Rossini: <i>L’Italiana in Algeri</i> (<i>The Italian Girl in Algiers</i>) (1813)	“Languir per una bella” (To pine for a beautiful woman)	Maxim Mironov Riccardo Frizza, cond; Aix en Provence, Festival 2006
9.	Rossini: <i>L’Italiana in Algeri</i> (<i>The Italian Girl in Algiers</i>) (1813)	“Languir per una bella” (To pine for a beautiful woman)	Lawrence Brownlee, Opera Philadelphia, 2008
10.	Rossini: <i>L’Italiana in Algeri</i> (<i>The Italian Girl in Algiers</i>) (1813) Video Excerpts Arthaus Musik DVD 100 121	Elvira: Nuccia Focile Haly: Rudolf Hartmnan Isabella: Doris Soffel Lindoro: Robert Gambill Mustafà: Günter von Kannen Taddeo: Enric Serra Zulima: Susan McLean	Ralk Weikert, Conductor Michael Hampe, Director Radio-Symphony-Orchestra Stuttgart
11.	Rossini: <i>L’Italiana in Algeri</i> (<i>The Italian Girl in Algiers</i>) (1813)	“Pens’alla patria” (Think of your homeland)	Marilyn Horne as Isabella

Rossini: *Tancredi* (Synopsis)

Tancredi, an exiled Syracusan soldier	contralto or mezzo-soprano
Amenaide, the daughter of a noble family, in love with Tancredi	soprano Elisabetta
Argirio, father of Amenaide; at war with Orbazzano	tenor
Orbazzano, at war with Argirio	bass
Isaura, friend to Amenaide	contralto
Roggiero, Tancredi's squire	mezzo-soprano or tenor

Syracuse (Sicily), 11th Century: Amid internal conflicts and war with the Byzantine Empire, the soldier Tancredi (son of the rightful king) has been banished since his youth. Two noble families, headed by Argirio and Orbazzano, have been warring for years and they begin to reconcile. Also present is Solamir, a Saracen (Muslim) general. Argirio's daughter, Amenaide, is secretly in love with Tancredi. Prior to the beginning of the opera, she has sent him a letter (without naming him in it), and it is this letter which complicates the proceedings which follow.

Scene 1: A gallery in Argirio's palace

Warring nobles Argirio, leader of the Senate in Syracuse, and Orbazzano and their men celebrate a truce and the end of a civil war: Along with Isaura and her ladies, Argirio proclaims that this unity reinforces a new security for the city against the Moorish forces led by Solamir. He names Orbazzano as the leader against the Moors. However, Argirio warns the assembled forces against a possible greater threat, that from the banished Tancredi, a statement which disturbs Isaura. Argirio then summons his daughter, Amenaide to appear. She joins in the general songs of triumph which are expressed by the assembly but is also disturbed by the fact that her secret beloved, Tancredi, has not rejoined her despite the fact that she has written a letter to him asking him to do so now that he is returning in disguise to Syracuse. The Senate, having already given Tancredi and his family's confiscated estates to Orbazzano, Argirio then offers Amenaide in marriage to him to help solidify the truce. He wishes to have the ceremony performed immediately, and although she dutifully consents to the arrangement, she pleads with her father to postpone it until the following day. All leave except Isaura who laments upon the situation in which Amenaide is now placed.

Scene 2: A garden in the Palace

Roggiero, then Tancredi and his men, disembark from a ship. Not having received Amenaide's letter, he pledges to help defend the city against the invaders and to seek out his beloved. Roggiero is dispatched with a message for Amenaide, and he sends his followers to spread the word that an unknown knight has arrived to help save the city. His thoughts turn to Amenaide. And to how much pain he has caused her. When all have left, Tancredi sees Argirio and his daughter enter the garden. He hides, but can overhear their conversation. Argirio informs Amenaide and the followers who accompany them that all are invited to the wedding which will take place at noon. The young woman pleads for more time, but is told that the ceremony must take place right away. Argirio continues by informing all that the enemy leader, Solamir, has surrounded the city, and has asked for Amenaide's hand in marriage. Orbazzano then states that he will lead the people of Syracuse against the enemy, the recent action of the Senate having condemned to death all traitors. As Argirio leaves, Amenaide immediately regrets that she has indirectly involved Tancredi by writing to him. Tancredi then appears and Amenaide tells him that he must immediately escape. Coldly, she rejects his claims of loving her, although the couple, despite their differences, then laments the dangerous situation in which they find themselves.

Scene 3: A public square close to the cathedral

People are gathered in the square for the wedding ceremony. Argirio assures all that the new-found unity between the two factions will be strengthened by the marriage. In disguise, Tancredi appears and offers his services. Privately, he feels that Amenaide has betrayed him by accepting the marriage but, when she refuses to go ahead with it, an angry Orbazzano enters. Publicly, he denounces her and, having overheard the prior conversation, declares that the marriage will not take place. Immediately, he produces a letter, which he assumes was intended for Solamir and which appears to implicate her in a treasonous plot to overthrow Syracuse by calling upon the recipient to come and capture the city. [In reality it is the letter which Amenaide had sent to Tancredi, deliberately omitted his name for his protection, and which had never reached him]. The assembled crowd is horrified. Amenaide swears that she is innocent, but her father denounces her, as does Tancredi. She is dragged off to prison to await death as all except her faithful Isaura proclaim.

Act 2

Scene 1: A gallery in Argirio's castle

An angry Orbazzano reflects on Amenaide's apparent treachery and her contempt of him. Aside, Isaura pities Amenaide's fate, reminding Argirio that Amenaide is his own daughter. The assembled knights are divided in their emotions, and while Argirio expresses his sorrow at the turn of events, but reluctantly signs the death warrant, with some of the group of knights pleading for mercy, others supporting his decision. All but Isaura and Orbazzano leave. She reproaches him for his cruelty and barbarous behavior, and, then alone after he leaves, she pleads for divine aid for Amenaide.

Scene 2: Inside the prison

In chains, Amenaide enters. She cries out to Tancredi, believing that he will learn the truth and know the constancy of her heart. Into the prison come Orbazzano and his followers, determined to see the execution carried out. But he asks if there is anyone willing to defend the traitor. Tancredi, although he still believes that his love has been betrayed and that Amenaide is a traitor, steps forward. He challenges Orbazzano to a duel in defense of Amenaide's honor and life, and throws down his gauntlet before his adversary. Throughout the men's interchange, Amenaide urges Tancredi to prove that she is innocent. Orbazzano embraces the unknown knight, seeking to know his identity as does Argirio. The trumpet sounds, signaling the start of the contest.

In another part of the prison, Amenaide learns what has transpired: she prays for protection for Tancredi, begging him to return to her a victor. From outside, a roar announces Tancredi's victory.

Scene 3: The main square of the town

Tancredi arrives triumphant and the people rejoice. However, as sweet as victory may be, he resolves to leave Sicily and, as Amenaide approaches him, he still believes that she has been unfaithful and is unwilling to talk to her. In a duet, they express their conflicting emotions. She demands that he kill her, but both leave while Roggiero remains, having learned the truth from Isaura.

Scene 4: A cavern in a mountain range with Mt. Etna in the distance

Alone and close to the Saracens' camp, Tancredi reflects upon his sad destiny while recalling Amenaide's betrayal. The Saracens appear ready to attack. Amenaide is told that peace will follow if she agrees to marry their leader Solamir. Tancredi defies the Saracens, expressing willingness to fight to the death. Tancredi emerges victorious and learns that the dying Solamir has testified to Amenaide's innocence. In a moment of general rejoicing, the lovers are reunited.

[Revised ending; Tancredi wins the battle but is mortally wounded, and only then does he learn that Amenaide never betrayed him. Argirio marries the lovers in time for Tancredi to die in his wife's arms.]

Rossini: L'Italiana in Algieri (The Italian Girl in Algiers) Synopsis

Isabella, the Italian girl, in love with Lindoro	contralto
Lindoro, in love with Isabella	tenor
Taddeo, an elderly Italian, suitor to Isabella	bass
Mustafà, the Bey (Provincial Governor) of Algiers	bass
Elvira, his wife	soprano
Zulma, Elvira's confidante	mezzo-soprano
Haly, the captain of the Bey's guard	tenor or bass]

PART I

In Algiers, at the seaside palace of the bey (provincial governor) Mustafà, his wife, Elvira, complains that her husband no longer loves her; her attendants reply there is nothing she can do. Mustafà himself bursts in. Asserting he will not let women get the better of him, he sends Elvira away when she complains. Mustafà says he has tired of his wife and will give her to Lindoro, a young captive Italian at the court, to marry. Then he orders Haly, a captain in his service, to provide an Italian woman for himself--someone more interesting than the girls in his harem, all of whom bore him. Lindoro longs for his own sweetheart, Isabella, whom he lost when pirates captured him. Mustafà tells him he can have Elvira, insisting she possesses every virtue that Lindoro, in his attempt to escape Mustafà's connubial trap, has listed.

Elsewhere along the shore, a shipwreck is spotted in the distance, and Haly's pirates exult in the catch. Isabella arrives on shore, lamenting the cruelty of a fate that has interrupted her quest for her lost fiancé, Lindoro. Though in danger, she is confident of her skill in taming men. The pirates seize Taddeo, an aging admirer of Isabella's, and attempt to sell him into slavery, but he claims he is Isabella's uncle and cannot leave her. When the Turks learn that both captives are Italian, they rejoice in having found the new star for their leader's harem. Taddeo is aghast at the aplomb with which Isabella takes this news, but after a quarrel about his jealousy, they decide they had better face their predicament together.

Elvira's slave, Zulma, tries to reconcile Lindoro and her mistress to the fact that Mustafâ has ordered them to marry. Mustafâ promises Lindoro he may return to Italy -- if he will take Elvira. Seeing no other way, Lindoro accepts, making it clear he might not marry Elvira until after they reach Italy. Elvira, however, loves her husband and sees no advantage in aiding Lindoro's escape. When Haly announces the capture of an Italian woman, Mustafâ gloats in anticipation of conquest, then leaves to meet her. Lindoro tries to tell Elvira she has no choice but to leave her heartless husband.

In the main hall of his palace, hailed by eunuchs as "the scourge of women," Mustafâ welcomes Isabella with ceremony. Aside, she remarks that he looks ridiculous and feels certain that she will be able to deal with him; he, on the other hand, finds her enchanting. As she seemingly throws herself on his mercy, the jealous Taddeo starts to make a scene and is saved only when she declares that he is her "uncle." Elvira and Lindoro, about to leave for Italy, come to say good-bye to the bey, and Lindoro and Isabella are stunned to recognize each other, but keep their secret to themselves. To prevent Lindoro's departure, Isabella insists that Mustafâ cannot banish his wife, adding that Lindoro must stay as her own personal servant. Between the frustration of Mustafâ's plans and the happy but confused excitement of the lovers, everyone's head reels.

PART II

Elvira and various members of the court are discussing how easily the Italian woman has cowed Mustafâ, giving Elvira hope of regaining his love. When Mustafâ enters, however, it is to declare he will visit Isabella in her room for coffee. She comes out of her room, upset because Lindoro apparently broke faith with her by agreeing to escape with Elvira. Lindoro appears and reassures her of his loyalty. Promising a scheme for their freedom, Isabella leaves him to his rapturous feelings. After he too leaves, Mustafâ reappears, followed by attendants with the terrified Taddeo, who is to be honored as the bey's Kaimakan, or personal bodyguard, in exchange for helping secure Isabella's affections. Dressed in Turkish garb, he sees no choice but to accept the compulsory honor. In her apartment, Isabella dons Turkish clothes herself and prepares for Mustafâ's visit, telling Elvira that the way to keep her husband is to be more assertive. As she completes her toilette, Isabella, knowing she is overheard by Mustafâ in the background, sings a half-mocking invocation to Venus to help conquer her victim. To make him impatient, she keeps him waiting, as her "servant" Lindoro acts as go-between. At length she presents herself to the bey, who introduces Taddeo as his Kaimakan. Mustafâ sneezes -- a signal for Taddeo to leave--but Taddeo stays, and Isabella invites Elvira to stay for coffee, to Mustafâ's displeasure. When Isabella insists that he treat his wife gently, Mustafâ bursts out in annoyance, while the others wonder what to make of his fulminations.

Elsewhere in the palace, Haly predicts that his master is no match for an Italian woman. As Lindoro and Taddeo plan their escape, Taddeo says he is Isabella's true love. Lindoro is amused but realizes he needs Taddeo's help in dealing with Mustafâ, who enters, still furious. Lindoro says Isabella actually cares very much for the bey and wants him to prove his worthiness by joining the Italian order of Pappataci (literally "Daddy Be Quiet"). Believing this to be an honor, Mustafâ asks what he has to do. Simple, says Lindoro: eat, drink, and sleep all you like, oblivious to anything around you. Aside, Haly and Zulma wonder what Isabella is up to.

In her apartment, Isabella readies a feast of initiation for the bey, exhorting her fellow Italians to be confident. Mustafâ arrives, and Lindoro reminds him of the initiation procedure. After he is pronounced a Pappataci, food is brought in, and he is tested by Isabella and Lindoro, who pretend to make love while Taddeo reminds Mustafâ to ignore them. A ship draws up in the background, and the lovers prepare to embark with other Italian captives, but Taddeo realizes that he too is being tricked and tries to rally Mustafâ, who persists in keeping his vow of paying no attention. When Mustafâ finally responds, the Italians have the situation under control and bid a courteous farewell. Mustafâ, his lesson learned, takes Elvira back, and everyone sings the praises of the resourceful Italian woman.