

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This volume assembles original essays from the events devoted to Florence-born American Jewish composer Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1895-1968) presented in Florence by ICAMus in June 2015: a session of papers and live performance at the “Intersections/Intersezioni” Conference (5 June 2015) and a conference-concert at the Lyceum Club Internazionale di Firenze (8 June 2015).

The focus of the essays is on Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s unpublished art song settings *Leaves of Grass* and *Shakespeare Sonnets*. The Whitman Songs, Opus 89 (the 10-song cycle *Leaves of Grass* and 2 individual songs, *Louisiana* and *Ocean*) were set in Tuscany in 1936, before the composer and his family were forced to emigrate to the United States following the enforcement of the Racial Laws in Italy. The selection of thirty-two Sonnets by William Shakespeare, Opus 125, was set to music in the United States, in 1944-1945, 1947 and 1963. These song settings are to be considered among Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s masterpieces, and a significant addition to the international art song repertoire.

The contributions comprising this volume study the continuity between the European and American years of Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s career. The composer was open to an international perspective ever since his youth in Florence. In such openness, his sincere, deeply felt admiration and love for the English language, and for the English and American literature, had an outstanding role.

The four essays here published address this subject from different yet complementary angles: Daniela Tortora draws a kaleidoscopic range of topics in her introduction to Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco and his unique position within the international musical 1900s (in Italian); Aloma Bardi offers a multifaceted survey of the unpublished *Leaves of Grass* and *Shakespeare Sonnets*, and the composer’s lifelong fascination with literature (in English); in her second essay, Aloma Bardi investigates the musical and human significance of Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s Whitman Songs, and the unusual challenge of setting original texts, in the perspective of the composer’s Italian and American production (in Italian); John Champagne provides a sophisticated reflection on Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s daring choice of Whitman’s poetry on the background of the many contradictions and controversies of the fascist era (in English).

The International Center for American Music gratefully acknowledges: “Intersections/Intersezioni” International Conference and its Organizing Committee, Francesco Ciabattini, Fulvio Santo Orsitto, and Simona Wright; the Lyceum Club Internazionale di Firenze, its president Donatella Lippi and the president of the Music Section, Eleonora Negri; The University of Florence, Dipartimento di Storia, Archeologia, Geografia, Arte e Spettacolo (SAGAS) – Dottorato interuniversitario Pegaso - Regione Toscana in Storia delle Arti e Storia dello Spettacolo, and Mila De Santis; Oberlin College and Conservatory of Music, and Oberlin Music distributed by Naxos; the Castelnuovo-Tedesco family in New York and in Florence, in remembrance of the late Ms. Lisbeth Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1936-2014), who was for many

years the copyright manager for this composer's music; James Westby, longtime scholar of Castelnuovo-Tedesco's biography, music, and catalogue of works; the Library of Congress Music Division, where the Castelnuovo-Tedesco Papers are housed, and Special Collections Curator, Kate Rivers.

We have experienced the events from which the essays here published originated, as part of a true Castelnuovo-Tedesco Renaissance on both sides of the Ocean, in which ICAMus is proud and delighted to have played a committed role over the years, both in Europe and in the United States.

ALOMA BARDI, ANN ARBOR, MI, U.S.A., 22 NOVEMBER 2015

