

**MARIO CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO  
AND HIS UNPUBLISHED SETTINGS  
OF WHITMAN & SHAKESPEARE POETRY**

**"INTERSECTIONS/INTERSEZIONI" CONFERENCE 2015  
An ICAMus Session **With Live Performance****

**Edited by ALOMA BARDI**

**ICAMus 2015**



Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco on board of a ship; c. 1933-35; Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco Papers, The Library of Congress Music Division, Washington, D.C., Box 143, folder 12, photo 1; reproduced by permission.

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**p. 3 Preface and Acknowledgments**

**p. 4 Session Program**

**p. 7 Aloma Bardi**

*The Music of a Spiritual and Transparent Language: Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco's Unpublished Settings of Whitman and Shakespeare, and Rare Settings of Modern American Poets*

**p. 27 Salvatore Champagne and Howard Lubin**

*Live Performance of Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco Song Selection: Unpublished Pieces and Premières*

**p. 33 John Champagne**

*Whitman, Fascist Ambiguities, and Castelnuovo-Tedesco's Covert Critique*

**p. 45 Mila De Santis**

*New Castelnuovo-Tedesco Projects on the International Scene*

**p. 49 Eleonora Negri**

*Castelnuovo-Tedesco Events and Projects at the Lyceum Club Internazionale di Firenze*



## PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*This volume features the revised content of the ICAMus Session "Florence-Born US Composer Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1895-1968) and His Unpublished Settings of Whitman and Shakespeare Poetry," presented, with live performance, at the "Intersections/Intersezioni" Conference held in Florence, Italy, on June 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>, 2015. The ICAMus Session took place on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015.*

*The publication includes the text of all the session's papers. The PowerPoint images shown at the conference are integrated in Aloma Bardi's paper as illustrations from the original documents of the Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco Collection at the Library of Congress Music Division. For the numerous PowerPoint illustrations in John Champagne's presentation, a link is provided. For Eleonora Negri's non-written report, an abstract is given here.*

*The volume also features the Live Performance Program (Salvatore Champagne, tenor, and Howard Lubin, piano), as well as the Whitman, Shakespeare, Edna St. Vincent Millay and Arthur Guiterman texts, set to music by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco and performed at the Conference.*

*In addition, each contribution is illustrated with conference and live performance photographs, in the ICAMus Archive, from "Intersections/Intersezioni" 2015.*

*For this beautiful experience, the ICAMus team participating in the Conference wishes to express the Center's special thanks to "Intersections/Intersezioni" and its Organizing Committee: Professors Francesco Ciabattoni, Fulvio Santo Orsitto, and Simona Wright.*

*The International Center for American Music thanks all those who made this event possible: Lisbeth Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1936-2014) and the Castelnuovo-Tedesco family in New York and in Florence; the Library of Congress Music Division and its Special Collections curator, Kate Rivers; Oberlin College & Conservatory; Dr. James Westby.*

*To Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco and his impressive unpublished manuscripts, ICAMus expresses the most heartfelt gratitude, in the hope that the Center's work can inspire more researchers and performers to explore the still numerous unpublished and unknown works by this important composer, worthy of being discovered, performed, published, and recorded.*

Aloma Bardi - Ann Arbor, MI, 26 October 2015





## **“INTERSECTIONS/INTERSEZIONI” INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE** **Florence, June 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

**Organizing Committee:**  
**Francesco Ciabattoni, Fulvio Santo Orsitto, Simona Wright**

The event was sponsored by:  
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY  
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, Chico  
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The Conference was hosted by:  
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CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM - FLORENCE, ITALY

**FLORENCE-BORN US COMPOSER MARIO CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO**  
**(1895-1968)**  
**AND HIS UNPUBLISHED SETTINGS OF WHITMAN & SHAKESPEARE POETRY**

**With Live Performance**  
**An ICAMus Session**

**Participants:**  
**ALOMA BARDI · SALVATORE CHAMPAGNE · HOWARD LUBIN · JOHN CHAMPAGNE**  
**Special Guests:**  
**MILA DE SANTIS · ELEONORA NEGRI**

**Kent State University - Florence Program**  
**Palazzo dei Cerchi · Vicolo dei Cerchi 1 · Florence**  
**Friday, June 5th, 2015**

Florentine Jewish pianist and composer **Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco** was a highly educated, internationally renowned, and largely published musician. In 1939 he fled Italy following the enforcement of the Racial Laws. In the United States, he became an American citizen and an American composer; as such, he gave a significant contribution to film music, while still producing a large output of concert music.

Castelnuovo-Tedesco's unpublished settings of American poets, particularly Whitman, and of Shakespeare's Sonnets are a unique dialogue between music and poetry, and between the Old and the New World. A daring choice during the fascist era, the Whitman settings were written in Italy in 1936; the Shakespeare Sonnets reveal the composer's continuing love for poetry and the English language in later years.

This event is presented and coordinated by ICAMus - The International Center for American Music [www.icamus.org](http://www.icamus.org), that has made this project possible.

## SESSION PROGRAM

**Aloma Bardi (ICAMus - The International Center for American Music)** - *The Music of a Spiritual and Transparent Language: Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco's Unpublished Settings of Whitman and Shakespeare, and Rare Settings of Modern American Poets.*

**Salvatore Champagne (Oberlin Conservatory of Music)** Tenor; **Howard Lubin (Oberlin Conservatory of Music)** Piano - *Live performance of Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco song selection: Unpublished pieces and premières.*

**John Champagne (Penn State Behrend)** - *Whitman, Fascist Ambiguity, and Castelnuovo-Tedesco's Covert Critique.*

**Mila De Santis (The University of Florence)** - *New Castelnuovo-Tedesco Projects on the International Scene. Short Communication Paper.*

**Eleonora Negri (Lyceum Club Internazionale di Firenze and The University of Florence)** - *Castelnuovo-Tedesco Events and Projects at the Lyceum Club Internazionale di Firenze. Short Communication Paper.*

A session of 90 mins., inclusive of presentations, live performance of rare and unpublished songs of Italian American composer Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, and of discussion time.





The medieval Palazzo dei Cerchi, Vicolo dei Cerchi, Florence, built in the early 1300s, where Kent State University - Florence Program is located, and venue of the ICAMus Session at the "Intersections/Intersezioni" Conference (June 5-7, 2015).

## *The Music of a Spiritual and Transparent Language*

*Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco's Unpublished Settings*

*of Whitman and Shakespeare*

*and Rare Settings of Modern American Poets*

Aloma Bardi



Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1895-1968) at his desk, working on a score; Florence, early 1930s. Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco Papers, The Library of Congress Music Division, Washington, D.C., Box 143, Folder 14/5; reproduced by permission.

## Opening Remarks

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Aloma Bardi. I direct ICAMus - The International Center for American Music, the Organization offering this session—illuminated with live performance—on Florence-born American composer Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1895-1968).

Our warmest thanks to:

the “Intersections” Conference and its Organizing Committee, for having us here today, in the beautiful Palazzo dei Cerchi;

to the Library of Congress Music Division, where the Castelnuovo-Tedesco Papers are located, and to curator Kate Rivers;

to Dr. James Westby, longtime scholar of Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s biography, music, and catalogue of works, for his generous encouragement, and for providing constant historical advice and research materials.

Special thanks to the composer’s family, for their support to the research.

We are honored by the presence of Marinetta Piva from Florence, and Diana Castelnuovo-Tedesco, the composer’s granddaughter, from New York. Her mother, the late Ms. Lisbeth Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1936-2014), was for many years the copyright manager for this composer’s music. Today we remember her.





Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Photographic studio portrait; A. Cattani & Figli, Florence, 10 October 1921. Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco Papers, The Library of Congress Music Division, Washington, D.C., Box 143, Folder 6; reproduced by permission.

This session focuses on a prominent figure of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Italian Jewish composer Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco was born in Florence in 1895 and lived in his beloved city until—after the promulgation of the Racial Laws—he was forced to expatriate with his family to the United States, shortly before the outbreak of World War II. In America he would live for the rest of his life, and only occasionally would he return to Florence.

A cosmopolitan polyglot of wide cultural horizons, in the 1920s and 1930s he had a brilliant Italian and European career as a concert pianist, a widely-published composer and music critic. His works were performed by the most prestigious soloists, conductors, orchestras, institutions: Jascha Heifetz, Arturo Toscanini, the New York Philharmonic, the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino.

After the enforcement of the Racial Laws, with the help of Heifetz, Toscanini, and of violinist Albert Spalding, Castelnuovo-Tedesco and his family left Italy in the summer of 1939. They eventually settled in Beverly Hills, California, where he started a new career as composer for film scores at the MGM Studios in Hollywood. An American citizen since 1946, he died in Beverly Hills in 1968. A life—and a career—divided in exactly two parts.



Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco in his studio; Beverly Hills, 1960s. Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco Papers, The Library of Congress Music Division, Washington, D.C., Box 144, Folder 15; reproduced by permission.

Castelnuovo-Tedesco composed for virtually all genres, for vocal and instrumental ensembles: operas, oratorios, concertos for solo instrument and orchestra, chamber music, songs. Influenced by his teacher Ildebrando Pizzetti (1880-1968), he was profoundly interested in setting poetry to music. In his art songs, he integrates a musical style of lyrical immediacy, with an intense love for literature and the arts. In his important 1944 article *Music and Poetry: Problems of a Song-Writer*,<sup>1</sup> he wrote: «My ambition—even more than that, a profound urge within me—has always been to unite my music to poetic texts that arouse my interest and emotion, [...] to stamp them with the authentic and therefore undetachable seal of melody, to give utterance to the music that is latent within them, and, in doing so, to discover their real source in the emotions that brought them into being».<sup>2</sup> A straightforward statement of poetics; equally striking is this composer's lifelong loyalty to it.

Among the several languages and literatures he drew inspiration from, the English language has special prominence, as well as the English and American literature. In *Music and Poetry*, he wrote: «I am surprised that its musicality [of the English language] is so often doubted [...] To be sure, English does present some remarkable difficulties to the song-writer. One, for example, is the great number of monosyllabic words, which it is difficult to distribute over a melody in an expressive fashion and, at the same time, with correct accentuation. But, on the other hand, it is perhaps just this—its very lack of “sonorous substance”—that lends English its charm, and makes it one of the most “spiritual” and transparent languages I know».<sup>3</sup>

In the summer of 1936, in Florence and other locations in Tuscany, Castelnuovo-Tedesco discovered and fell in love with Walt Whitman. He set 12 Whitman poems; these songs comprise his Opus 89. In the order of composition, they are: *Louisiana*, Opus 89a; the 10-song cycle *Leaves of Grass*, Opus 89b; and *Ocean*, Opus 89c. All of them are unpublished except *Louisiana*,<sup>4</sup> which is the opening song on our musical program today.

*Louisiana* (set on May 26-27, 1936) was Castelnuovo's first Whitman song. The composer perceives a secret sequence in Whitman's poetic imagination. *Live Oak, with Moss* was indeed among the first “germinations” of Whitman's *Calamus*, being a part of, and giving

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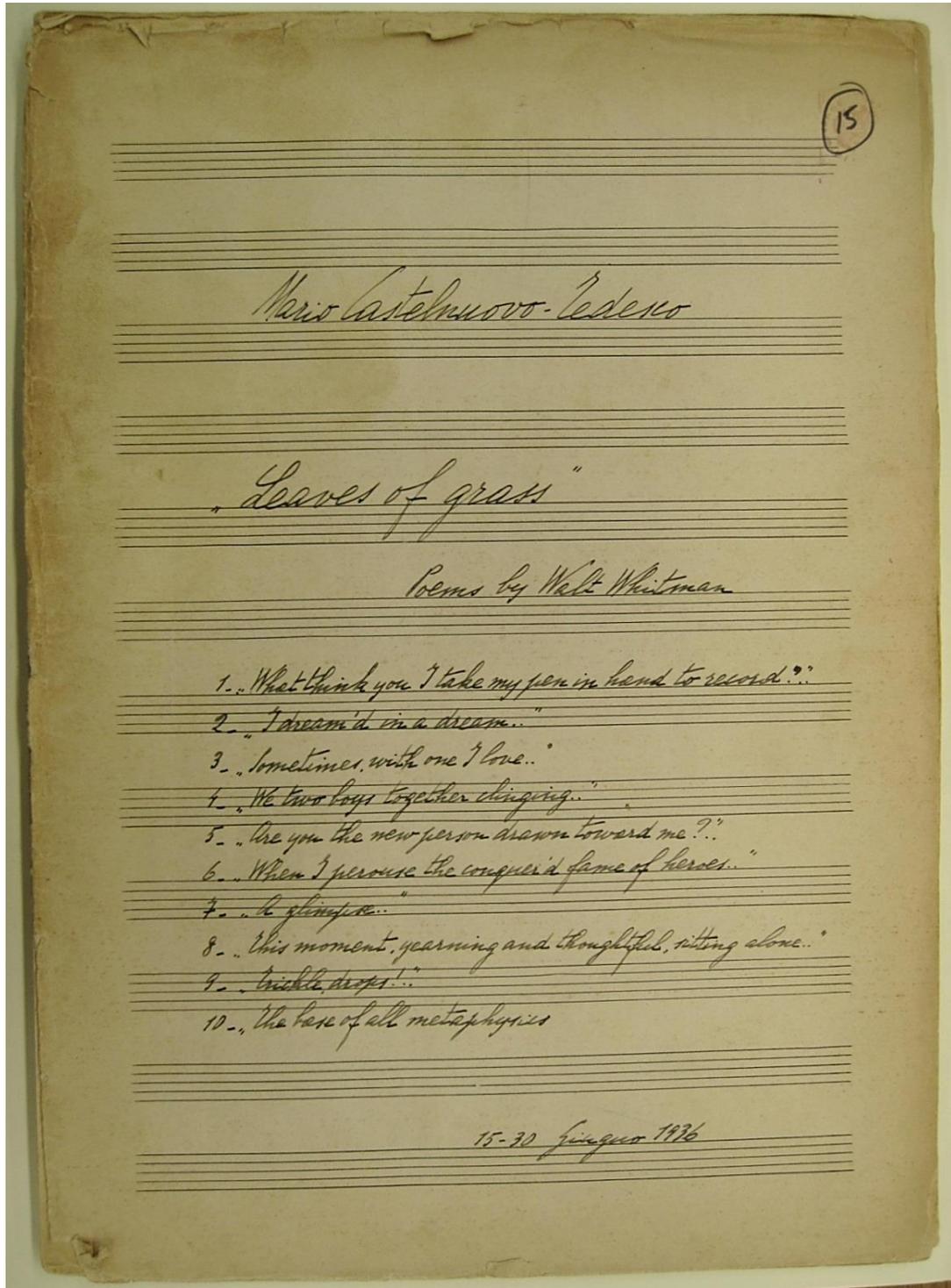
<sup>1</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Music and Poetry: Problems of a Song-Writer*, «The Musical Quarterly», Vol. 30, No. 1 - Jan., 1944; pp. 102-111.

<sup>2</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Music and Poetry*, p. 102.

<sup>3</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Music and Poetry*, pp. 107-108.

<sup>4</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Louisiana* (Walt Whitman), Galaxy Music Corp., 1940.

the original title to the set of poems constituting, as early as the late 1850s, the prehistory of this fundamental cluster within the genesis of *Leaves of Grass*.



Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Leaves of Grass*, Op. 89b: Cover Page and Index; holograph manuscript; Florence, dated 15-30 June 1936; unpublished. Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco Papers, The Library of Congress Music Division, Washington, D.C., Box 17, Folder 10; reproduced by permission.

The attention of Castelnuovo-Tedesco to the poetic text and the musicality of the English language stands out in the 50-page unpublished *Leaves of Grass* song cycle.<sup>5</sup> Here, he set nine poems selected from the *Calamus* cluster of the 1860 edition of Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, plus one poem (set as the final song, *And now gentlemen - The Base of All Metaphysics*) that was added by Whitman in 1871.

The significance of Castelnuovo Tedesco's re-reading of Whitman's *Calamus*, his creation of a new sequence, is illuminated by the fundamental values he devised in the great American poet: attraction and fraternal love, between individuals and among countries.

In Italy there was a lively interest in American literature, especially among antifascist intellectuals: it meant modernity and freedom from the rhetoric of the fascist regime.

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco expressed his views on musical freedom in Italy in the fascist era. On September 14-17, 1944, the composer participated in a conference of The Musicians Congress Record at UCLA. He lectured in the session "Music Under Fascism"; The other participants were Theodor W. Adorno, Hanns Eisler, Paul Nettl, and Walter H. Rubsamen, Chairman.

In his unpublished conference paper *Music under Italian Fascism*,<sup>6</sup> Castelnuovo-Tedesco mentions a second phase of music under fascism, after «the period of organization» (1922-1933), «that of the absorption by the State of all musical activities» (1933-1938). He composed his Whitman settings in Italy during that time period, the time of suppression of free enterprise in every art field.

He devotes noteworthy pages of this paper to the analysis of the fascist attitude towards music in Italy during those years that, in his analysis, appear to have been crucial for the development of the fascist aesthetics. Also, they were the years of expansionism and conquest. On the other hand, he observes, in contradiction with the intent of the absorption by the State of all musical activities, there was no attempt to create a specific "Fascist Music", and fascism was more "open" than one would have thought.

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<sup>5</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Leaves of Grass*, Op. 89b; holograph manuscript; Florence, dated 15-30 June 1936; 50 pages, unpublished. Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco Papers, The Library of Congress Music Division, Washington, D.C., Box 17, Folder 10.

<sup>6</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Music under Italian Fascism*, unpublished conference paper; the manuscript and typescript are housed at The Library of Congress Music Division, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco Papers, Box 116, Folder 17.

The composer notes that, for instance, two intelligent musicians were named as superintendents in Florence and Venice, Mario Labroca and Goffredo Petrassi: «They were both composers of the most advanced trend, both had very broad and progressive views.». On the other hand, he writes that «until 1933, the personal political opinion of the teachers had been, at least in private life, respected; now they were compelled, under menace of being dismissed, to join all the Fascist Party and to swear allegiance to the Régime!... I know it was a hard moment and a bitter choice for many ones; a few, in the Universities, refused; none, as far as I know, in the Schools of Music.»<sup>7</sup>

Castelnuovo-Tedesco then continues his comments, observing that the period between 1933 and 1937 «was also, in the political and international field, the “period of folly,” which led to the Ethiopian War and to the Intervention in Spain... By 1937 the “regimentation” was complete; every branch of music was under State’s control, except... for the brains of the composers!» Exactly here he observes how «the Fascist Government had made no attempt to create a specific “Fascist Music”» or at least there were not many and successful attempts, while that happened in literature and the arts.<sup>8</sup>

Such was the environment, as described by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco himself, in which he created his 1936 Whitman settings, *Louisiana* Opus 89a, *Leaves of Grass* Opus 89b, and *Ocean* Opus 89c. In these songs, Castelnuovo-Tedesco, in his quiet way, certainly opposed dictatorship «as it endangers the most sacred and elementary right of men (both as individuals and as communities): the “freedom of thought and of work”».<sup>9</sup>

The text-oriented musical poetics of Castelnuovo-Tedesco in the *Leaves of Grass* cycle dictates its lyricism, its modernist but free approach to composition. It is a true cycle of inseparable songs, like Schubert’s or Schumann’s cycles of Romantic Lieder, developing a narrative, with an increasingly explicit reappearance of musical themes, especially notable in the final transition from Song IX, *Trickle drops!*,<sup>10</sup> into Song X, *And now gentlemen – The base of all metaphysics*.<sup>11</sup> On today’s program, we will listen to Song No. IX, *Trickle drops!*

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<sup>7</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Music under Italian Fascism*, p. 12 of the revised manuscript.

<sup>8</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Music under Italian Fascism*, pp. 14-15.

<sup>9</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Music under Italian Fascism*, conference paper conclusion, p. 19 (last page of manuscript).

<sup>10</sup> *Trickle drops!*, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Leaves of Grass* (Walt Whitman), Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco Papers, The Library of Congress Music Division, Washington, D.C., Box 17, Folder 10; pp. 37-43 of unpublished manuscript.

The inspiration from Schubert is a Romantic trait of the Whitman settings. Before immigrating to America, the composer was a concert pianist; he frequently accompanied singers such as Lotte Lehmann and Elisabeth Schumann in Schubert and Schumann Lieder recitals.

In his 1932 essay on Schubert,<sup>12</sup> which is an expanded review of the first important book on Franz Schubert published in Italian, by Mary Tibaldi-Chiesa, Castelnuovo-Tedesco extensively comments on the Lieder, that he regards as Schubert's highest creations: «The balance between the voice and the accompaniment, between the word and the sound, is nearly always perfect». Of Schubert's Lieder he praises «the simple immediacy, the innocence and candor, the overwhelming power». This description would equally apply to his own Whitman Songs.

Although the article reflects an early stage of serious, documented consideration of Schubert, with residual underratings and hurried judgments (for instance, about the Piano Sonatas; but at the time so little was known about Schubert!), its conclusive paragraph is deeply felt and illuminating: «If a modest artist of today were permitted to envy a great man of the past [...] I would wish to have composed—rather than a passionate opera, a sonorous symphony or a masterful fugue—one of these pure and simple melodies: one would say that *Du bist die Ruh* or *Litenei für das Fest "Aller Seelen"* were dictated by God for the consolation of men».<sup>13</sup>

In conclusion, the prominence of Whitman from the New World, Whitman the «great fraternal soul»<sup>14</sup> was passionately stated in a song cycle whose style pays homage to Schubert, Schumann and Brahms, and to the melodic gift of the Italian vocal tradition. The American poet acquires the status of a classic.

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<sup>11</sup> *And now gentlemen – The base of all metaphysics*, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Leaves of Grass* (Walt Whitman), Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco Papers, The Library of Congress Music Division, Washington, D.C., Box 17, Folder 10; pp. 44-50 of unpublished manuscript.

<sup>12</sup> *Schubert*, review of Mary Tibaldi-Chiesa, *Schubert. La vita - L'opera*, Treves-Treccani Tumminelli, Roma 1932, in the series "I grandi musicisti italiani e stranieri" directed by Carlo Gatti; Castelnuovo-Tedesco's review appeared in «Pegaso», Anno IV, No. 11, Novembre 1932.

<sup>13</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Review of Mary Tibaldi-Chiesa, *Schubert. La vita - L'opera*, p. 629.

<sup>14</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Music and Poetry*, p. 108: «Walt Whitman, that great fraternal soul».



Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco beginning life in America, outside his new house in Larchmont, N.Y.; autumn 1939. Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco Papers, The Library of Congress Music Division, Washington, D.C., Box 144, Folder 1; reproduced by permission.

In the US from 1939, Castelnuovo-Tedesco also set to music contemporary American poems, by Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892-1950) and Arthur Guiterman (1871-1943), both well known in their time. By St. Vincent Millay, he set *Recuerdo* and *Tavern* (unpublished manuscript). By Guiterman, he set *The Legend of Jonas Bronck* and *New York*.

These songs date from 1940-1941. Among Castelnuovo-Tedesco's earliest American works, they express the composer's settling in the United States. He captures the humor of the poems, with a sentiment of discovery, and with reminiscences of American musical styles.

Of *Recuerdo*, Op. 105,<sup>15</sup> Castelnuovo-Tedesco wrote in his autobiography *Una vita di musica [A Life with Music]*: «It was set to a delightful poem by Edna St. Vincent Millay. Despite its Spanish title, it has a definitely American character, in fact a New York character. It is about a young couple of lovers at dawn on a ferry boat. The music is carefree and indolent, somehow in the manner of Gershwin».<sup>16</sup>

As for *The Legend of Jonas Bronck*,<sup>17</sup> the composer was inspired by Guiterman's humorous outlook at American History—and at immigration. *Jonas Bronck* was a 17<sup>th</sup>-century immigrant who came from the Netherlands or Denmark in search for opportunities, and ended up to found a city: The Bronx. Castelnuovo-Tedesco was a recent immigrant. In this song, the onomatopoeic of the name "Bronck" and of the toponym "Bronx" blend imaginatively, and to a comical effect, with the sonorous comment of the... calling of frogs.

This attempt at creating an "American repertoire" shows Castelnuovo-Tedesco's short-lived hope to begin an American career of classical pianist and published composer, as an extension of his pre-war European career.

In our live performance, today we are going to present these two mentioned songs, *Recuerdo* and *The Legend of Jonas Bronck*.

If Whitman's poetry was a sudden discovery, William Shakespeare was for Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco a constant source of musical interest. Over the years, he produced numerous works inspired by his most admired English poet.

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<sup>15</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Recuerdo* (Edna St. Vincent Millay), Op. 105; composed: 1941; published: Carl Fischer, New York 1941.

<sup>16</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Una vita di musica (un libro di ricordi)*, a cura di James Westby, introduzione di Mila De Santis, cura editoriale di Ulla Casalini, Cadmo, Fiesole 2005, p. 327. Castelnuovo-Tedesco's Autobiography was written in the United States, mostly in the 1950s.

<sup>17</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *The Legend of Jonas Bronck* (Arthur Guiterman), composed: 1941; published: Galaxy Music Corp., 1941.

Castelnuovo-Tedesco experienced his love for Shakespeare as answering a call from the poet himself. In his 1940 article *Shakespeare and Music*,<sup>18</sup> he states that Shakespeare «asked for musical collaboration as a necessary element for completing the poetic expression».<sup>19</sup> He then comments on the Songs. He also explores «Shakespearean music», that is, instrumental music by different authors, inspired by the poet, first of all the Overtures, including his own five Overtures to *The Taming of the Shrew*, Op. 61 (1930), *The Twelfth Night*, Op. 73 (1933), *The Merchant of Venice*, Op. 76 (1933), *Julius Caesar*, Op. 78 (1934) and *The Winter's Tale*, Op. 80 (1934), all of them published by Ricordi.

He finally deals with symphonic poems, incidental music, and operas inspired by Shakespearean subjects.

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco gave great importance to the full respect of the original Shakespeare text. In *Shakespeare and Music*, he complains that even great Purcell, «although English, did not have recourse to the original text of Shakespeare (a fact which greatly diminishes his importance) but he employed the adaptations of librettists often unfortunate, as for instance, Shadwell, whom his contemporaries called "the assassin of Shakespeare!"».<sup>20</sup> Castelnuovo-Tedesco here judges Purcell not from the perspective of baroque opera, but from his own standpoint, that of text-oriented modern music.

In addition, the composer wonders whether opera is «truly the ideal form to express the humanity, the fantasy, the poetic essence of Shakespeare, to realize the musical collaboration which the poet wished». His answer is that he doubts it. In the first place, because of the language.

Shakespeare is, in Castelnuovo-Tedesco's opinion, untranslatable: «His English is a perfectly musical language: I dare say (from my experience with it) that it unites the spiritual subtlety of English with the sonorous splendor of Italian. We must therefore approach him in English (and with the original text) and it is perhaps for the musician whose language is English to say the final word on the subject, to recapture and to complete the heritage left unfinished by Purcell.»<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Shakespeare and Music*, «Shakespeare Association Bulletin», Vol. XV, No. 3 (July, 1940), pp. 166-174; Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco Papers, Writings, Box 115, Folder 28. The folder in the Collection contains handwritten preparatory notes in French (2 pages) and French text (12 pages) titled *Shakespeare and Music: Outlines for an essay on Shakespearean music*, 2 copies of the «Bulletin» reprint, and a photocopy of the «Bulletin» pages; the final article was in English.

<sup>19</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Shakespeare and Music*, p. 166.

<sup>20</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Shakespeare and Music*, p. 170.

<sup>21</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Shakespeare and Music*, p. 172.

There are other significant writings by Castelnuovo-Tedesco where he explains his relationship to Shakespeare: his program notes to *Much Ado About Nothing*, Op. 164,<sup>22</sup> and *Confessione di un autore: Il Mercante di Venezia* [*Confession of an Author: The Merchant of Venice*].<sup>23</sup> In this latter essay, he states once again that Shakespeare had always been his favorite poet, and again he stresses the importance of the original text, even at the cost of being accused of snobbery ("snobismo"), as it had happened to him for setting the original text of the Shakespeare Songs.

In his article *Lettera da Firenze*,<sup>24</sup> Castelnuovo-Tedesco titles the eighth section of the article *Perché ho musicato Shakespeare in inglese* [*Why I set Shakespeare in English*]. Discussing his *Shakespeare Songs*, he recalls the composer Antonio Veretti asking him why he set the English poet in the original language: did he believe the Italian language to be insufficient, or not beautiful enough? Why did he set a foreign language? Castelnuovo-Tedesco replies in this article that a «mised nationalism (that can also become provincialism) should not set limitations to the creations of an artist, should not prevent him from appreciating the beauties of other literatures, that can be, or are, deeply musical, too. True, the fact that an Italian composer sets English words is quite unusual; but how many among our composers set to music French poems? Did we perhaps criticize them for this?». He affirms the musical quality of the English language from an unprejudiced and cosmopolitan intellectual perspective, much ahead of his time.

Castelnuovo-Tedesco's *Shakespeare Songs* were written in 1921-1925 and published by Chester in 1926. The composer even played a group of them, accompanying Madeleine Grey, on the occasion of a visit to D'Annunzio at Il Vittoriale.

Already in the early 1920s, in Florence, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco had addressed the question whether Shakespeare should be set in the original English text or in an Italian translation<sup>25</sup>. The *Shakespeare Songs* offered him the opportunity to approach more closely Shakespeare's style, and to study more deeply the English language.

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<sup>22</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Program notes to *Much Ado About Nothing*, Op. 164; Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco Papers, Box 116, Folder 5.

<sup>23</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Confessione di un autore: Il Mercante di Venezia* [*Confession of an Author: The Merchant of Venice*]; published in: *Maggio Musicale Fiorentino 1961*, "Numero Unico" printed by Teatro Comunale di Firenze; Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco Papers, Box 116, Folder 7; handwritten draft copy with corrections, 10 pages, signed; typed copy, 10 pages, signed.

<sup>24</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Lettera da Firenze*, «Il Pianoforte», aprile 1929.

<sup>25</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Una vita di musica*, p. 147.

The decision was made to set the poet's original English text, and Castelnuovo-Tedesco began the composition. In *Una vita di musica*, he writes: «Setting Shakespeare turned out to be so easy and natural to me! With his immense variety, his profound knowledge of the human heart, his concise and perfect form, he was just the poet for me, who had in vain looked for his equivalent in Italian literature! In him I also found that mixture which I had been looking for in comedy: the expression of the tragic and the comic element (and also the imaginary). [...] Soon after completing the *Shakespeare Songs* cycle, I naturally thought of the Sonnets by the same poet. But they presented very great problems of concept and form, and I was not sufficiently mature for this, neither spiritually nor musically. So I waited twenty years, and eventually set them only in 1945. The still unpublished *Shakespeare Sonnets* are particularly dear to me, and are perhaps more intense and profound than the *Songs*, although they do not have their variety and pleasantness.»<sup>26</sup>

Singing the Shakespeare word, meant for Castelnuovo-Tedesco acknowledging the supremacy of prosody. In his autobiography, he criticizes Stravinsky for his «nearly always arbitrary and incorrect prosody» and the «almost disturbing results in his *Shakespeare Songs*».<sup>27</sup> (But, he adds, this is of course true for the entire body of musical setting of poetry by this composer, in various languages.)

Among the pieces inspired by Shakespeare, completed after the *Songs*, are the already mentioned orchestral Overtures to individual plays («The Overtures to the operas I will never compose», Castelnuovo-Tedesco would jokingly repeat), written over a span of decades (1930-1953). Five of them were composed in Italy, mostly in Usigliano and Castiglioncello; in America, he resumed the project with a second series, and composed the Overture to *Midsummer Night's Dream* in 1940. The second series of the Shakespeare Overtures continued with *King John* (1941), *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Coriolanus* (both 1947).

The last Shakespearean season was in 1953, with *Much Ado about Nothing* and *As You Like it*, followed in the same year by the orchestral *Four Dances for "Love's Labour's Lost"*.

In 1954-1958, Castelnuovo-Tedesco composed the opera *All's Well That Ends Well*, to a libretto in English and in Italian. This was notably followed by *The Merchant of Venice*, written in 1956.

He also set the still unpublished *Three Shakespeare Duets* op. 97 for soprano, tenor and orchestra<sup>28</sup> for the Duo Clovis-Steele. And he transcribed for violin, for Jascha Heifetz, some *Shakespeare Songs*.

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<sup>26</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Una vita di musica*, p. 156.

<sup>27</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Una vita di musica*, pp. 410-411.

<sup>28</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Three Shakespeare Duets*, Op. 97 for soprano, tenor and orchestra; 1937, unpublished; Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco Papers, Box 23, Folders Folders 3, 4, 5.

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco

SHAKESPEARE SONNETS

- 1 - No. VIII - "Music to hear, why hearst thou music sadly?"
- 2 - No. XVII - "Should I compare thee to a summer's day?"
- 3 - No. XXIX - "When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes."
- 4 - No. XXX - "When to the sessions of sweet silent thought"
- 5 - No. XXXI - "Thy bosom is endeared with all hearts"
- 6 - No. XXXII - "If thou survive my well-contented day"
- 7 - No. LIII - "What is your substance whereof are you made?"
- 8 - No. LVII - "Being your slave, what should I do but tend?"
- 9 - No. LX - "Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore"
- 10 - No. LXIV - "When I have seen by Time's fell hand defaced"
- 11 - No. LXV - "Time base, nor stone, nor earth, nor bounden sea"
- 12 - No. LXXIII - "That time of year you mayst in me behold"
- 13 - No. LXXXVII - "Farewell! thou art to dear for my possessing"
- 14 - No. XC - "Then hate me when thou wilt, if ever won"
- 15 - No. XCIV - "They that have power to hurt, and will do none"
- 16 - No. XCVII - "How like a winter hath my absence been"
- 17 - No. XCVIII - "From you have I been absent in the spring"
- 18 - No. CII - "My love is strengthen'd, though more weak in seeming"
- 19 - No. CTV - "To me, fair friend, you never can be old"
- 20 - No. CV - "Let not my love be called idolatry"
- 21 - No. CVI - "When in the chronicle of wasted time"
- 22 - No. CIX - "O, never say that I was false of heart"
- 23 - No. CXXI - "Let me not to the marriage of true minds"
- 24 - No. CXXVIII - "How oft, when thou, my music, music play'st"
- 25 - No. CXXXIX - "Th'expense of spirit in a waste of shame"
- 26 - No. CXLVI - "Poa, Poa, the center of my night's earth"
- 27 - No. CLIV - "The little Love-god, lying once asleep"
- 28 - No. CXXVII - "Wearied with toil, I haste me to my bed"

Beverly Hills, Calif. 1944-45

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Shakespeare Sonnets*, Op. 125: Index Page; holograph manuscript; Beverly Hills, 1945; unpublished. Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco Papers, The Library of Congress Music Division, Washington, D.C., Box 37, Folder 1; reproduced by permission.

In his American years, the composer selected thirty-two Shakespeare's Sonnets out of the 154 comprising the canon. Opus 125 (twenty-eight Sonnets) was composed in 1944-1945 and 1947. In 1963, four more Sonnets were set as Addenda to Opus 125.

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco's thirty-two *Shakespeare Sonnets*, Opus 125 are a 172-page unpublished manuscript, housed at the Library of Congress.

To the «solitary and proud group of the *Shakespeare Sonnets*», as he defines them,<sup>29</sup> Castelnuovo-Tedesco devotes Chapter 89 of his autobiography:<sup>30</sup> «Perhaps they do not have the variety and pleasantness of the *Shakespeare Songs* (nor could they have it) but I believe them to be, in the marriage, so to speak, of the voice and the piano comment, more perfect, and I regard them as far as songs go, as my highest accomplishment. It is a work of which (I confess) I am particularly proud, also for its quantity and body. While the Songs have been set to music innumerable times by composers of all ages, very few dared approach the Sonnets, and never in this number (Vanity? Ambition? Perhaps!). Also for this reason I never decided to publish them; in addition to the general objection of the publishers, that these poems are too obscure for the audience and the average singer, no one (at least in America, in these times) would have dared publish, even in sections, a manuscripts that exceeds 160 pages! So, although some publishers offered to print a few pieces, I preferred to decline and leave them unpublished, at least for the time being.

Should I therefore regard them among my "unlucky works"? Certainly not! In fact, I believe it very fortunate to have reached (after many years of various experiences) such an accomplished lyrical expression as that of the *Sonnets*; I am also certain that, if they are ever published, they will be considered (I ask pardon for my lack of modesty) among the best examples of the English art songs. But precisely for this reason (because they are my ultimate accomplishment, and because after Shakespeare hardly could I find such high poetry) after the *Sonnets* I practically abandoned the art song. If I were to write more, I would probably set Italian poems. My vocal production has turned to other forms and sources: choral music, the Oratorio, the Bible.»

On July 3, 1944, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco set Sonnet XXX (*When to the sessions of sweet silent thought*) as a birthday gift for his friend Aldo Bruzichelli. Others followed: «Not only did I succeed in composing them, but I felt that I was ready, too! And so I wrote more; at

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<sup>29</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Una vita di musica*, p. 450.

<sup>30</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Una vita di musica*, pp. 447-454.

first in a hesitant manner (that July, I set only four); but when I resumed composing them a year later, I had already found an easy vein, and I should say the "problem" was solved. From August 17 to October 13, 1945, just a few days apart from each other, I set twenty-three more! I was working at a remarkable speed, if you think of the intensity and complexity of those poems. I eventually added another one only much later, in 1947.»<sup>31</sup>

As a continuation of his analysis, he wonders what the *Shakespeare Sonnets* really are, and what they represent in his production. With gentle humor, he also touches on the issue of Shakespeare's private life (are the Sonnets a conversation with a male friend? with a lady lover?), which he considers as of secondary importance. Poetry is what counts!

In this connection, Castelnuovo-Tedesco states that all the critical controversies about identification of characters, composition history and meaning of the Sonnets do not interest him anymore, although he had «read many books about all that».<sup>32</sup>

Unique features of some Shakespeare's Sonnets prompted his inspiration to compose three settings for mixed chorus, instead of for voice and piano. *Sonnet XCIV* is scored for mixed chorus and piano; *Sonnet CXXIX* and *Sonnet CLIV* are a cappella (piano for rehearsal only). In *Sonnet CXXIX (Th'expense of spirit in a waste of shame)*, the chorus may be an evocation of the severe moral commentary of a Greek chorus.

Today we are going to listen to *Shakespeare Sonnet XVIII* by Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Shall I Compare Thee to a Summer's Day?*, one of the first he set to music, in July 1944.

It is admirable how this composer treats the characteristic subjunctives, interrogatives, comparisons, and the innumerable Elizabethan syntactic devices of the Shakespeare Sonnets.

He succeeds in creating endless shades of color and expression within the boundaries of the strophic construction and its rhyming scheme (the metric uniformity of the Shakespearean pentameter) and the sonnet's typical development of the subject matter.

On a number of occurrences, the score reveals an internal musical reference: the piano part explicitly suggests other instruments, as stated in the manuscript score: *dolce* (like lute); *p espr* (like bassoon); *light and crisp* (like harpsichord) [*Sonnet CXXVIII*]; *mf espr* (quasi cello solo) [*Sonnet XXVII*].

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<sup>31</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Una vita di musica*, pp. 451-452.

<sup>32</sup> Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Una vita di musica*, p. 453.

123

*a Clara*

SONNET M CXXVIII

William Shakespeare      Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco

*Moderato - molto gracioso*  
(in 8)

*pp light and crisp (like Harpsichord)*

*How*

*oft, when thou, my mu — sic, mu — sic playst, upon those blessed woods whose mo — tion*

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Shakespeare Sonnets*, Op. 125: Sonnet CXXVIII, *How oft, when thou, my music, music play'st; analogy of the piano part with the sound of another instrument: "pp light and crisp (like harpsichord)"; holograph manuscript score, p. 123; Beverly Hills, 1945; unpublished. Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco Papers, The Library of Congress Music Division, Washington, D.C., Box 37, Folder 1; reproduced by permission.*

In answering Shakespeare's call for musical collaboration, Castelnuovo-Tedesco shaped a world of nuances, correspondences, and subtle variety of effects.

In conclusion, both *Leaves of Grass* and the *Shakespeare Sonnets* reveal Castelnuovo-Tedesco's fascination with the English language, and great consideration of the English and American literature. Both manuscripts are significant collections of 20<sup>th</sup>-century art songs, worthy of being studied, performed, published, recorded.

We are thankful for this opportunity to welcome Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco back to his city he was once forced to leave, and to introduce these remarkable manuscripts of his settings of English and American poetry in this very place, within an international context.



Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco visiting his native city of Florence; ca. mid-1960s. Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco Papers, The Library of Congress Music Division, Washington, DC; Box 144, Folder 15; reproduced by permission.



Aloma Bardi presenting on Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco at the "Intersections/Intersezioni" Conference, ICAMus Session, Palazzo dei Cerchi, Florence, Italy, June 5, 2015.



**“INTERSECTIONS/INTERSEZIONI” INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**  
**Florence, June 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

**FLORENCE-BORN US COMPOSER MARIO CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO**  
**(1895-1968)**  
**AND HIS UNPUBLISHED SETTINGS OF WHITMAN & SHAKESPEARE POETRY**  
**With Live Performance**  
**An ICAMus Session**

**Participants:**  
**ALOMA BARDI · SALVATORE CHAMPAGNE · HOWARD LUBIN · JOHN CHAMPAGNE**  
**Special Guests:**  
**MILA DE SANTIS · ELEONORA NEGRI**

**Kent State University - Florence Program**  
**Palazzo dei Cerchi · Vicolo dei Cerchi 1 · Florence**  
**Friday, June 5th, 2015**

**LIVE PERFORMANCE**

**Salvatore Champagne (Oberlin Conservatory of Music) Tenor**  
**Howard Lubin (Oberlin Conservatory of Music) Piano**

**Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco**  
***Unpublished Works and Premières***

**SALVATORE CHAMPAGNE, tenor**  
**HOWARD LUBIN, piano**

**MARIO CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO**  
**(1895-1968)**

**TEXTS**

**Louisiana**

Poem: Walt Whitman, 1819-1892

Op. 89a; composed: 1936; published: Galaxy Music Corp., 1940.

I saw in Louisiana a live-oak growing,  
All alone stood it and the moss hung down from the branches,  
Without any companion it grew there uttering joyous leaves  
    of dark green,  
And its look, rude, unbending, lusty, made me think of myself,  
But I wonder'd how it could utter joyous leaves standing alone  
    there without its friend,  
Its lover near, for I knew I could not,  
And I broke off a twig with a certain number of leaves upon it,  
    and twined around it a little moss,  
And brought it away, and I have placed it in sight in my room,  
It is not needed to remind me as of my own dear friends,  
(For I believe lately I think of little else than of them,)  
Yet it remains to me a curious token, it makes me think  
    of manly love;  
For all that, and though the live-oak glistens there in Louisiana  
    solitary in a wide flat place,  
Uttering joyous leaves all its life without a friend a lover near,  
I know very well I could not.

## **Recuerdo**

**Poem: Edna St. Vincent Millay, 1892-1950**

Op. 105; composed: 1941; published: Fischer, 1941.

We were very tired, we were very merry—  
We had gone back and forth all night on the ferry.  
It was bare and bright, and smelled like a stable—  
But we looked into a fire, we leaned across a table,  
We lay on a hill-top underneath the moon;  
And the whistles kept blowing, and the dawn came soon.

We were very tired, we were very merry—  
We had gone back and forth all night on the ferry;  
And you ate an apple, and I ate a pear,  
From a dozen of each we had bought somewhere;  
And the sky went wan, and the wind came cold,  
And the sun rose dripping, a bucketful of gold.

We were very tired, we were very merry,  
We had gone back and forth all night on the ferry.  
We hailed, "Good morrow, mother!" to a shawl-covered head,  
And bought a morning paper, which neither of us read;  
And she wept, "God bless you!" for the apples and pears,  
And we gave her all our money but our subway fares.

## **The Legend of Jonas Bronck**

**Poem: Arthur Guiterman, 1871-1943**

Composed: 1941; published: Galaxy Music Corp., 1941.

At end of manuscript score, Castelnuovo-Tedesco's handwritten copy of Guiterman's poem.

With sword and Bible, brood and dame,  
Across the seas from Denmark came  
Stout Jonas Bronck. He roved among  
The wooden vales of Ah-qua-hung.  
"Good sooth! On ev'ry hand," quoth he,  
"Are pleasant lands and fair to see;  
But which were best to plow and till.  
And meetest both for manse and mill?"

"Bronck! Bronck! Bronck!"  
Called the frogs from the reeds of the river;  
"Bronck! Bronck! Bronck!"  
From the marshes and pools of the stream.  
"Here let your journeyings cease;  
Blest of the Bounteous Giver.  
Yours is the Valley of Peace,  
Here is the home of your dream."

"O-ho!" laughed Jonas Bronck; "I ween  
These pop-eyed elves in bottle-green  
Do call my name to show the spot  
Predestined! Here I cast my lot!"  
So there he reared his dwelling place  
And built a mill, with wheel and race.  
And even now, beneath the hill  
When summer nights are fair and still:

"Bronck! Bronck! Bronck!"  
Rise the cadenced batrachian numbers;  
"Bronck! Bronck! Bronck!"  
Chant a myriad chorister gnomes;  
"High on the shadowy crest,  
Under the hemlock he slumbers,  
Here is the region of rest,  
Come to our Valley of Homes!"

### **Leaves of Grass: IX. Trickle Drops!**

**Poem: Walt Whitman, 1891-1892**

10-Song Cycle, Op. 89b; composed: 1936; unpublished manuscript, The Library of Congress Music Division, Washington, D.C.

Trickle drops! my blue veins leaving!  
O drops of me! trickle, slow drops,  
Candid from me falling, drip, bleeding drops,  
From wounds made to free you whence you were prison'd,  
From my face, from my forehead and lips,  
From my breast, from within where I was conceal'd, press forth  
    red drops, confession drops,  
Stain every page, stain every song I sing, every word I say,  
    bloody drops,  
Let them know your scarlet heat, let them glisten,  
Saturate them with yourself all ashamed and wet,  
Glow upon all I have written or shall write, bleeding drops,  
Let it all be seen in your light, blushing drops.

## **Shakespeare Sonnets: Sonnet XVIII. Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?**

**Poem: William Shakespeare, 1564-1616**

Opus 125; composed: 1944; unpublished manuscript, The Library of Congress Music Division, Washington, D.C.

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?  
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:  
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,  
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:  
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,  
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;  
And every fair from fair sometime declines,  
By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimm'd;  
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,  
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;  
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,  
When in eternal lines to time thou growest;  
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,  
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.





Tenor Salvatore Champagne and pianist Howard Lubin performing Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco's rare and unpublished settings at the "Intersections/Intersezioni" Conference, ICAMus Session, Palazzo dei Cerchi, Florence, Italy, June 5, 2015.

## *Whitman, Fascist Ambiguity and Castelnuovo-Tedesco's Covert Critique*

John Champagne

PowerPoint illustrations for John Champagne's presentation can be found at this link:

<https://psu.box.com/s/xu0d6erg6pi96eju6dnbz60vmkfk8hc>

Explaining how a work of art came into existence is never simple. While it is tempting to follow the Romantics and simply cite the artist's inner life as sufficient cause, the modernist avant-garde vociferously challenged the equation "art equals self-expression." As someone whose aesthetic was a rich mix of Romanticism and Modernism, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco invites us to imagine in complex ways the circumstances that led to the Whitman songs. Of course, that the cycle was composed in year fourteen of the *Ventennio* renders particularly prescient the question of how the *Leaves of Grass* cycle came to be. Considered in the shadow of Fascism, Castelnuovo-Tedesco's decision to end the cycle with a poem invoking "the dear love of man for his comrade" can only intrigue modern listeners.

In his *Symposium*, Plato proposed that no poet could hope to achieve greatness minus the madness that results from possession by the Muses. Following a period of nervous exhaustion, Castelnuovo-Tedesco composed his *Leaves of Grass* cycle in a Bacchic frenzy itself in keeping with Whitman's pagan sensibility (and references to Socrates and Plato!) So debilitated by exhaustion and loneliness that this typically prolific composer could not work, Castelnuovo-

Tedesco had received a book of Whitman's poetry, in 1936, from his family doctor, Vincenzo Lapicciarella, and "what medicine could not do, poetry could!" As he recounts in his autobiography *Una vita di musica (A Life with Music)* the composer immediately "fell in love" with Whitman's poetry, "so full of warmth, of enthusiasm, of human solidarity." Castelnuovo-Tedesco considered the songs among [his] best; "I found in them a freshness of inspiration and a warmth of inflection I had long lost." He had hoped to have them published in the US but archly confessed, "I found in American editors a strange bias against the poetry of Whitman (who is nonetheless considered *the* national poet, but only due to his patriotic poetry)."

Given that Whitman was known internationally as the preacher of brotherly love and the poet of democracy, how was it possible for Castelnuovo-Tedesco – a Modernist (at least according to Fascist hardliners) and a Jew – to write these songs without fear of retribution? The composer's efforts coincide with the struggle to determine a properly Fascist aesthetic and the debates, conducted in the Italian press, around Modernism – specifically, the tendency among certain "fascists of the first hour" to equate Modernism with "internationalism," "Hebraism," and "Bolshevism." It is well remarked, however, that, unlike Hitler, Mussolini himself refused to denote a single Fascist aesthetic, the catholicity of his patronage on the one hand an attempt to secure the loyalty of artists and on the other, a kind of gambit: hoping that *someone* would bring glory to Fascist Italy, Mussolini gave financial support even to artists who were not strong advocates of the regime, as long as they did not publicly voice their opposition (Sachs, Stone).

Italian fascism's attitude toward anti-Semitism was ambiguous; certain fascists were anti-Jewish from the regime's beginnings. Their position was strengthened after the Concordate in 1929, and they used the fact that Italian Jews had a tradition of sending money to their co-religionists in Palestine as an occasion to question Jewish patriotism. The scholarly consensus

today is that Italian anti-Semitism was homegrown and not merely a "foreign" import from Germany, as the post-war myth of Italians as *la brava gente* asserted (Del Boca; Sarfatti).

The long history of Italian anti-Semitism, however, is itself quite complex. On the one hand, the medieval and early Renaissance periods saw incidents of persecution, a particularly horrific one following what is termed the blood libel, invented by Franciscan friars like Fra Bernadino da Feltre, wherein the Jews of Trent were accused of murdering a Christian infant and using his blood to make matzo (Roth). Italy is also responsible for the invention of the ghetto, and at various periods in history, Jews were required to wear badges or other identifying signs. On the other hand, the Jewish presence in Rome dates to the late Republican period, enforcement of anti-Jewish measures was often uneven (and in some cases, nonexistent), many areas of Italy welcomed Jews from the 1492 Spanish expulsion, and, unlike their European neighbors, many regions in Italy never banished their Jews. Until 1938, Fascist anti-Semitism did not include anti-Jewish laws, and Jews were allowed to be members of the Party. Castelnuovo-Tedesco's Jewish identity did not automatically endanger his career.

Whitman was first introduced to Italian audiences in 1879; in 1887, the first Italian volume of his work appeared. 1907 saw the publication of a two-volume edition of the complete poems that was then revised in 1923. Giuseppe Mazzini and Giosuè Carducci were both champions of Whitman's work.

In fact, Whitman's poetry appealed both to Fascists and anti-Fascists alike. Castelnuovo-Tedesco set poems from what is today considered Whitman's most homoerotic cluster, *Calamus*. The extent to which the composer heard these homoerotic overtones can be imagined as consistent with the same tolerant cultural and humanist outlook with which he regarded Shakespeare's Sonnets, which inspired him with their powerful expression of love, free of prejudice and constraints. We know that these homo-tones were perceived by Cesare Pavese (arrested in

1935 on suspicion of participating in anti-fascist activity). Pavese's response is itself fascinating: he accepts Whitman's pansexuality as a product of the poet's healthy, prelapsarian sensibility – an attitude similar to one adopted by Renaissance scholars like Pico della Mirandola and Marsilio Ficino toward antiquity (Carman), and also typical of how European intellectuals of that time regarded America as a land of "innocence."

The idea of Whitman as prelapsarian also found expression, however, in Giovanni Papini's embrace of the poet, Papini locating in Whitman's lyrics a modern primitivism or barbarism in keeping with Fascist ruralism, anti-intellectualism, and critique of the "soft" bourgeoisie – a phrase used to vilify the leaders of liberal Italy. That is, the same characteristics that led Pavese to praise Whitman were also those that could be admired by anti-Semitic fascists like Papini. For Whitman's sensibility could be read as consonant with fascist calls for a new Italian male characterized by his virility and allegedly modeled after Mussolini himself.

That both allies and foes of Fascism could find in Whitman a fellow traveler alerts us to the contradictions of Mussolini's dictatorship – for the critique of the bourgeoisie did nothing, for example, to dissuade Italian industrialists from turning to the regime to "solve," via thuggery, strikes and labor disputes. These contradictions are to some degree what made it possible for Castelnuovo-Tedesco to write his Whitman songs minus fear of reproach. For the history of virility is itself traversed by contradictions. To refer to just one Italian example: in Carlo Goldoni's *La locandiera*, il Cavaliere di Ripafratta equates the pursuit of women with effeminacy and weakness: "Moglie a me! Piuttosto una febbre quartana (26) . . . Pazzi! Pazzi! Quelli che s'innamorano delle donne" (34).

The past two decades have seen the publication of studies of Italian fascist culture that, owing to the fascist determination to produce a "new man" who might redress all the perceived inadequacies of liberal Italy, include examinations of masculinity. But the role of the arts in *resisting*

this new man has been overlooked. Barbara Spackman, for example, argues that Italian fascism must be understood as “a discursive formation whose principal node of articulation is ‘virility’” (ix). Virtually absent from her book, however, is an analysis of a masculinity not in keeping with the stated values of the regime.

Parallel to Spackman, Lorenzo Benadusi begins his *The Enemy of the New Man* by contrasting the representation of masculinity offered by Francesco Hayez’s “I Vespri Siciliani” with images by fascist period artists Mario Sironi and Gerardo Dottori: Benadusi asks, “How was ‘the romantic man,’ the effeminate dandy of little virility, transformed into his anti-thesis, the ‘new man’ of the twentieth century?” According to the author, during the twenty years of fascism, “This stereotype of masculine virility reached its peak.” (3)

This idea of a “model of masculinity under fascist Italy” is now so common as to have generated a Wikipedia page. That page defines this model as espousing the values of anti-intellectualism and ruralism and as being anti-Modern, anti-feminist, and anti-bourgeoisie. It cites Mussolini as the prototype of the “hegemonic male” and argues that this model of fascist masculinity was institutionalized via the Opera Nazionale Balilla, the fascist youth group

But the fascist cultural context—and the representations of the masculine body it produced—was more complicated than this Wikipedia page implies. Specifically, in an attempt to imagine itself as the predestined heir of imperial Rome, fascism frequently employed an antiquarian aesthetic that of necessity alluded to Platonic homoeroticism (as well as Roman pansexuality). Imperial Roman male sexuality was itself a combination of on the one hand a long-standing freedom to make use of the bodies of social inferiors of whatever gender and on the other, a very different model, that of the Greek philosopher and his ephebe (Cantarella). This Greek inspired model achieved a kind of apotheosis in the relationship between the “virile” Emperor Hadrian and his lover Antinous. Following Antinous's death by drowning in the Nile, the

young and purportedly beautiful man was deified. The last God added to the Roman pantheon, Antinous and his cult were ultimately fused with that of Dionysus, and there are many surviving representations of Antinous as Dionysus (and, to a lesser extent, Osiris, reminding us of the syncretism of the Roman religion.)

Fascism's references to ancient Rome could not side-step this historical reality. What the Renaissance, the poetry of Whitman, and the fascist appropriation of Greco-Roman culture could not contain are precisely the contradictions of Platonism. Today we use the term platonic love to define intimate, nonsexual friendships. As described by Plato, however, these friendships were highly eroticized. The homosociality of ancient Rome could be deployed by fascism to both homoerotic and homophobic ends, promoting Platonic bonds but vilifying "passive" homosexuality as effeminate and a threat to the Italian race. During the fascist years, a number of homosexual painters, including Filippo de Pisis, Corrado Cagli, and Guglielmo Janni, pursued a strategy of painting nude male figures that masked their homoeroticism by referencing the Greco-Roman world. Janni and Cagli also reworked Renaissance images of saints and religious figures (including images of St. Sebastian, but also King David and St. Francis) that themselves borrowed from classical, pastoral antecedents.

The fascists' obsession with virility and their appropriation of images from Ancient Rome, however, is only half of the story. For the fascist years also saw the production of representations of masculinity not in keeping with a single, classical model. To understand how and why, we must turn once again to the contradictions of the regime. Despite his paeans to ruralism, perhaps most characteristically embodied in the photographs of the time period – Mussolini driving a tractor, Mussolini threshing wheat – *Il Duce* was committed to industrializing Italy. He was not anti-capitalist but instead encouraged a limited consumption in keeping with the realities of the Italian economy.

The early decades of the twentieth century saw, in response to changes in capitalism, transformations in Western masculinity. A process begun in the late nineteenth century with the appearance of the dandy continued, accelerated by Fordism and Taylorism and their demand for a managerial class (Floyd). That process required the increasing targeting of men as consumers. Masculinity increasingly became something that could be purchased. (Prior to the Wilde trials in 1895, the dandy was not, contra Benadusi, perceived as effeminate and/or homosexual; in the Italian context, Gabriele D'Annunzio, whom Castelnuovo-Tedesco personally knew and admired, is perhaps the most famous example, though Castelnuovo-Tedesco appears in some photos to himself reflect the model of refined, dandified elegance. Breward.)

Fascism could not insulate itself from these transformations, including the gradual if uneven adoption in Italy of Taylorism and Fordism and their attendant deskilling of labor and expansion of the "new" lower middle class of functionary intelligentsia, many of whom staffed the fascist bureaucracy. (Recall that Antonio Gramsci's "Americanism and Fordism" ("Americanismo e fordismo") was written from within the walls of a fascist prison.)

As Victoria de Grazia has argued, in the 1920s, Italy's managerial class was slow to develop and relatively small compared with its counterpart in other European nations, and yet this class fraction bore a certain representative burden. A fascinating early intervention in these debates is Roberto Cantalupo's *La Classe Dirigente* of 1926, Cantalupo being a Fascist deputy to the Italian parliament. Blatant propaganda, Cantalupo's book asserts that the fascist syndicates and accompanying corporatization of society will solve the problem of the clash of interests between owners and workers.

The way that Cantalupo fudges fascism's anti-bourgeois ideology is particularly noteworthy. Reminding them that only Mussolini can protect Italy from Bolshevism (82), the author assures the members of the bourgeoisie that fascism has two historical functions: that of revolution-limiter and

that of revolution-initiator. Regarding limiting revolution, it has accomplished an eminently conservative act, snatching from ruin Western society in general and that of Italy especially, preserving the centuries old sum of artistic, economic, and political civilization that the Asian subversion menaced with death. If Fascism were limited to its conservative action, however, it would have been deprived of originality and would have easily degenerated into a reactionary movement. It was also a revolution-initiator.

Insisting that Mussolini had declared as much from its beginning, Cantalupo argues that fascism is a revolution of both "*soldiers* and *producers*." "Fascism is the most harmonic fusion of nationalism and syndicalism able to be imagined . . . . in order to be a regime, it must comprehend all the interests of the national collectivity and all of the individualism of the producer, merging them and harmonizing them in a single system, robustly united and uniting" (84). Unfortunately for the author, such "harmonizing" was not always possible.

The fascists realized that, in order to compete with the US and Britain, they needed to "Taylorize" not only work, but also leisure (de Grazia 60) This was accomplished chiefly through the Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro, the fascist after-work program that sought to use leisure to create a sense of worker solidarity to replace and circumvent class-based forms of identification that preceded the regime, as well as to produce consent for fascist rule. It specifically took the place of union clubs and socialist circles that had survived into the mid-1920s, when they had been a means whereby workers addressed their own needs.

Mussolini thus offered the new managerial class on which the regime was increasingly dependent a scaled down version of the benefits provided by Fordism. Fascist anti-bourgeois ideology acted as a check on conspicuous consumption, while fascist discourses of virility attempted to calm the potential homosexual panic unleashed by the increased commodification of masculinity. For concern with one's mode of appearance always threatened to conjure the specter of effeminacy, particularly in an Italy with a

long tradition of figures like the *cicisbeo* – the indolent aristocrat – and the dandy.

To return to the Whitman cycle: within this complex historical context, should Castelnuovo-Tedesco's setting be considered a felicitous exploitation of the regime's own contradictions? I suggest that we imagine Castelnuovo-Tedesco's cycle as a covert critique of Fascism that redeploys some of the fascists' favorite tropes – the land, the crowd, brotherhood, blood, and glory – to mask that critique.

The months of Castelnuovo-Tedesco's depression – mid 1935 to mid 1936 – coincided almost exactly with fascist international aggression: seeking to expand its colonial possessions, Italy invaded Ethiopia, ultimately deploying chemical warfare. Thanks to victory, King Victor Emmanuel III added "Emperor of Ethiopia" to his title, and both the regime's and Mussolini's personal popularity were at an all time high. Two years later, the 1938 race laws would force the composer and his family to flee Italy. In one of the poems chosen by Castelnuovo-Tedesco, the speaker suggests that, if he were to know the "yearning and thoughtful" of the entire world, "I should become attached to them as I do to men in my own lands." Perhaps, in writing his songs, Castelnuovo-Tedesco was also moved by another kind of madness Plato describes: the madness of love.

I have dealt with this topic in further detail in my *Aesthetic Modernism and Masculinity in Fascist Italy*. New York and London: Routledge, 2013.

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John Champagne presenting on Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco at the "Intersections/Intersezioni" Conference, ICAMus Session, Palazzo dei Cerchi, Florence, Italy, June 5, 2015.

## *New Castelnuovo-Tedesco Projects on the International Scene*

### *Short Paper*

Mila De Santis

First of all, I wish to thank the "Intersections" Conference and ICAMus for this session devoted to Castelnuovo-Tedesco.

I am very pleased to be here, representing the University of Florence, and to have the opportunity to talk briefly about what I see as a true "Castelnuovo-Tedesco Renaissance", that is, a clear resurgence of interest—at least in Italy and in the U.S.A.—in the figure and work of Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, both in terms of programming concerts and recordings, and from a musicological point of view.

In 2012, I was invited to speak at the first international conference about the Florentine-American composer, that took place at Brown University. The title of that conference was "Music between Nation and Form: Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco and the boundaries of Italianità". The purpose was precisely to begin to systematically investigate the special position of this composer at the crossroads of different trends: his place within the international modernity (between need to ensure a national identity to his music and to satisfy at the same time a cosmopolitan education, to refer to an Italian cultural tradition and to update his musical language looking around), as well as the relationships between music and other practices and languages (poetry and film, above all), the influence of Jewish culture, the impact of American culture, and some other issues.

Aloma Bardi and John Champagne have just provided a significant exemplification about the progress of such studies in these last few years. Now I would like to announce a new editorial project I am working on, that was originally conceived during that conference. As mentioned by Aloma Bardi, for a long time when he lived in Italy, Castelnuovo-Tedesco was also a music critic. Following his teacher, Ildebrando Pizzetti, who directed him also towards this kind of activity, he began very early to regularly write articles and reviews of music for «La critica musicale», the Florentine musical journal founded in 1918 and led by Luigi Parigi until its closure, in 1923.

In the meantime, Castelnuovo-Tedesco was invited by the director, Guido Maggiorino Gatti, to write for another, even more important musical periodical, «Il pianoforte», based in Turin. As was the case for «La critica musicale», at the very beginning Castelnuovo-Tedesco was asked to use his privileged position as pianist and piano reducer to analyze Pizzetti's music and write about it. He soon became one of the regular contributors of this journal too, as well as the official correspondent from Florence. «Il pianoforte» discontinued publication in 1928, but it was immediately replaced by «La Rassegna musicale», also directed by Gatti. Castelnuovo-Tedesco wrote for the new journal from 1929 until 1936; after that, his long, ongoing collaboration with Italian musical periodicals ceased completely. In the United States he wrote about music only occasionally.

From 1919 to 1936, Castelnuovo-Tedesco authored about twenty very long articles, or reports, and hundreds of reviews of contemporary music. At some point (still we do not know exactly when) he decided to publish a significant selection of them (fifteen articles and forty reviews) and to give it the overall title *La penna perduta* (The lost pen). The composer, however, could not carry out his plan. Thanks to Castelnuovo-Tedesco's heirs and to the Library of Congress in Washington, who both made available the original typewritten copies of such articles and reviews, this selection is now being published, edited by myself, in the series "I discorsi della musica" of the Aracne publishing house in Rome.

While in his articles Castelnuovo-Tedesco deals mainly with the musical life in Florence and with some of the leading exponents of the Italian and European music—like Pizzetti, Casella, Alfano, Stravinsky and Manuel de Falla—the selection of the reviews reflects in a much more extensive and detailed way his interest in contemporary international music production. In this context, the presence of composers from Great Britain (Arnold Bax, Arthur Bliss, Gordon Jacob, John Ireland, Eugen Goosens, Lord Berners, Ralph Vaughan William) is decidedly conspicuous. As regards the United States of America, we find just one, small but very significant presence: in November 1921, Castelnuovo-Tedesco devoted his attention to the Piano Sonata No. 2, "Concord, Mass, 1840-1860" by Charles Ives, albeit he didn't hide his doubts with respect to the interaction of music and philosophical program, as well as the music itself, that he judged «abbastanza bislacca e dilettantesca» (rather odd and amateurish).

Luigi Dallapiccola, who was a friend of Castelnuovo-Tedesco's, liked to say that when a composer speaks about other composers' music, he actually speaks almost always of his own compositional problems. Castelnuovo-Tedesco is not an exception in this sense. This is one more reason for considering his writings worth looking into.

After me, Eleonora Negri will tell you about a new upcoming occasion to explore the work of Castelnuovo-Tedesco. I hope you will not miss it, and I thank you for your attention.





Mila De Santis presenting on Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco at the "Intersections/Intersezioni" Conference, ICAMus Session, Palazzo dei Cerchi, Florence, Italy, June 5, 2015.

## *Castelnuovo-Tedesco Events and Projects at the Lyceum Club Internazionale di Firenze*

### *Short Paper*

Eleonora Negri

#### *Abstract*

The prestigious institution of the Lyceum Club Internazionale di Firenze, established in 1908, is the recipient of the recent donation of Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco's musical and literary library, by the Florentine family and heirs of the composer.

This important event reconnects the Lyceum and Castelnuovo-Tedesco. The newly donated collection will be housed at this Florentine institution. Here the composer, during his pre-war years, when he lived in his native Florence, would frequently appear in solo piano recitals, as an accompanist for singers, and in chamber music ensembles. The Castelnuovo-Tedesco Library will be catalogued and made available for study and research.

Eleonora Negri serves as the President of the Lyceum Club Internazionale di Firenze, Sezione Musica. She extends an invitation to all "Intersections" participants to attend the upcoming Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco event of June 8, 2015 at the Lyceum (an ICAMus-University of Florence-Lyceum collaboration): a Conference and a Concert, featuring specialist lectures and a première performance of unpublished Whitman and Shakespeare settings.

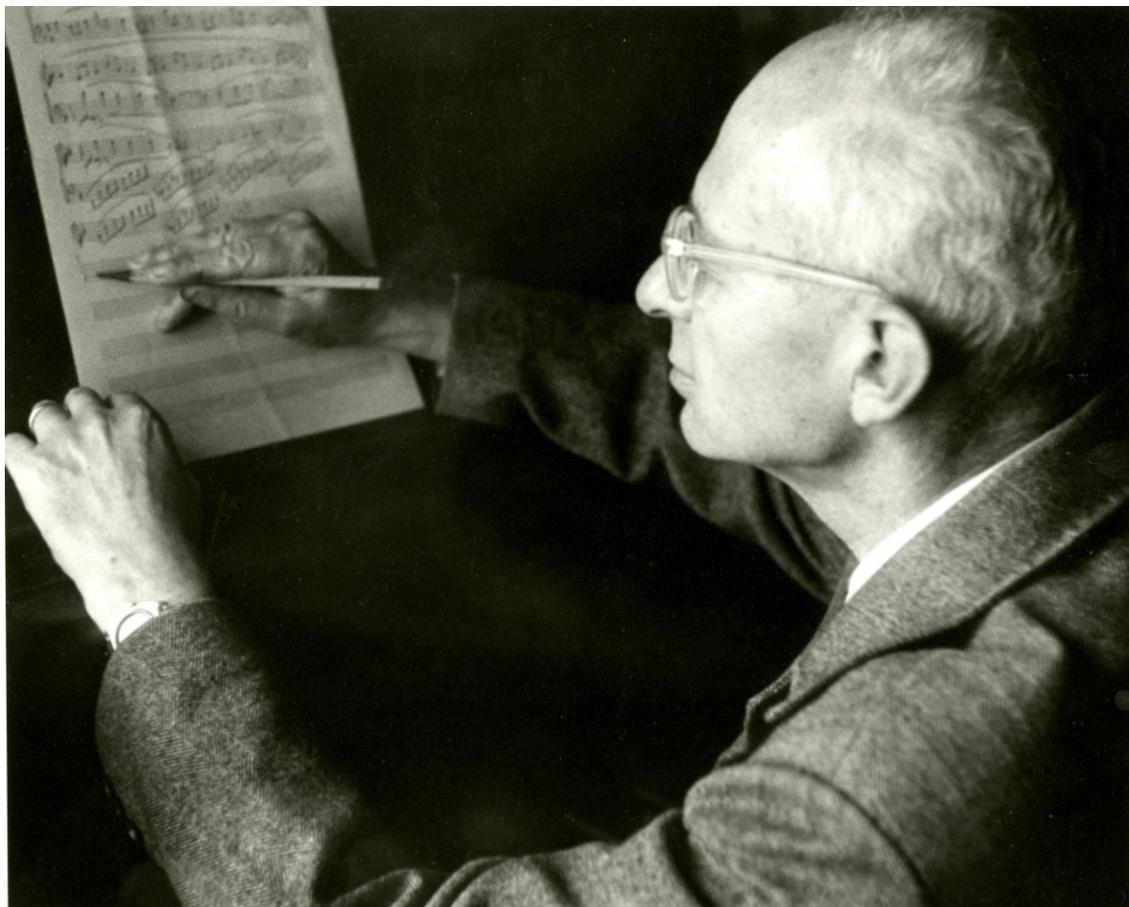




Eleonora Negri presenting on Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco at the "Intersections/Intersezioni" Conference, ICAMus Session, Palazzo dei Cerchi, Florence, Italy, June 5, 2015.



The medieval Palazzo dei Cerchi, Vicolo dei Cerchi, Florence, built in the early 1300s, where Kent State University - Florence Program is located, and venue of the ICAMus Session at the "Intersections/Intersezioni" Conference (June 5-7, 2015).



Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco in his studio, Beverly Hills, composing piano music; 1950s; Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco Papers, The Library of Congress Music Division, Washington, D.C., Box 144, Folder 7; reproduced by permission.



*"Intersections/Intersezioni" Conference, Logo - Signature Image.*