



Contrafagotto in ottone, Giuseppe Pelitti, Mailand, um 1860, TLMF, Musiksammlung, Inv.-Nr. 220.

BRASS BANDS AND THE BRASS INSTRUMENT INDUSTRY IN 19TH CENTURY MILAN

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Während der französischen Herrschaft in Italien (1796–1815) begründeten einige Musiker in Mailand die moderne Tradition des Metallblasinstrumentenbaus mit bemerkenswerten Ergebnissen durch die zwei Pelitti (Giuseppe der Ältere und Jüngere), Ferdinando Roth und seine Nachfolger, die Bottali. Gleichzeitig erfuhren die Militär- und Bürgerkapellen eine wesentliche Veränderung, mit starken Einflüssen der österreichischen Tradition bis zur endgültigen Wiedervereinigung des Landes (1860). Wesentlichen Anteil an der Entwicklung hatte die Musikinstrumentenindustrie mit der Herstellung einer schier unüberschaubaren Zahl von Typen und Varianten der Blechblasinstrumente, jede mit ihren typischen Besonderheiten. Diese Vielfalt wurde gegen Ende des Jahrhunderts eingeschränkt, als die sogenannte Vessella-Reform die italienische Blasmusik nach neuen Vorstellungen bezüglich Funktion und Besetzung reorganisierte.

NAPOLEON'S INVASION OF MILAN AND THE *GUARDIA NAZIONALE* BAND

After the conquest of Milan and its territory by Napoleon's troops in May 1796, the Lombardy region underwent many political and institutional changes with its inclusion into the French Republic; among them the establishment of the

Guardia Nazionale, a civic militia in imitation of the French *Garde Nationale*. This military corps included a band to accompany all major military and municipal events, an example imitated in each main centre of Northern Italy that had subsequently fallen under Napoleonic rule (e. g. Bergamo, Brescia, etc.).¹

The initial instrumentation of the ensemble included 2 horns (*corni da caccia*), 2 natural trumpets (*trombe dritte*)², 6 clarinets (*clarinetti*), 2 piccolos (*ottavini*), 3 bassoons (*fagotti*), jingling johnnie (*ombrolino*)³, cymbals (*piatti*), serpent (*serpent*), and bass drum (*tamburone*), with a total number of 19 players. In its composition the ensemble of the *Guardia Nazionale*, apart from the suppression of oboes, didn't differ considerably from the military bands seen in the city during the preceding Austrian domination.⁴ In fact its arrangement closely matched that of a 'Turkish Music' (*Türkische Musik*) of the Austrian army, a military corps thus described by Ferdinand Schönnfeld in that same year (1796):

Field music, i. e. the *Harmonie*, or *Bande*, is formed of 2 horns, 2 bassoons, and 2 oboes. These instruments are also shown in the *Türkische Musik* with the addition of 2 clarinets, trumpet, triangle, and piccolo, along with a very large drum, an ordinary drum, and a pair of cymbals. Field music can be heard at the drumbeat, or tattoo, when the Guard leaves the fortress or the Court Palace. The Turkish music is played in front of the barracks on summer

¹ All the archival documentation here referred to is preserved, arranged in roughly chronological order, at the Archivio Storico Civico of Milan, *Materie*, folders 49 and 50. I would thank Mike Quinn for his friendly revision of the English prose of my article.

² *Trombe dritte* ('straight trumpets') was used to distinguish common or 'natural' trumpets from *trombe da caccia*, an alternative name for horns.

³ The name *ombrolino* is never encountered elsewhere in Italian for this very common instrument, otherwise called *Cappel chinese*.

⁴ Since 1706 Lombardy had remained under Austrian rule in consequence of the so-called War of Spanish succession.

Buolo

Pegli Individui Componenti la Banda della Guardia N^{ale} Milanese

1	Garegnani Melchior	} Corni da caccia
2	Garegnani Giuseppe	
3	Camoccia Felice	} Trombe Drite
4	Schiroli Antonio	
5	Binago Piero	} Clarineti Primi
6	Galinotti Giuseppe	
12	Amber Domenico	} Clarineti Secondi
7	Guala Luigi	
13	Remond Giuseppe	} Clarineti Secondi
10	Deluigi Giacomo	
11	Aber Giovanni	} Oboi
12	Emanuel Antonio	
13	Bucinelli Giuseppe	} Fagotti
14	Mazzone Giuseppe	
15	Cattaneo Domenico	} Oboi
16	Galinotti Giacomo	
17	Claver Giovanni	} Trombe
18	Morlet Carlo	
19	Verdier Andrea	} Tamburone

Il 10 Brumaire Anno Quarto della R. F. L. E. è stato il primo giorno della
Banda agli primi quindici Individui di soldi trenta al giorno e l'assistenza
la prima Decade fu pagata dalla Casa della Municipalità di Milano. Indi
dalla Casa del Consiglio Amministrativo della Guardia N^{ale} Milanese.

(1) I tre Francesi sono Ennati nella 1^a Banda e questi dati come sopra
il 25 Brumaire Anno V.

(2) Verdier Andrea è Entrato nella 2^a Banda e assistente come sopra
il 24 Ventoso Anno V.

FIG. 1: The early *Guardia Nazionale* band (1796)
(I-Mt, *Spettacoli pubblici*, 49).

Elenco

Pegli Individui che Compongono la Banda Nazionale Milanese

	Nome degli Individui	Instrumento	Contrada	Numero	Posto
1	Aber Giovanni	Oboino	Sanza morati	913	P.O.
2	Binago Piero	Clarinetto	S ^a Antonio v.	11735	P.R.
3	Bucinelli Giuseppe	Fagotto	Del Bece	11955	P.R.
4	Cattaneo Domenico	Tamburone	De Armatori	3120	P.R.
5	Camoccia Felice	Tromba Drita	S ^a Margherita	1129	P.M.
6	Deluigi Giacomo	Clarinetto	Del Oboino	1556	P.O.
7	Emanuel Antonio	Oboino	Del al Baglioli	488	P.O.
8	Claver Giovanni	Clarinetto	Del Ballo	3155	P.V.
9	Galinotti Giuseppe	Clarinetto	Piazza del Vento	1149	P.M.
10	Galinotti Giacomo	Oboino	Strada del Vento	Sui	Sui
11	Garegnani Melchior	Corno da caccia	Cornia de Servi	545	P.O.
12	Garegnani Giuseppe	Corno da caccia	Sui	Sui	Sui
13	Guala Luigi	Clarinetto	Del Oratorio	11757	P.R.
14	Mazzone Giuseppe	Fagotto	S ^a Zeno	1177	P.T.
15	Schiroli Antonio	Tromba Drita	San ^a Longa	11779	P.T.
	Maestro Nazionale	la musica	Instrumentale		
15	De Balliou Luigi	Compositore	Ed. Casella	431	P.O.

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il 24 Ventoso Anno V.

FIG. 2: The *Guardia Nazionale* band in 1797
(I-Mt, *Spettacoli pubblici*, 50).

evenings in good weather, and sometimes in the presence of the Guard of the Court Palace.⁵

A main difference occurred on the whole in the commitments of the new ensemble, since in addition to military ceremonies the band of the *Guardia Nazionale* was also requested to perform in a plethora of other civilian events. In addition, with the exception of three Frenchmen enrolled for a while, many players of the group were (or were to be) professionals in the La Scala orchestra, either in the same position or in a different role (e. g. Giuseppe Mazzone, a bassoonist here, who served as double bass player at La Scala). The two Garegnanis (horns) and Giacomo De Luigi (clarinet) were in their turn instrument makers of brasses and woodwinds respectively.

A slightly later document reports the definitive arrangement after the dismissal of the three French players and the recruitment of a *Maestro nazionale per la musica istromentale* (composer of 'national' instrumental music). This was Luigi De Balliou, first violin and conductor of the La Scala orchestra, who was, according to the same source, "not included with the others, being unpaid". The standard make-up of the group, with 15 players and the *maestro*, is shown in the following document.

Even though relevant documentation of this ensemble is preserved, nothing is known about the music they played and, except for an inferable repertoire of marches and batteries, the remainder is left to speculation, for no band compositions by De Balliou or his successor, Ambrogio Minoja, seem to survive.

⁵ Schönfeld, Ferdinand: *Jahrbuch der Tonkunst von Wien und Prag*, Wien, Schönfeld, 1796; Facs. Wien, Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, 1976, p. 98.

THE COMEBACK OF THE AUSTRIANS AND THE STAGE BAND

The defeat of Napoleon and the return of Lombardy to Austria after the Congress of Vienna (1815) go with a period of promising innovation in musical instrument design and use. At the same time the so-called 'stage band' knew an increasing success. It is worth noticing that in both Viennese and Italian operatic tradition, stage bands were normally supplied by military corps, so that Austrian soldiers were enrolled in Milan for the stage band at La Scala.⁶ Before the beginning of rehearsals, the police unit attached to the theatre, with censorship as its primary responsibility, requested to a battalion based in the city to favour the presence of its band. The respective band master had to adapt music, usually written in the full score on two staves (bass and treble clefs), to the actual forces and instruments at his disposal.

The increasing request for stage bands was paralleled by the appearance in the theatre orchestras of a unit of percussion instruments also named *Banda*, apparently a remainder of the percussion section of 'Turkish music'. Pietro Lichtenthal describes this group in 1826 in the following terms: "*Banda* [...] In Italy this name is also given to a group of percussion instruments formed by bass drum, cymbals, triangle, etc. seen in all major theatre orchestras, and requested on occasion to strengthen the *forte* in some pieces of operas and ballets". The latter function seems confirmed by the 'Turkish music' pedal found on most Viennese pianos of the 1810s to 1830s: the frequent occurrence of such a pedal attachment, when compared with the scanty requests for it by contemporary scores, lets one infer that it was added extemporaneously in performances of dance music and military-inspired compositions.

THE INVASION OF AUSTRIAN INSTRUMENTS

The attentive Imperial administration usually endorsed the most typical products of the many countries under its rule; and musical instruments, with pianos as a speciality, were all typical domestic products of Austria. The restored Austrian domination implied therefore a lively export to Italy of Viennese-made instruments; an occurrence that, even considering the skilled craftsmanship achieved by Austrian makers, entailed political support and favourable taxation rates.⁷ In fact, it was unparalleled by a similar incoming from France, England, or Germany, all countries which could boast best quality and competitiveness in instrument-making. Therefore, even in the lack of indisputable documentation, juridical or administrative as it may be, some kind of commercial protectionism should be admitted.⁸

A witness to the point is given by catalogues of Austrian musical instrument firms preserved in Italian libraries, for instance one by the Riedl company of the early 1830s.⁹

The same opinion is fostered by two catalogues of the Uhlmann firm printed both in German and Italian, one just after the death of Johann Tobias Uhlmann (1838), the second by his son and main successor Leopold Tobias (1842?).

And the incoming is confirmed by a large number of Uhlmann's instruments still harboured in Italian collections, among them a unique double-reed contrabass in the Conservatory of Parma and a valve ophicleid in Modena.

Also revealing is an affirmation subscribed to by several Italian band masters during a music meeting in 1842: "the best firms are those of Uhlmann for brasses and Ziegler for the woodwinds".¹⁰

The bilingual catalogue also draws attention to a wooden 'Bass horn' (at the centre of the illustration), whose name is translated into Italian as *cornò basso*, thus confirming the

⁶ See for example documents, mostly related to 1830s, preserved at I-Mt, Spettacoli Pubblici, folder 5.

⁷ A thoroughly survey of the contemporary Austrian industry with particular reference to musical instruments is found in: Keess, Stephan von: Darstellung des Fabriks- und Gewerbswesens in seinem gegenwärtigen Zustande, 2. Ausgabe, Wien, Mörschner und Jasper, 1824, 2. Teil, pp. 161–202; see also, Anhang 2. Teil, pp. 84–87.

⁸ The fact seems inferable also from what is said in von Keess, Darstellung (Note 7), p. 204.

⁹ A copy of the leaflet is in the library of Istituto Musicale Donizetti in Bergamo.

¹⁰ Il fondo musicale della banda della Guardia Nazionale di Parma, a cura di Gaspare Nello Vetro, Parma, Comune di Parma, 1993, p. 43.

Fabrics.

PREIS COURANT

Des. 26

Dof. Felix Riedl

in Wien.

Tablature de l' Ophicleide, ou Basse d' Harmonie in C Ton.

Chromatische Blasinstrumente

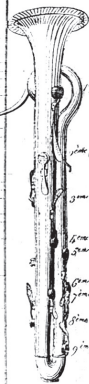
noch weiterverbreitete, jedoch nicht
den Willen des Componisten
vollkommen auszudrücken, weil
einige Organe, namentlich die Clarinetten,
nicht alle Töne auszusprechen
vermögen.

Klappen-Trompeten.

Sie sind die A. B. C. des Blasinstrumenten-
Orchesters, und sind die einzigen,
die alle Töne auszusprechen
vermögen.

Instrumente ohne Nachschlageklappe.

Man kann diese Instrumente in drei
Klassen theilen: 1. die, welche
keine Nachschlageklappe haben,
2. die, welche eine Nachschlageklappe
haben, und 3. die, welche eine
Nachschlageklappe haben, und
eine Nachschlageklappe haben.



Hals-Blasinstrumente.

1. **Flöten.** 2. **Clarinete.** 3. **Fagotte.** 4. **Alten.** 5. **Violoncelle.** 6. **Bass.** 7. **Contra.** 8. **Bass.** 9. **Bass.** 10. **Bass.** 11. **Bass.** 12. **Bass.** 13. **Bass.** 14. **Bass.** 15. **Bass.** 16. **Bass.** 17. **Bass.** 18. **Bass.** 19. **Bass.** 20. **Bass.** 21. **Bass.** 22. **Bass.** 23. **Bass.** 24. **Bass.** 25. **Bass.** 26. **Bass.** 27. **Bass.** 28. **Bass.** 29. **Bass.** 30. **Bass.** 31. **Bass.** 32. **Bass.** 33. **Bass.** 34. **Bass.** 35. **Bass.** 36. **Bass.** 37. **Bass.** 38. **Bass.** 39. **Bass.** 40. **Bass.** 41. **Bass.** 42. **Bass.** 43. **Bass.** 44. **Bass.** 45. **Bass.** 46. **Bass.** 47. **Bass.** 48. **Bass.** 49. **Bass.** 50. **Bass.** 51. **Bass.** 52. **Bass.** 53. **Bass.** 54. **Bass.** 55. **Bass.** 56. **Bass.** 57. **Bass.** 58. **Bass.** 59. **Bass.** 60. **Bass.** 61. **Bass.** 62. **Bass.** 63. **Bass.** 64. **Bass.** 65. **Bass.** 66. **Bass.** 67. **Bass.** 68. **Bass.** 69. **Bass.** 70. **Bass.** 71. **Bass.** 72. **Bass.** 73. **Bass.** 74. **Bass.** 75. **Bass.** 76. **Bass.** 77. **Bass.** 78. **Bass.** 79. **Bass.** 80. **Bass.** 81. **Bass.** 82. **Bass.** 83. **Bass.** 84. **Bass.** 85. **Bass.** 86. **Bass.** 87. **Bass.** 88. **Bass.** 89. **Bass.** 90. **Bass.** 91. **Bass.** 92. **Bass.** 93. **Bass.** 94. **Bass.** 95. **Bass.** 96. **Bass.** 97. **Bass.** 98. **Bass.** 99. **Bass.** 100. **Bass.** 101. **Bass.** 102. **Bass.** 103. **Bass.** 104. **Bass.** 105. **Bass.** 106. **Bass.** 107. **Bass.** 108. **Bass.** 109. **Bass.** 110. **Bass.** 111. **Bass.** 112. **Bass.** 113. **Bass.** 114. **Bass.** 115. **Bass.** 116. **Bass.** 117. **Bass.** 118. **Bass.** 119. **Bass.** 120. **Bass.** 121. **Bass.** 122. **Bass.** 123. **Bass.** 124. **Bass.** 125. **Bass.** 126. **Bass.** 127. **Bass.** 128. **Bass.** 129. **Bass.** 130. **Bass.** 131. **Bass.** 132. **Bass.** 133. **Bass.** 134. **Bass.** 135. **Bass.** 136. **Bass.** 137. **Bass.** 138. **Bass.** 139. **Bass.** 140. **Bass.** 141. **Bass.** 142. **Bass.** 143. **Bass.** 144. **Bass.** 145. **Bass.** 146. **Bass.** 147. **Bass.** 148. **Bass.** 149. **Bass.** 150. **Bass.** 151. **Bass.** 152. **Bass.** 153. **Bass.** 154. **Bass.** 155. **Bass.** 156. **Bass.** 157. **Bass.** 158. **Bass.** 159. **Bass.** 160. **Bass.** 161. **Bass.** 162. **Bass.** 163. **Bass.** 164. **Bass.** 165. **Bass.** 166. **Bass.** 167. **Bass.** 168. **Bass.** 169. **Bass.** 170. **Bass.** 171. **Bass.** 172. **Bass.** 173. **Bass.** 174. **Bass.** 175. **Bass.** 176. **Bass.** 177. **Bass.** 178. **Bass.** 179. **Bass.** 180. **Bass.** 181. **Bass.** 182. **Bass.** 183. **Bass.** 184. **Bass.** 185. **Bass.** 186. **Bass.** 187. **Bass.** 188. **Bass.** 189. **Bass.** 190. **Bass.** 191. **Bass.** 192. **Bass.** 193. **Bass.** 194. **Bass.** 195. **Bass.** 196. **Bass.** 197. **Bass.** 198. **Bass.** 199. **Bass.** 200. **Bass.** 201. **Bass.** 202. **Bass.** 203. **Bass.** 204. **Bass.** 205. **Bass.** 206. **Bass.** 207. **Bass.** 208. **Bass.** 209. **Bass.** 210. **Bass.** 211. **Bass.** 212. **Bass.** 213. **Bass.** 214. **Bass.** 215. **Bass.** 216. **Bass.** 217. **Bass.** 218. **Bass.** 219. **Bass.** 220. **Bass.** 221. **Bass.** 222. **Bass.** 223. **Bass.** 224. **Bass.** 225. **Bass.** 226. **Bass.** 227. **Bass.** 228. **Bass.** 229. **Bass.** 230. **Bass.** 231. **Bass.** 232. **Bass.** 233. **Bass.** 234. **Bass.** 235. **Bass.** 236. **Bass.** 237. **Bass.** 238. **Bass.** 239. **Bass.** 240. **Bass.** 241. **Bass.** 242. **Bass.** 243. **Bass.** 244. **Bass.** 245. **Bass.** 246. **Bass.** 247. **Bass.** 248. **Bass.** 249. **Bass.** 250. **Bass.** 251. **Bass.** 252. **Bass.** 253. **Bass.** 254. **Bass.** 255. **Bass.** 256. **Bass.** 257. **Bass.** 258. **Bass.** 259. **Bass.** 260. **Bass.** 261. **Bass.** 262. **Bass.** 263. **Bass.** 264. **Bass.** 265. **Bass.** 266. **Bass.** 267. **Bass.** 268. **Bass.** 269. **Bass.** 270. **Bass.** 271. **Bass.** 272. **Bass.** 273. **Bass.** 274. **Bass.** 275. **Bass.** 276. **Bass.** 277. **Bass.** 278. **Bass.** 279. **Bass.** 280. **Bass.** 281. **Bass.** 282. **Bass.** 283. **Bass.** 284. **Bass.** 285. **Bass.** 286. **Bass.** 287. **Bass.** 288. **Bass.** 289. **Bass.** 290. **Bass.** 291. **Bass.** 292. **Bass.** 293. **Bass.** 294. **Bass.** 295. **Bass.** 296. **Bass.** 297. **Bass.** 298. **Bass.** 299. **Bass.** 300. **Bass.** 301. **Bass.** 302. **Bass.** 303. **Bass.** 304. **Bass.** 305. **Bass.** 306. **Bass.** 30

Flügelhorn, Basset Horn, Bass Trombone, Cornet, Trombone, Tuba, Flügelhorn, Trombone, Tuba.

FIG. 3: Riedl's trade catalogue of about 1830 (Bergamo, I-BGc).

FIG. 4, 5: Uhlmann's catalogues in both German (left-hand) and Italian (right-hand) dating back to 1838 and 1842 ca. respectively (Salzburg, Museo Carolino-Augusteum).

Willkürliche Bestellungen von Lieferanten erzeugt eine unmittelbare in die allgemeine Substanz zu machen, sowie das verlangte Instrument mit geringer Bezeichnung der Werte nach dieser Fristenstelle auszuweisen, wenn die Bilanzierung durch einen kleinen Güterver-

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FIG. 6–8: Uhlmann's double-reed contrabass (Parma, Conservatorio "A. Boito"); Uhlmann's valve ophicleid (Modena, Museo Civico); Valve-ophicleid by A. Apparuti, Modena (Modena, Museo Civico): compare with previous illustration.

etymological root of the word *cimbasso*, a unique Italian name for the lowest voice of the brasses: the term *cimbasso* apparently derives from an abbreviation of *corno basso*, sometimes written *c.basso* or *c.in basso* in the scores, whence *cimbasso*.¹¹ This was originally a wooden instrument with brass bell (like that illustrated by Uhlmann), even though the name was subsequently used in a generic sense for the lowest brass instrument, at least until the later adoption in Italy of the bass-tuba in the 20th century (see below). A parallel to Viennese wind-instrument import to Italy

comes, of course, from the piano market: as a matter of fact grand pianos documented in Milan during the first part of the 19th century were all Viennese-made, whilst cheaper square pianos were commonly local products, frequently based on a Viennese model as well. The same occurrence is sometimes recorded also with wind-instruments, for instance the brass instruments made by Antonio Apparuti of Modena, in imitation of those of Uhlmann. A different circumstance is that of a horn made in 1822 by Lorenzo Dall'Asta and Luigi Pini of Parma, now in the Bolo-

¹¹ Meucci, Renato: The 'Cimbasso' and related instruments in 19th-century Italy, in: "The Galpin Society Journal", XLIX (1996), pp. 143–179, Engl. transl. (by William Waterhouse) of the article published in Italian in: "Studi Verdiani", V (1988–89), pp. 109–162.

gna Music Museum. Its valve system, with double pistons loosely resembling the Viennese valves, cannot imitate this famous design usually attributed to Riedl, for this horn predates it by some eight years. The primacy of the invention by Pini and Dall'Asta was claimed in several contemporary publications in which a story is recorded according to which this horn was sent to Vienna for expert examination, and was there imitated by Riedl. Whatever may have passed, van der Meer, author of the catalogue of the museum¹², stressed the point of originality of this mechanism, which in his opinion didn't match any other known valve system, thus deserving special attention from specialists. However, the wide-spread adoption in Italy of the same double-pistons devised by Riedl, further demonstrates Austrian primacy in instrument making. Also significant is the name initially attributed to this system in Italy, that of *macchina*, the same as the German *Maschine*. This is confirmed, for instance, by Alberto Mazzucato, Italian translator of the instrumentation *Traité* by Berlioz: "Our players use trumpets with the *macchina* system, that is, those furnished neither with pistons nor rotary valves, but with a comparable mechanism which similarly enables trumpets to perform the entire chromatic scale".¹³

In confirmation of the above, one may mention a document related to another company dealing with musical instrument import, established however in the territory of the Papal State, therefore outside the direct influence of Austria. The Gardelli company in Ferrara advertised for sale in 1847, alongside instruments made in Vienna, brasses coming from Paris and elsewhere, a condition otherwise never recorded at this date in Italian regions under Austrian government. Nonetheless, the same company put on sale at its associate branch in Rome brass instruments of Joseph Stecher of Salzburg (a name unknown even to the Langwill/Waterhouse dictionary), Joseph Ignaz Hoyer of Vienna (fl. 1854–), Franz Leibel of Innsbruck (fl. 1844–1856), and even Cerveny of Königgratz (p 1844–). And in the context of this symposium

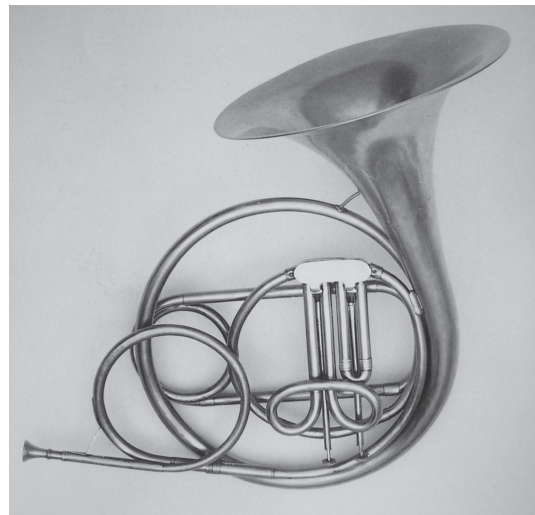


FIG. 9: Valve horn by Dall'Asta and Pini (Bologna, Museo della musica).

PREZZI CORRENTI									
DELLI STRUMENTI MUSICALI									
D'OGNI GENERE									
DEPOSITO DI FRANCESCO GARDELLI									
STRUMENTI DI METALLO A MACCHINA									
DI PRAGA, VIENNA E D'ALTRE CAPITALI									
1 Corni da Caccia con N. 10 Ritorti e pompa da	23	12	33	42	35	12	40	—	—
2 Trombette alte in Do, Si b. e La. co'	13	—	16	—	20	—	23	—	—
3 Trombe in Sol con N. 5 ritorti	14	—	18	—	22	—	25	—	—
4 Trombe basse in Sol o La	10	—	20	—	24	—	27	—	—
5 Flygehorn (Corno segnale) alto in Do	14	—	15	—	22	—	25	—	—
6 Flygehorn basso con ritorti	18	—	22	—	24	—	28	—	—
7 Serpenti in Si b. e La	20	—	23	—	25	—	29	—	—
8 Tromboni alti in Do	18	—	20	—	22	—	26	—	—
9 Tromboni tenori in Si b.	19	—	22	—	25	—	29	—	—
10 Tromboni bassi in Fa	20	—	24	—	26	—	30	—	—
11 Bombardoni tenori in Si b.	25	—	28	—	30	—	35	—	—
12 Detti a quattro Cellindri d'ultima invenzione	—	—	—	—	35	—	40	—	—
13 Bombardoni bassi in Fa, Mi, Mi b. e Re	34	—	38	—	44	—	48	—	—
STRUMENTI DI METALLO DI PARIGI									
A MACCHINA									
14 Corni da Caccia con N. 10 ritorti e pompa da	40	12	50	42	55	12	60	—	—
15 Detti come sopra a due pistoni	35	—	45	—	—	—	—	—	—
16 Cornetto (Trombetta) in Si b. con sette toni	21	—	25	—	28	—	35	—	—
17 Trombe in Sol con cinque ritorti e pompa	20	—	25	—	28	—	35	—	—
18 Bugler (Flygehorn) alto con suoi ritorti	18	—	23	—	26	—	30	—	—
19 Clavicor in Si b., Do, o Mi b. (Istru-	30	—	35	—	36	—	40	—	—
mento basso cantabile)	23	—	33	—	34	—	38	—	—
20 Tromboni tenori in Si b.	30	—	35	—	36	—	40	—	—
21 Ophicleides tenore a 9 e 10 Chiavi	38	—	40	—	44	—	48	—	—
22 Detti a 4 pistoni	38	—	43	—	44	—	48	—	—
23 Detti (Bombardoni) bassi d'armonia	45	—	50	—	55	—	60	—	—
STRUMENTI CON CHIAVI SENZA									
MACCHINA									
24 Trombe alte in Sol con N. 5 ritorti	10	12	13	da	12	—	—	—	—
25 Ophicleides tenore a 9 e 10 Chiavi	30	—	35	—	36	—	40	—	—
26 Detti basso	38	—	40	—	44	—	48	—	—
27 Clarini da 8 alle 13 Chiavi di Ottone	12	—	16	—	—	—	—	—	—
28 Detti da 8 alle 13 Chiavi d'Argento	16	—	20	—	—	—	—	—	—

FIG. 10: Trade catalogue of Gardelli's firm, 1847 (private collection).

¹² van der Meer, John Henry: *Strumenti musicali europei del Museo Civico Medievale di Bologna*, Bologna, Nuova Alfa Editoriale, 1993, pp. 78–79.

¹³ Berlioz, Ettore: *Grande trattato di stromentazione e d'orchestrazione moderne*, op. 10, trad. ital. di Alberto Mazzucato, Milano, Ricordi [1846–47], vol. III, p. 19 (translator's note).

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E con orgoglio che possiamo dichiarare alla ns. affezionata Clientela, che la lunga secolare esperienza, ed i continui studi che sempre ci spingono a perfezionare i ns. prodotti, furono coronati da un meritato successo, cosicchè ora siamo in grado di offrire Istrumenti ottimi sotto ogni rapporto e del più grande rendimento artistico.

La ns. Ditta "SOC. AN. W. STOWASSER'S SÖHNE - VERONA" - fondata fin dal 1824, ed unica in Italia, tecnicamente fondata con razionale severità, fabbrica qualsiasi Tipo di Istrumento per Banda od Orchestra, in Ottone a Fiato, in Ebano ad Anicia, Saxofoni e Batteria, dal tipo B. di primissima qualità usuale a quello extra lusso.

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at the Innsbruck Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum the rare testimony regarding Leibelt seems particularly suggestive, as the museum does possess a couple of instruments made by him. A further circumstance, although somewhat posterior to the scope of the present paper, is the establishment in Italy of the Stowasser's Söhne company, a division of which operated in Verona from 1899 until around 1941.

The constant request of Austrian military bands as stage ensembles in the theatres of Northern Italy also had consequences in Italian orchestras. A direct spin-off of this

¹⁴ On this matter see the Author's: *Testimonianze inedite sul diapason tra Settecento ed Ottocento negli studi di acustica* di Francesco Zantedeschi, in: *Rassegna Veneta di Studi Musicali*, XIII–XIV (1997–98), pp. 635–654.

to adopt their pitch. Gradually at Vienna, pitch rose from $a' 421.6$ (Mozart's pitch) to $a' 456.1$, that is, 136 cents, or nearly three-quarters of a Tone. The mania spread throughout Europe, but at very different rates. The pitch reached $a' 448$ at the Paris Opera in 1858, and the musical world took fright. Art. 13 – The Emperor of the French [!] appointed a commission to select a pitch, and this determined on $a' 435$, and made a fork called *Diapason normal*, now found to be $a' 435.4$, which is preserved at the Musée du Conservatoire, and is the only standard pitch in the world [...]

Art. 15 – If we look into the secrets of the rise of pitch we find it always connected to wind instruments.

To Ellis's words let me add a piece of evidence which clearly documents the same trend and attitude in Milan. It is contained in a report of 1846 by the then supervisor of the La Scala orchestra, Francesco Antonio Biscottini:¹⁶ After the introduction in the theatre of military bands, whose instruments were fixed at a high pitch being played outdoors and at the head of regiments, a step-by-step rise of pitch also occurred in the opera house. It was eventually pushed about a semitone higher, so that the orchestra could be in tune with it [the band]. Furthermore, during long performances these high-tuned instruments get heated and wet, therefore rising even more, and the poor singers find themselves out of ease and forced to shout, to scream, and to lose their voices. To support his previous argument Biscottini offered one further proof: For confirmation, I still preserve the tuning fork formerly used for the La Scala orchestra, which I bought in the year 1820 from the harpsichord tuner signor Piantanida. All church organs of this city [Milan] would confirm what I assert, because whenever opera players perform in a liturgical service they are forced to lower the pitch of their instruments.

Thus, the rise in pitch registered during the first half of the 19th century was caused by high-pitched wind instruments

adopted by Austrian military bands; their role as stage ensembles in all major theatres of Northern Italy had in fact understandable consequences on the respective orchestras.

A NEW INTEREST FOR INSTRUMENTS AND INSTRUMENTATION IN MILAN

Around the middle of the century a radical change began in the Italian attitude towards instrumentation. The main supporter of this renewal was Giovanni Ricordi (1785–1853), founder and chief manager of the celebrated publishing house. In his circle were some brilliant musicians and intellectuals, like Giacinto Battaglia, editor of the “Gazzetta Musicale di Milano”, official journal of the Casa Ricordi since 1842, and Alberto Mazzucato, conductor, music teacher, and historian, as well as a skilled translator. His was the first Italian version of Berlioz's *Instrumentation Treatise*, which appeared concurrently with the Paris edition as shown by a trade catalogue of 1843 in which the Berlioz handbook is said to be “in printing”.

One could guess that this interest for instrumentation was mostly motivated by the educational goals related to such a relevant aspect of musical composition. But one further reason of Ricordi's interest in instrumentation was of a political nature. In fact, when envisaging the Italian edition of Berlioz' *Treatise*, the ‘republican’ Giovanni Ricordi¹⁷ had in mind political and ethical thoughts of the major Italian patriot of the day, Giuseppe Mazzini (1805–1872). Let me remind that Mazzini was a central figure in the long process of re-unification of the Peninsula, which began in 1848 (with the 1st War of Independence) and lasted until 1866 (with the 3rd war of Independence).

In 1836 Mazzini had published a small book entitled “Philosophy of music”, in which he described the main skills of a composer yet to come (whom many subsequent commenta-

¹⁶ The quotes are reported from Author's: Osservazioni del m.^o Francesco Antonio Biscottini sull'orchestra scaligera del 1846, in: Il Flauto Dolce, 17–18 (1987–88), pp. 41–44 (the passages here translated are at pp. 43–44).

¹⁷ On the political background of Ricordi, see: Casa Ricordi 1808–1958. Profilo storico a cura di Claudio Sartori. Itinerario grafico editoriale, Milano, Ricordi, 1958, in particular pp. 57–58.

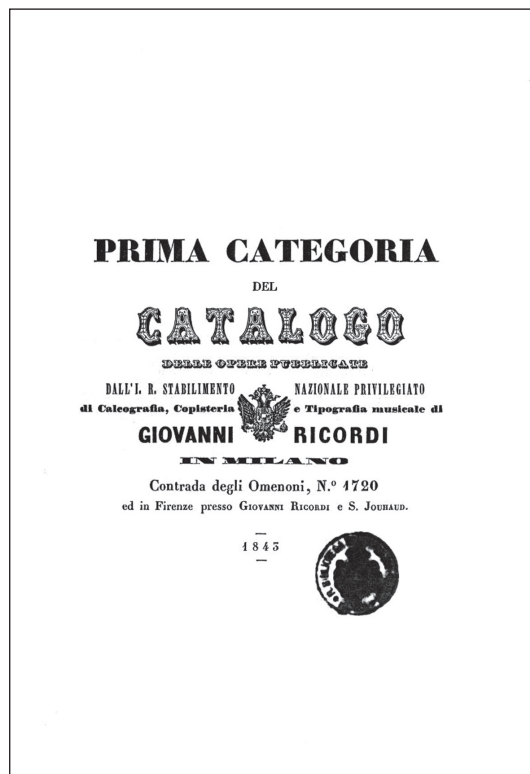


FIG. 13: Cover of Ricordi's trade catalogue and announcement of the publication of Berlioz's treatise (I-Rsc).

tors identify with Verdi) and the features he should be gifted with, among them a special interest for instrumentation. A quote from Mazzini's own pamphlet clearly discloses the issue with reference to operatic repertoire, then the most popular in Italy:¹⁸ Why not to make a more intensive use of, and have a more marked interest for instrumentation, to represent with [appropriate] accompaniments each character's affections, the attitudes, instincts, practical and moral tendencies that frequently act on his spirit and move him in consequence determining in such a large measure the fulfilment of his destiny, the final choices which solve the plot of dramatic action?

Hence, the Italian version of Berlioz' book was at least in part suggested by ideas and recommendations of a political inspirer. This fact explains its publication even when it is

apparently in contrast with long-standing Italian musical traditions (this is the case in several references to instruments not common or still unknown in Italy). The same publication, however, fills the gap between several poor preceding essays (the handbooks on instrumentation by Mirecki, Pilotti, Asioli, and few others) and a new skill in orchestration eventually adopted also by most Italian composers, Verdi among them. The troubles encountered by Italian instrumentalists when faced with orchestral writing more complex than was usual are documented by several articles in the "Gazzetta Musicale di Milano" signed by the same Alberto Mazzucato. These papers largely refer to the first representations in Milan of Meyerbeer's grand operas which presented the orchestral personnel and their conductors with unprecedented difficulties in performance practice.

¹⁸ Mazzini, Giuseppe: *Filosofia della musica* (1836), in: *Scritti editi e inediti di Giuseppe Mazzini*, vol. IV, Milano, Daelli, 1862, p. 110.

Instrumentation, in any case, was not a matter of concern only for orchestral people, but for the band personnel as well, which contributed to a large extent in disseminating operatic repertoire. This is most probably the background for papers like the one that appeared in the "Gazzetta Musicale" of 1846, a long article on the organization of Austrian bands written by the famous bandmaster Joseph Fahrbach. In this context the rebirth of brass instrument making in Milan took place. Its two most renowned exponents were Giuseppe Pelitti sen. (1811–1865) and his son Giuseppe (Clemente) Pelitti jun. (1837–1905).¹⁹ The former should be remembered for a number of inventions that drew public attention on the quality of his artefacts, thus paving the way for a lasting success of the firm. The latter was in turn responsible for transforming the workshop business into a modern industrial trade company which gained a dominant position during the second half of the 19th century. In coincidence with dramatic political events, Vienna lost in fact her predominant position on the market, thus allowing new trade perspectives for inland makers (Austrian rule of Italy lasted until 1866, when re-unification terminated, apart from the Papal State eventually annexed in 1870). In addition the reunification of all other Italian States gave way to a period of florid trade and exchanges, while the uniting of previously distinct military traditions favoured the birth of new bands and the renewal of those already existing. A typical band setting of these times is that of the *Guardia Nazionale* of Milan in the years 1876–78:²⁰ flute, piccolo, 9 clarinets (two of them in E flat), four horns, cornet, 3 fluegel horns, 1 *basso flicorno*, 2 *bombardino*, 6 trumpets, 3 trombones, 2 *bombardone*, 2 *pelittone*, bass drum, 2 military drums, 2 cymbals. The ensemble included several sizes of low-pitched instruments, namely *basso flicorno*, *bombardino*, *bombardone*, together with their lowest variant, the *pelittone*, a peculiar presence in Italian bands of those days. For the sake of completeness, let the explanation of this peculiar terminology which, for the aforementioned reasons,



FIG. 14: Cover of "Gazzetta Musicale di Milano" of 16 August 1846, with the article by Joseph ('Giuseppe') Fahrbach.

partially matches that of contemporary German countries suffice. Three different sizes of bass "fluegel horn", instruments in B flat, were adopted in Italy, all similar in internal profile, but with decreasing bore of tubing, large, medium, and small respectively. *Basso flicorno* or *flicorno basso* is the largest of the three, with a huge and much flared bell as well. *Bombardino*, also called *flicorno baritono*, is like an Anglo-American euphonium, but with a narrow tapered mouthpiece which makes it difficult, if not impossible, to emit the fundamentals of the harmonic series; in addition, it normally comes with three pistons instead of the four (or even five) of the euphonium.

¹⁹ Meucci, Renato: The Pelitti firm: makers of brass instruments in nineteenth-century Milan, in: Historic Brass Society Journal, VI (1994), pp. 304–333.
²⁰ Galli, Amintore: Manuale del capomusica, Milano, Ricordi e Lucca, 1889, p. 44.

Pianta organica
del Corpo di musica Municipale di Milano, negli anni 1876-77-78.

N.º	ISTRUMENTO	Assegno mensile	N.º	ISTRUMENTO	Assegno mensile
1	Flauto obb.º L.	01 07	21	Bombardino obb.º L.	01 07
2	Ottavino »	75 —	22	» 2º »	06 07
3	Clarino mi b obb.º »	01 07	23	Tromba obb.º »	01 07
4	» » 1º »	75 —	24	» 2º »	75 —
5	» » si b obb.º »	01 07	25	» 3º »	58 33
6	» » spalla »	75 —	26	» 4º »	58 33
7	» » 1º »	06 07	27	» 5º »	50 —
8	» » 2º »	06 07	28	» 1º »	50 —
9	» » 2º »	58 33	29	Trombone »	83 33
10	» » 2º »	58 33	30	» 2º »	58 33
11	» » 3º »	50 —	31	» 3º »	58 33
12	Corno 1º »	75 —	32	Bombardone »	75 —
13	» 2º »	58 33	33	» 2º »	58 33
14	» 3º »	58 33	34	Pelittone (*) »	55 —
15	» 4º »	50 —	35	» 2º »	58 33
16	Cornetto obb.º »	01 07	36	Gran Cassa »	06 07
17	Flicorno obb.º »	01 07	37	Rollo »	50 —
18	» 1º »	75 —	38	» »	50 —
19	» 2º »	58 33	39	Piatti »	50 —
20	Basso flicorno obb.º »	01 07	40	» »	50 —

(*) Non si può far parola della musica militare in Italia senza ricordare il nome di un artefice insignito, perfezionatore e inventore di parecchi strumenti, l'autore del

FIG. 15: The municipal *Guardia Nazionale* band of Milan in the years 1876–78 (from Galli, *Manuale* ..., p. 44).

Its name (*baritono*) should not suggest a parallel with an English 'baritone' in B flat, which matches in turn the *flicorno tenore*, third and narrowest of all three B flat basses. The *bombardone* identifies with the English E flat- or F-bass: 19th-century Italian bands commonly used the E flat, orchestral ensembles the F model. Finally, *pelittone* (after the inventor, Pelitti sen.) is a monumental low BB flat contrabass, a common presence in Italian orchestras well into the 20th century, when the bass-tuba gained a late success in this country also.

While discussing the main features of the *pelittone* a distinguished commentator, Amintore Galli, gave long praise to the Pelittis:²¹ One cannot mention military music in Italy without recalling the name of an illustrious craftsman, refiner, and inventor of several instruments, the author of the Pelittone: Giuseppe Pelitti, the Italian counterpart of Sax, who brought back prime awards from international exhibitions held in Europe; the founder of a famous factory whose instruments are scattered not only throughout Italy, but also in France, Portugal, Spain, and Greece; a firm which Austria and Germany are indebted to, even when they boast of musical instrument factories of great reputation, like those

of Cervený of Königgratz in Bohemia, of Stowasser, Uhlmann, Fuchs, all three in Vienna, and Hoffmann in Leipzig. Furthermore, from Buenos Aires, from Montevideo, from San Salvador, Rio de Janeiro and Val Paraiso to Boston and New York City, from Turkey and Egypt to Calcutta, Bombay and Java, the brass instruments of the Pelitti factory honour this illustrious name and that of Italy.

To the glories of Pelitti, the father, are added those of the son, worthy heir of the talent and the diligence of the famous maker. The Pelitti firm has been in existence for more than a century and half; however it is only since 1835 that its renown for innovations and ingenious inventions began. Here is a selection of the main ones: *bombardino* (1835), to which Pelitti gave a voice, the most appealing and homogeneous in its entire huge compass. The *horn in six tonalities* (1844). The *trumpet in eleven tonalities* (1846), the only one excluded is the key of b natural. The *duplex* (1853), which combines two different instruments: one with an open, bright, brilliant tone like that of cornet, trumpet and trombone, the other with a dark, smooth, romantic voice, like *flicorno*, *clavicorno*, or *bombardino*. This instrument was imitated in France, with an apparent plagiarism, and gave way to the *triplex* and other musical instruments, and perhaps even to those with independent tubing by Sax. The *upright horn* (1851) treble, tenor and bass: this vertical horn was adopted with the recent band reformation in Italy (1884), as may be said of the over-the-shoulder instruments devised by Pelitti. Recently Pelitti has put out the *bombardone tritonico* (in F, Eflat and Bflat).

But among all the numerous inventions of this famous craftsman, the one which exceeds every other for its great and undisputed artistic value, and for its practical usefulness as well, is the *Pelittone*, an instrument with a strong, soft and round voice, an incomparable bass for a wind-instrument ensemble.

The Pelittone has come into universal use, which constitutes the highest praise for it.

²¹ Galli: *Manuale* (Note 20), p. 45.

GIUSEPPE PELITTI JUN. AND THE TROMBONE BASSO VERDI

The real inventive glory of Giuseppe, the son, is in turn the instrument that, in honour of its famous inspirer, took the name of *trombone basso Verdi*. In my study on the *cimbasso* (see note 11) I dwelt at length on its origin and role in Italian performance practice as a substitute for the bass-tuba until at least the 1930s. The conclusions reached in that study can be summarized as follows: at the beginning of the 1880s the bass-tuba was still an unknown instrument in Italian orchestras, where *bombardone*, and *pelittone* were profusely in use, in particular a gigantic variant of the latter, named *generale pelittone*. The Congress of musicians held in Milan in 1881 was urged to review the possibility of introducing the tuba into the orchestra, expressing itself in favour of it. In the meanwhile Verdi, who did not participate in the congress, went to visit the Pelitti factory and attended an audition of the upright *bassetto* in E flat and in B flat of recent invention (bass and contrabass trombones to be held in a vertical position). He found “the bass trombone in B flat and E flat to be excellent, as it achieves a perfect homogeneity of timbre with the tenor trombones, thus completing the quartet without altering the fundamental notes, which happens with the present-day ophicleides and similar instruments, all appropriate for bands, but out of place in an orchestra”. This critique ensured the fortune of the *trombone basso Verdi*, which nowadays, after its revival in the 1970s, is usually called ‘cimbasso’, a name which should instead be applied to the wooden model with brass bell.

THE DEBATE ON PITCH: FROM 432 TO 435 HZ

After the reunification of Italy and the eventual inclusion of the former Papal State in 1870, one major problem faced

by military bands was that of standardization, as they all came from long-standing separate musical and military traditions. In 1881, at the First National Congress of Musicians in Milan, the reorganization of military bands and the normalization of the musical pitch were also put under discussion. After a lively debate the pitch was fixed at 432 Hz, a value thereafter imposed by a national law of 1884.²² This measure also implied the restoration of many instruments in use, according to detailed dispositions contained in the “Giornale Militare Ufficiale” of that year (1884).

One year later, however, after an International conference held in Vienna (1885), the band of the newly-established Reign of Italy, like those of many other European countries, passed to the new international pitch, 435 Hz, the French *diapason normal*, the official standard thenceforth. A long period was starting in which municipal and non-professional bands, in addition to military ones, reached brilliant and lasting success in Italy. Their capillary dissemination throughout the country also meant a flourishing market for brass and woodwind instrument makers. According to Pelitti’s example, the principal contribution was given by the industry of Milan, which knew an increasing expansion in the last part of the century, as witnessed by emerging firms like Roth, Bottali, Sambruna, Maino e Orsi, Rampone, and many others.

Finally, at the very end of the 19th century, all military and civilian bands underwent a radical reform: a movement which started with the approval of the so-called Vessella’s Reform, after the name of the bandmaster Alessandro Vessella (1860–1929). To him a complete renewal of the band is due, mostly based on an appropriate balance of timbres and a neat distinction between dull and bright brasses, a goal Vessella attained both with his authoritative example as conductor and with his authorship of a fundamental book on band instrumentation, let alone the one on the history of the band published posthumously.²³

²² The full story is reconstructed in Meucci, Renato: Verdi, Bazzini e l’unificazione del diapason in Italia, in: Milano musicale 1861–1897, a cura di Bianca Maria Antolini, Lucca, LIM, 1999, pp. 393–403.

²³ Vessella, Alessandro: Studi d’istrumentazione per banda, Milano, Ricordi, [1897], with many later re-editions; Vessella, Alessandro: La banda. Dalle origini fino ai nostri giorni, Milano, Istituto editoriale nazionale, 1935.

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