Love and Virtue in the Lobkowitz House Theatre: 
Ferdinando Paër’s L’amor conjugale 

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Abstract
The Lobkowitz Library and Archives preserve important materials that illuminate the musical sphere of Franz Joseph Maximilian, 7th Prince Lobkowitz (1772–1816). Though his patronage of Beethoven has been widely recognized and well documented, Lobkowitz’s cultivation of opera productions in house theatres within his Bohemian and Vienna palaces, and his support of opera composers and singers, form a fascinating and little known part of his musical activity. This essay examines one particular opera, Leonora, ossia l’Amor conjugale, by Ferdinando Paër, which received a series of performances in the Lobkowitz house theatre in Vienna during the spring of 1806. A valuable trove of production documents, including account records from stage designer Lorenzo Sacchetti, costumer Lucas Piazza, and Lobkowitz Kapellmeister Anton Wranitzky, allows us to reconstruct the narrative of this opera’s earliest performances in Vienna, and its connections to another opera based on the same libretto, Beethoven’s Leonore (later Fidelio), presented during precisely the same period. Surviving manuscripts that include the opera’s score and original performing parts, as well as Lobkowitz family letters, also contribute vital information.

Key words
Lobkowicz, 7th Prince Lobkowitz, house theatre, Vienna, opera, Ferdinando Paër, Leonora, L’amor conjugale, Lorenzo Sacchetti, Lucas Piazza, Anton Wranitzky, Beethoven

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Love that could endure separation and fear, virtue that could overcome injustice and cruelty – these were the guiding ideas of Jean-Nicholas Bouilly’s 1798 narrative about a courageous heroine, Léonore, who disguised as a man penetrates a fortress prison, confronts a tyrant on the verge of murdering a prisoner, and ultimately frees that prisoner, her husband. These ideas inspired several operas within a short time span, including the one by Ferdinando Paër that is the subject of this essay. The triumph of love and virtue in a time of war against an implacable and tyrannical foe was the ideal, or perhaps the hope, that animated an important but little known series of private performances of this opera in the spring of 1806, when it seemed that the foe, Napoleon Bonaparte, held the winning hand. The sources that have enabled me to reconstruct this story reside primarily in the Lobkowicz Archives and Music Archive, and include musical manuscripts, family letters, and accounting documents.1

In the turbulent autumn of 1805, Austria’s war with France moved into a disastrous phase that brought the conflict directly home to Vienna and its inhabitants, not excepting the household of Franz Joseph Maximilian, 7th Prince Lobkowitz, and his wife Caroline. Princess Caroline’s favorite brother, the Fieldmarshal Karl von Schwarzenberg, led troops in the battle at Ulm in early October, from which he and 6,000 cavalry managed to escape the crushing defeat of the Austrian army. His brother-in-law Prince Lobkowitz joined him afterwards near the German border, and from there on 29 October Lobkowitz reported to his wife, “Karl advises us to stay at Raudnitz or Prague to wait on events, but for the present to send neither the children nor anything else to Vienna [...].”2 Shortly thereafter, on 13 November, Napoleon invaded Vienna, staying himself at Schönbrunn and quartering important officers in the city’s semi-abandoned palaces; General Pierre-Augustin Hulin, who was appointed commander of the city, took over the palace belonging to Prince Lobkowitz.3 Not until the middle of January, after the French victory at Austerlitz, did the occupiers finally leave, and Lobkowitz returned to inspect his home and, as his wife wryly commented, to allow “the French air to evaporate”.4

But at the peak of the conflict, as her husband and brother consulted at the edge of a battlefield, Caroline was at home in Bohemia, reading Jean-François Marmontel’s Régence du duc d’Orléans, and reflecting on the nature of courage.5 She wrote to her hus-

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1 Archival materials cited in this paper stem from two main sources: the Lobkowiczová Roudničtí Rodinný Archív [LRRA–Roudnice Lobkowicz Family Archives] and the Lobkowicz Ústřední Účtárna [LÚÚ–Lobkowicz Central Accounting Office], now held at Roudnice (or “Raudnitz” in family letters and documents) and Nelahozeves castles in the Czech Republic. Music manuscripts preserved in the Music Archive are cited by their inventory numbers, which begin with “X”, referring to Room X (ten) of the old Lobkowicz Library formerly at Roudnice.

2 “Charles nous conseille de rester à Raudnitz ou à Prague pour attendre les événements mais de ne pas envoyer jusqu’à présent ni les enfans, ni rien à Vienne [...].” Letter of 29 October 1805. LRRA D/197.

3 Many expenses incurred during the “Einquartierung” of General Hulin in Prince Lobkowitz’s palace, from 14 November through 29 December 1805, are recorded in Lobkowitz account records. LÚÚ 1806/938 – Box 910.

4 “[...] il faut que l’air français s’évapore.” Letter of 10 January 1806. LRRA D/200.

5 Jean-François Marmontel’s Régence du duc d’Orléans was published earlier in 1805 as volume 1 of the Oeuvres posthumes de Marmontel.
band, “Marmontel says there are three kinds of courage. That of the heart, which braves dangers; that of the soul, which sustains it through events; and that of the spirit, which gives force and assurance to resolutions, resilience to the will. I know few people who possess these three types of courage; without flattering you, you have them my beloved, and Karl; I have the second, and perhaps the others a little bit.”

During this period of anxiety, separation, and reflection, Caroline was not alone in the family castle at Raudnitz; Ferdinando Paër, Antonio Brizzi, and a few other singers from that season’s opera productions were still in residence there. Paër and Brizzi had been artistic collaborators since the 1801 premiere of Paër’s opera *Achille*, with Brizzi in the title role. Paër had become a friend of the Lobkowitz household at around the same time, and in 1802 the new house theatre in Prince Lobkowitz’s Vienna palace opened with Paër’s opera *La testa riscaldata*. It is not difficult to imagine conversations that may have arisen around the topic of Bouilly’s Léonore, a heroine possessed of all three of Marmontel’s “espèces de courage”, and subject of three new operas. The first, by Paër, had premiered in Dresden on 3 October 1804, the very same day that he was introduced to the eighty musicians of the Elector’s Hofkapelle as their new Kapellmeister; in a letter to Lobkowitz the previous day, Paër mentioned that his new opera, in which “the music pleases everyone”, was about to open, and that the star of the opera – his wife, prima donna Francesca Riccardi Paër – had taken to calling herself “Madama Capellmeisterin”. The second version, by Giovanni Simon Mayr, had debuted in Padua that summer, but may not yet have been known within the Lobkowitz circle. The third setting was by Ludwig van Beethoven, whose premiere in Vienna would be undermined that November by the arrival of Napoleon’s troops. For the Lobkowitz family, whose house was even then occupied by those troops, the libretto’s ethos of courage in the face of tyranny, and the triumph of conjugal love and virtue over injustice, provided comfort and inspiration. Whatever discussions and persuasion took place at Raudnitz that fall, by the end of the year a decision had been made to produce Paër’s *Leonora* – known in the Lobkowitz circle by its sub-title, *L’amor conjugale* – in their house theatre, and it was among the first items that copyist Wenzel Sukowaty prepared for them in January 1806. The Lobkowitz Library preserves a full score, along with an unbound prompter’s score, and a large set of parts for orchestra and voices.

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8 Sukowaty’s account records the copying of all parts, including additional arias for Florestano, Leonora, and Marcellina. LÜÚ 1807/939, Box 913, no. 233.

9 There are 19 parts for orchestra, and vocal parts for the six main characters. There is no part for Giachino, the under-jailor and Marcellina’s suitor. All these materials bear the inventory number XEc 1.
The stage designer of Vienna’s imperial court theatre, Lorenzo Sacchetti, was commissioned to prepare new sets and other stage materials for the house theatre. Sacchetti had already designed five new operas at the court theatre for Ferdinando Paër, when Prince Lobkowitz hired him in 1802 to design and install a portable theatre for the concert hall of his Vienna palace. This structure, which according to Sacchetti’s invoice included a stage, proscenium, and decorated sets, would almost certainly have been set up at one of the hall’s two ends, either of which had a doorway into another room that would have provided a temporary backstage area. Sacchetti also furnished a stage curtain and fixtures for lighting. His invoices show that Sacchetti hired stagehands, who assisted with the mechanics on the evening of a performance, and – most crucially – took it all down at the end. This creation of a portable theatre that could be erected and collapsed as needed, yet nonetheless featured the same professional ambiance one would encounter at the court theatres, was an elegant solution to the problem of space in a hall that measured only about 15 by 7 meters, and hosted many concerts and other entertainments as well as opera.

As shown in two detailed expense statements, Sacchetti was involved with two production periods for *L’amor conjugale*, one in March and the other in May 1806. The first invoice (see Fig. 1) lists expenses for performances on 26 and 28 March, which include the sets, enough wax to fill 150 lamps for stage lighting, the six stagehands who managed scene changes and other tasks as well as erecting the theatre and taking it down, and a group of significant props – especially Pizzarro’s dispatch box from Act I, Rocco the jailer’s keys, the iron chain and belt that shackle Florestano in the dungeon, and the portrait of Leonora that he clutches to his chest. The second invoice (Fig. 2) numbers each performance between 18 and 28 May, and lists the supplies of wax and manpower for each one.

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11 A full account of the Lobkowitz theatre in Vienna, and Sacchetti’s role in setting it up and maintaining it, will be published in my forthcoming book, *Franz Joseph Maximilian Lobkowitz and Musical Culture in Vienna and Bohemia*.

12 These are at the beginning of a large composite invoice with expenses for at least four different operas produced that season by the Lobkowitz troupe in the city palace, the garden palace, and the public theatre in Baden. LUÚ 1806/958 – Box 911, no. 207.

13 I am very grateful for the expertise of Elizabeth Elmi, who translated Sacchetti’s invoices from the original Italian.
Fig. 1 Lorenzo Sacchetti invoice for theatrical expenses, 26 and 28 March 1806. Lobkowicz Archives, LÚÚ 1806/938 – Box 911, no. 207
Fig. 2 Lorenzo Sacchetti invoice for theatrical expenses, 30 May 1806.
Lobkowicz Archives, LÚÚ 1806/938 – Box 911, no. 207
List —

Of what was required for the opera *L’Amore Conjugale* performed in the house theatre of His Highness the Reigning Prince Joseph of Lobkowitz, on the 26th and 28th days of March 1806 —

Set decoration of the interior of the Castle with practical houses and doors, [Florins] 120

For the set decoration of the dungeon, [having] created and painted all the pieces [of scenery] necessary to the action [on stage] 10

Took down the set decorations for the Ballet and set up those for the Opera 5

For the dress rehearsal 3

For the production on the evening of the 26th [of the] current [month], for 6 men [stagehands] 6

For the second production, for 6 men 6

24 Viennese *Pfund* of wax to fill 150 lamps -- at 2 florins, 30 [kreuzer per *Pfund*] 60

12 Viennese *Pfund* [of wax] consumed between the rehearsal and the production of the Ballet 30

13 Viennese *Pfund* [of wax] consumed in the first production of the Opera 2.30

Set up the aforementioned lighting 3 times, including wicks 6

Requisite [props] for the aforementioned opera:

A set of keys for the jailer 1.12

A wicker chest 3

An iron belt and a tin box, as on the invoice 5

A lock for the aforementioned belt 1.12

A chain to secure the prisoner 3.30

A little cord for the tin box –.6

Letters and dispatches –.12

Portrait with its own portfolio case –.36

Little satin cord for the aforementioned portrait –.12

Wicker-wrapped bottle for the jailer 1.24

Sum: _______  F: 294.54

Carachouf on the 2nd day of May I received the aforementioned sum in: Florins 294.54

Vienna, 1 April 1806 Lorenzo Sacchetti Painter Decorator

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14 Paul Carachouf was Haushofmeister of Prince Lobkowitz’s Vienna palace.
Kathryn L. Libin

Love and Virtue in the Lobkowitz House Theatre: Ferdinando Paër’s L’amor conjugale

Vienna, 30 May 1806

Invoice for all [the work] that I, the undersigned, performed for the theatre in the home of His Highness the Reigning Lord Prince of Lobkowitz in the shows produced in his theatre in the city with Signora Ricardi Pär ——

1. on the 18th day of May, for the opera L’Amor conjugale, set up the Theatre for the rehearsal, including nails and stage screws F. 11.30
   Little cord of black silk, jointed blades for the apron F. −.26
   Wax to fill the lamps; 8 Viennese Pfund at 2 florins, 21 kreuzer per Pfund F. 18.48
   Setting up the lighting, [and] transporting it, including wicks F. 2.30

2. on the 21st day of said [month], the second production, 9 Viennese Pfund of wax, as above F. 21.9
   Setting up the lighting, etc. F. 2.30
   6 men for the set F. 6. 

3. on the 24th day of said [month], the third production, 11 Viennese Pfund of wax, as above F. 25.51
   Setting up the lighting, etc. F. 2.30
   6 men for the set F. 6. 

4. on the 28th day of said [month], the fourth production, 9 Viennese Pfund of wax, as above F. 21.9
   Setting up the lighting, etc. F. 2.30
   6 men for the set F. 6. 

As Sacchetti indicates at the beginning of the first invoice, there were just two main sets required for this opera. First, the Act I interior of the castle fortress where the above-ground action of the opera takes place; and for Act II, the dungeon of the prison where Florestano is held captive. With eight flats for the Act I setting, this is the most complex scenery created for the house theatre. Though the Lobkowicz Archives unfortunately do not preserve designs for this or any other productions in the house theatres, the Theatermuseum in Vienna, appropriately located in the Lobkowitz palace, contains many sketches by Sacchetti, so it’s possible to imagine what he designed for this purpose. For example, he sketched a vaulted interior courtyard with a grilled window, and a thick wall with imposing tower in the background, which forms a suitable match with the libretto’s description of the Act I setting. Sacchetti also drafted numerous sotterranne sketches, including one with a guard leading a manacled prisoner through a dark, vaulted passage with stairways just visible in the background; such a scene corresponds well to the atmosphere of Act II. 


16 Kat. II/88. Theatermuseum, Vienna. Act II, scene 1: “Il teatro rappresenta un oscuro sotterraneo. Alla sinistra dello spettatore esvi uno sporgimento in fuori d’ingresso d’una vecchia prigione, vicino a cui vi sono più grosse pietre. Dall’altro lato e dirimpetto v’è un simile sporgimento in fuori del tutto rovinoso e attorniato di rottami, che formano una cavità in cui v’è una cisterna [...]. Nel fondo del teatro è situata una doppia porta in cavata in una grossa muraglia, e dalla quale si scende per varj scalini.”
The invoices for costumes from court Garderober Lucas Piazza provide further useful information about the Lobkowitz production of *L’amor conjugale*. These are lengthy, informative documents in which Piazza presents detailed lists of costume materials, enumerating the yards of cloth required for special styles of dress, with linings, trims, colors, and fabrics; no expense was spared in this realm of production either. In the invoice shown here, Piazza names the singers but not their roles (Fig. 3); fortunately, the score and vocal parts are inscribed with names of the performers so it is possible to assign most of these garments properly. We thus find a costume in grey cloth for Antonio Brizzi as Florestano, and a man’s frock coat, waistcoat, and stockings, also in drab colors, along with a “Titusperücke”, or short-haired wig, and black velvet beret for Louisa Müller in her role as Fedele/Leonora. Lobkowitz house singer Lodovico Verri performed the role of Rocco, wearing a “Spanish” jacket and brown stockings. The most elaborate costume was that created for the only openly female character, Marianne Auernhammer as Marcelina, who opens the opera with a tender aria expressing her love for Fedele. She wears an “altdeutsches Frauenkleid”, consisting of a skirt of ponceau red cashmere with muslin bodice, and a black velvet spencer. The bass Carlo Angrisani likely sang the role of the Minister, Don Fernando. A second Brizzi, associated with white pantaloons, is also on the list, and that is certainly the tenor Lodovico Brizzi, Antonio’s older brother, as Pizarro. For the performances in May, Piazza indicates in a separate note that he loaned the troupe fourteen additional outfits and some accessories. He also took charge of having many items laundered for re-use.

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17 LÚÚ 1807/939 – Box 913, no. 24.
18 The transcription included here leaves out much of this wealth of detail, which will be published elsewhere.
19 The “coiffeur à la Titus” became popular with men and women alike during the 1790s.
20 LÚÚ 1806/938 – Box 911, no. 206.
Fig. 3 Lucas Piazza invoice for costume expenses, 18 April 1806.
Lobkowicz Archives, LÚÚ 1807/939 – Box 913, no. 24
Conto
über nachfolgend auf Befehl Seiner Durchlaucht Herrn Herrn Fürsten/von Lobkowitz p.p. gelieferte Theatral-Schneiderarbeit
1806
den 18. April Bey der ersten Vorstellung der Oper Amor conjugale [sic] für
Anton Prizzi ein Kollet, und lange Hosen gemacht, Macherlohn 6
fuer eine schwarzlederme Gürtel mit messingener Schnalle
ausgelegt 3
Für Mlle Müller einen Gehrock, Weste, und Hosen von trappfarben
Tuch gemacht, Macherlohn 7
Für 1 Paar blau wollene Strümpfe ausgelegt 2
, 1 Paar lederne Stiffleten 5
, 1 lederne Gürtel mit messingener Schnalle 2 30
, 1 Titusperüke – die aber Mlle Müller behalten hat 8
, 1 schwarz sammetenes Biret, sammt Sammet, und Zugehör 6
Für Monsieur Wery Vater ein spanisches Röckel, und Hosen
von braunem Barkan gemacht, Macherlohn 6
Für die Fräule von Auerhammer ein altdeutsches Frauenkleid gemacht, Macherlohn 5
5 Ellen ponceau rothen Kasamir zum Rock erkauft Elle a 5 F 25
4 Ellen Musselin zum Fürtuch, und Hemd mit langen
Ermeln Elle a 1 F 45 Xr 7
1 Elle schwarzen Papieratlas zu Rockgarnirung 1 12
¾ Elle schwarze Sammet zum Spenzer Elle a 4 F 30 Xr 3 22
1 Paar blau wolle Strümpfe für den Angrisani
erkauf pr 2
2 weiße Pantalopenhosen für Mons: Wery, und Mons: Prizzi
putzen lassen a 45 Xr 1 30

The expense records of Lobkowitz Kapellmeister Anton Wranitzky fill in further significant aspects of these events.21 As he normally did for opera productions, he hired an extra twenty orchestral musicians in the March performances, paying them each three gulden per service, and contracting them for three full rehearsals (“3 grosse Proben”) as well as the two productions (Fig. 4). Because Prince Lobkowitz already had violinists and cellists on his staff, Wranitzky hired only three further violins and no cellists. The score required a full wind section, with trumpets and timpani.

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21 LÚÚ 1806/938 – Box 911, no. 189.
Fig. 4 Anton Wranitzky, account of expenses for musicians, 30 March 1806. Lobkowicz Archives, LÚÚ 1806/938 – Box 911, no. 189
Music Account for the presented opera L’amor conjugale

3 Violins
2 Violas
2 Contrabasses
2 Oboes
2 Flutes
2 Clarinets
2 Bassoons
2 Horns
2 Trumpets
1 Timpani
20 Persons

Each person for one service at 3 florins makes 60 f.
3 full rehearsals 2 productions in total: . . . 5 services 300 f
Instrument porter at 1 f per service 5 f
Timpani porter d[itto] 5 f
Extra pay for Kromer of 1 f per service 5 f
Preparation of small spinet 5 f

Sa: 320 f
Approved. Vienna 30 March 1806
FJ: Prince Lobkowitz mpia

Extra expenses noted at the bottom of the list show the usual payments to instrument porters, including one for the timpani, as well as a supplemental fee paid to the distinguished violinist and Kapellmeister Franz Krommer, plus tuning for the little spinet kept in the hall to accompany recitatives. Wranitzky’s account for the May performances, a composite document in two parts, is even more informative, and contains a couple of fascinating new insights. The first list, approved by Prince Lobkowitz on 2 June 1806, is a snapshot of the important dates, events, and costs, with references (“Lit[tera] A”, etc.) to the more detailed “Beilage” (Supplement) that follows (Figs. 5–6).
Fig. 5 Anton Wranitzky, “Expense List for music performed in the month of May 1806.” Lobkowicz Archives, LÚÚ 1806/938 – Box 911, no. 189
Fig. 6 Anton Wranitzky, “Supplement for music performed in the month of May 1806.” Lobkowicz Archives, LÚÚ 1806/938 – Box 911, no. 189
Expense List for music performed in the month of May 1806, thus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17 May</td>
<td>Rehearsal of Amor Conjugale</td>
<td>65 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 May</td>
<td>Production of Amor Conjugale</td>
<td>65 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 May</td>
<td>Rehearsal in Redouten Saal for the Accademie of Madame Paër</td>
<td>143 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 May</td>
<td>Production of that Accademie</td>
<td>143 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 May</td>
<td>Amor Conjugale</td>
<td>65 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 May</td>
<td>Rehearsal in Redouten Saal for the Accademie</td>
<td>65 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 May</td>
<td>Production of that Accademie</td>
<td>65 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 May</td>
<td>Last production in honor of Her Majesty</td>
<td>65 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 May</td>
<td>Rehearsal of Segreto</td>
<td>65 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 May</td>
<td>Morning Correctur-rehearsal of the Ballet</td>
<td>65 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 May</td>
<td>Evening Production of Segreto</td>
<td>65 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rehearsal of Ballet with dancing</td>
<td>65 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extra for instrument transport</td>
<td>3 f</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 964 f

Approved. Vienna 2 June 1806.
FJ: Prince Lobkowitz mpia

Supplement
For music performed in the month of May 1806

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17 May</td>
<td>Rehearsal of Amor Conjugale</td>
<td>60 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extra pay for Krommer</td>
<td>1 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instrument porter including Katl</td>
<td>2 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Timpani porter</td>
<td>1 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grams contrabass porter</td>
<td>1 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 May</td>
<td>Production of Amor Conjugale</td>
<td>65 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 May</td>
<td>Rehearsal in Redouten Saal for the Accademie</td>
<td>65 f</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
of Madame Paër
9 Violins
4 Violas
3 Contrabasses
3 Cellos
2 Flutes
2 Oboes
2 Clarinets
2 Bassoons
2 Horns
2 Trumpets
1 Timpani
32 Persons at 3 f [each] 96 f
Extra pay for Krommer, Instrument porter with Katl, timpani porter and contrabass, as above 5 f
Chorus 6 boys at 2 f [each] 12 f
10 men at 3 f [each] 30 f 143 f 143 f Lit C
20 d° Production of said Accademie 143 f Lit D
21 d° Production of Amor Conjugale as above Lit B 65 f Lit E
481 f
[next page]
Latus 481 f
24 May Amor Conjugale as above Lit B 65 f Lit F
26 d° d° 65 f Lit G
28 d° Last production /: in honor of Her Majesty :/ 65 f Lit H
29 Rehearsal of Segreto as above Lit B: 65 f Lit I
30 Morning Correctur-Rehearsal of the Ballet 65 f Lit K
d° Evening Production of Segreto 65 f Lit L
31 Ballet: Rehearsal with dancing 65 f Lit M
6 carriages to garden palace with wait time 25 f
Extra for transporting instruments 3 f
483 f

Latus 481 f
Sa: 964 f

Supplement to the Music Account
For the month of May 1806

A composite document with cross-referencing of this type is unusual for Wranitzky, but I suspect that the unusual circumstances – an extraordinary number of major rehearsals and performances within a very short period – made it necessary. These included not only a remarkable number of presentations of L’amor conjugale, but also an additional opera, Il segreto, and a substantial, though unnamed ballet. Among the musicians hired was the violinist Krommer again, as well as the contrabass player Anton Grams, for
whom a porter was provided to carry his instrument. Beyond the internal expenses for the house theatre is an “Accademie der Madame Paër”, held on 20 May in the imperial court’s Redoutensaal. The engagement of Francesca Riccardi Paër, the celebrated prima donna of the Dresden court opera for whom Paër had originally conceived the role of Leonora, is confirmed both here and in Sacchetti’s title on his 30 May expense list, which refers specifically to the participation of “Signora Ricardi Pär” in the May performances of *L’amor conjugale*. Her appearance at the Lobkowitz theatre in a role that she created, which had not yet been seen in Vienna, would have made this opera an outstanding attraction of the concert season, and likely explains the unusually high number of performances.

Perhaps in recompense for her participation in his house opera production, Lobkowitz hired a 16-voice chorus and a substantial orchestra of 32 extra players to accompany Riccardi Paër for her public concert. The participation of his own players is also suggested in the concert’s programme, which along with various numbers from Paër’s operas included a potpourri for two cellos featuring Lobkowitz cellists Anton and Nicholas Kraft. This special academy would have been for the prima donna’s own benefit, unlike another appearance she made on 25 May for a charity concert of the Wohltätigkeits-Anstalten, supported by the Empress Marie Therese, and also held in the Redoutensaal. The presence of Madame Riccardi Paër in Vienna was recorded in the *Journal des Luxus und der Moden*, which confirms all of her engagements, and adds further details as well as a compliment for the Lobkowitz ensemble:

> We have renewed our very pleasant acquaintance with Madame Pär of Dresden; she has been here for some weeks, and appeared several times with great success in her husband’s opera *L’amor conjugale* at Prince Lobkowitz’s. On 20 May she gave an academy for her benefit, in which she and Brizzi from Munich sang some arias from the opera *Achille*. As Prince Lobkowitz entrusted the accompaniment to his own orchestra, this academy ranked among the most accomplished that we have heard in a long time. On 25 May Madame Pär sang with Brizzi some of the main scenes from the opera *Sofonisba* in the large Redoutensaal for the benefit of the poor.

The final significant aspect of the Lobkowitz season of *L’amor conjugale* also involves the empress. According to Wranitzky’s list of expenses, the fifth performance of the opera on 28 May was presented expressly for Marie Therese (“Letzte Production wegen Ihre...”)


Majestät”). As John A. Rice has pointed out in his book about her, Marie Therese loved Bouilly’s libretto and had been kept informed of Paër’s progress with his new opera as he worked on it in 1804; Paër made sure that she received a copy of it that same year, and had hoped that she would help arrange a public staging of it in Vienna. Since such a performance never materialized, the Lobkowitz production would have been her first opportunity to hear the opera, with its original Leonora heading the cast. The attendance of the empress at a house theatre performance would have been a considerable honor, and not only because of her rank. Marie Therese was a somewhat retiring figure who preferred the intimacy of her family circle and seems to have made relatively few excursions into Viennese society. But her involvement with Paër and his setting of this libretto since 1804 would have made this production an irresistible opportunity for her to hear the words and music come to life.

It is also important to note that Marie Therese’s interest in Bouilly’s libretto extended not only to Paër, but to Beethoven as well. Beethoven’s opera, Leonore, was originally scheduled to premiere on the empress’s name day, 15 October 1805. In arguing for that performance, the author of the German-language version of the libretto, court secretary Joseph von Sonnleithner, had written to the censor of Vienna’s police, “I have thoroughly adapted this opera from the French original of Bouilly, primarily because Her Majesty the Empress and Queen finds the original very beautiful and assured me that no opera text had ever given her so much pleasure.” As misfortune would have it, the postponement of Leonore’s premiere to 20 November meant that Marie Therese and most of Vienna’s music-loving nobility, including Prince Lobkowitz, had left Vienna before the arrival of the French army, and Beethoven’s audience instead included the cream of Napoleon’s officer corps. But come spring, it would have been possible to hear both Beethoven and Paër’s works in extremely close proximity, particularly in March when the opening Beethoven production followed directly upon those of Paër:

26, 28 March – L’amor conjugale, Lobkowitz house theatre
29 March, 10 April – Leonore, Theater an der Wien
18, 21, 24, 26, 28 May – L’amor conjugale, Lobkowitz house theatre

It is unclear whether Prince Lobkowitz himself actually heard Beethoven’s Leonore in this period. It is possible that he might have attended the first performance, on 29 March, since his two evenings of L’amor conjugale had wrapped up the previous day. The opportunity to hear the two operas back to back would have aroused keen interest, particularly as the soprano Louise Müller appeared in both of them, singing the role of Leonora in Paër’s version, and Marzelline in Beethoven’s; such a feat would definitely have demonstrated her own courage and heroism. But it is unlikely that Lobkowitz or his wife heard

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the performance on 10 April, since their youngest son Karl was gravely ill and indeed died the following day.

Francesca Riccardi Paër would join the Lobkowitz troupe that fall at Raudnitz, where she again sang the role of Leonora. The opera remained in the repertoire of the Lobkowitz theatre, with account records confirming further performances in 1807 and 1809. Other names on the parts that date from one or more of the later performances suggest further links to Beethoven’s opera (Figs. 7–8). At some point “Sig Radichi” was inscribed on the part for Florestano; the tenor Julius Radichi would perform the same role as Florestan in Fidelio in its 1814 revival. On the part for Pizzarro, alongside the name “Luigi” (Lodovico) Brizzi, appears the name “Sigr Vogl”, indicating another singer, Johann Michael Vogl, who would take on the same role in the 1814 production. Both Radichi and Vogl are linked to the Lobkowitz household through multiple performances in other operas and academies.

In February 1809, Paër’s opera was presented publicly for the first time in Vienna, with sets by Lorenzo Sacchetti at the court theatre, and received several performances during that and the following season. But as we are well aware, the return of Beethoven’s Fidelio in its final revised form in 1814 would permanently overshadow Paër’s L’amor conjugale. We must give the Lobkowitz production considerable credit for sustaining interest in this compelling opera throughout the period, and for keeping a significant group of singers and musicians, some of whom would prove influential in bringing Fidelio back to the stage, fully engaged with its narrative. Among the many differences between the two works, one of the most important is surely that Beethoven’s, with its “Prisoners’ Chorus”, and its rousing public finale in the 1814 version, took on an ethos of political liberation that resonated with the Viennese public during the increasingly victorious War of the 6th Coalition. L’amor conjugale, on the other hand, remained a domestic drama. Its interlocking love plots, of Leonora for her husband, and of Marcellina for her presumed fiancé Fedele, receive nearly equal weight. This becomes especially clear in Act II, when Leonora and Florestano are locked together into the prison by Pizzarro, and Marcellina must act to rescue them both. The cardinal virtue that illuminates this opera, it turns out, is courage; displayed by the man who survives a harsh and lengthy imprisonment, and by the two women, motivated by love, who finally secure his release. Marmontel’s “three kinds of courage” – of heart, soul, and spirit – emerge potently in these three characters, and we can understand why they gripped the imaginations of their devoted listeners.

27 Costume record of Lucas Piazza, LÚÚ 1808/940 – Box 915, no. 213; and expenses for erecting the theatre and extra decoration from a Lobkowitz staff theatre painter, Caspar Melchior, LÚÚ 1809/941 – Box 917, no. 209.
Fig. 7 Act II title page of part for Florestano in *L’amor conjugale*. Lobkowicz Music Archive, inv. no. XEc 1

Fig. 8 Act II title page of part for Pizzarro in *L’amor conjugale*. Lobkowicz Music Archive, inv. no. XEc 1
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