

## NORMA – A MULTI FACETED PERSONA

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### Abstract

This essay offers a detailed account of Bellini's *Norma*, focusing specifically on the title character. It describes the different facets of Norma: a priestess leader, a daughter, a mother, a friend and a woman scorned by her lover. It discusses the irony in Norma's status, showing that in each of the five facets that constitute her personality there are two opposing states: the noble- authoritative state versus the fragile-wounded state. All Norma's arias are analyzed with a special emphasis on how Bellini fit the different arias and ensembles to match Norma's complex character and how Bellini's music constructs Norma's dramatic persona.

**KEYWORDS:** Bellini's *Norma*; Norma's dramatic persona.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** "Norma" de Bellini; a multifacetada "Norma".

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## INTRODUCTION

When we first encounter Norma the priestess in Bellini's most famous aria, *Casta Diva*, we only see the adored Norma who is like a goddess to her people. We are oblivious of the other personas that are hidden underneath. But Norma the noble leader and priestess, has also broken her vows of chastity: she is the secret lover of Pollione, the Roman enemy, and the mother of his two children. She hid this secret from her father and tribe and went as far as almost murdering her own children in order to save them from their dismal fate. Finally, she could not deal with the fact that her lover had betrayed her. Is the ultimate trigger to Norma's fate her desperate, unrequited love to Pollione? Or is it a result of her ideals and acute sense of morality?

*Norma* is well rooted in classical tragedy. She is the tragic hero who, though not perfect, is certainly in some way morally superior to most of the audience (a high priestess). She also exhibits the tragic flaw (having a relationship with the enemy) which leads to some kind of *catastrophe* and a complete reversal of fortune from happiness to disaster.<sup>2</sup> But Norma the heroine is also an outcome of the pre-romantic era of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. *Norma* is a Greek tragedy that was created with pre-romantic spectacles. *Norma's* essence is the confrontation between the modern woman and the man from the ancient world.

Norma's story operates on two levels – the personal and the public. Norma is a private woman but also, a public priestess, a spiritual leader that is also a mother and a beloved wife. Norma the woman demands revenge. A vengeful woman is typical to the modern heroine of the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, she acts against much greater powers than herself so while she provides life, she simultaneously brings death. Norma can exist only in a society that gives place for a sacrifice. The story takes place in a dark and misty night in which the moon, lost time and memories are its heart. This Druid world glides towards the modern world, since it is more a work of the future than of the past. Therefore, Norma is a heroine but not a sacrifice.

This article describes the different facets of Norma: a priestess leader, a daughter, a mother, a friend and a woman scorned by her lover. It discusses the irony in Norma's status, showing that in each of the five facets that constitute her personality there are two opposing

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<sup>2</sup> [http://web.viu.ca/atkinsona/classical\\_tragedy.htm](http://web.viu.ca/atkinsona/classical_tragedy.htm)

states: the noble- authoritative state versus the fragile-vulnerable state. All Norma's arias are analyzed with a special emphasis on how Bellini fit the different arias and ensembles to match Norma's complex character and how Bellini's music constructs Norma's dramatic persona.

### Literary Review

Kimbell's detailed book<sup>3</sup> provides a biographical and cultural context to Bellini's Norma. It presents a synopsis of the opera, examines its origin, artistic qualities, musical structure, contemporary reactions and performance history. General sources such as Grout<sup>4</sup>, Knapp<sup>5</sup>, Hirshberg<sup>6</sup>, Harewood<sup>7</sup>, Dent<sup>8</sup>, Kerman<sup>9</sup>, Donington<sup>10</sup>, and Arblaster<sup>11</sup>, stress the central conflict in the opera and interpret some of the major arias. Deathridge<sup>12</sup> describes the importance of the *bel canto* in general and focuses on Bellini's influence in particular. Many of the articles that have been written about Norma discuss performance issues, mainly the fact that only a handful of artists' voices are capable to sing the role of Norma.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>3</sup> David Kimbell, *Vincenzo Bellini: 'Norma'*, Cambridge University Press, (Cambridge, 1998). See also Stephen A. Willier, *Vincenzo Bellini: A Research and Information Guide*, Routledge, (New York, 2002); John Rosselli, *The Life of Bellini*, Cambridge University Press, (New York, 1996) for critical biography of Bellini seen in his historical context.

<sup>4</sup> Donald Jay Grout, *A short History of Opera*, Columbia University Press, (New York, 1965).

<sup>5</sup> Merrill J. Knapp, *The Magic of Opera*, Princeton University, (New York, 1972).

<sup>6</sup> Jehoash Hirshberg, *Music and Drama in Opera*, The Hebrew University and the Arts Institute, (Jerusalem, 1974). [Hebrew]

<sup>7</sup> Earl of Harewood, ed., *The New Kobbé's Complete Opera Book*, Putnam's Son, (New York, 1976).

<sup>8</sup> Edward J. Dent, *The Rise of Romantic Opera*, Cambridge University Press, (Cambridge, 1976).

<sup>9</sup> Joseph Kerman, *Opera as Drama*, University of California Press, (Berkeley, 1988).

<sup>10</sup> Robert Donington, *Opera and Its Symbols*, Yale University, (Connecticut, 1990).

<sup>11</sup> Anthony Arblaster, *Viva la liberta! politics in opera*, Verso, (London 1992).

<sup>12</sup> John Deathridge, "Reminiscences of Norma," in *Das musikalische Kunstwerk Geschichte Festschrift Carl Dahlhaus*, (Laaber, 1988), 223-7.

<sup>13</sup> Nicholas E. Limansky, 'Norma', *The Opera Quarterly*, 21, no. 3 (2005), 551-5, reviews a recording of Bellini's *Norma*, performed by the Orchestra and Chorus of La Scala under the direction of Gianandrea Gavazzeni and with the feisty Turkish soprano Leyla Gencer (1928-2008). James A. Drake, 'A perfect voice: Ponselle in Norma', *The Opera Quarterly*, 14, no. 1(1997), 67-78, mentions Rosa Ponselle (1897-1981) an extraordinary opera singer, who was the toast of town in 1927 due to her triumphant lead in *Norma*. Susan Rutherford, 'La cantante delle passioni': Giuditta Pasta and the idea of operatic performance', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, 19, no. 2 (2007), 107-138, explores the artistry of the Italian singer Giuditta Pasta (1797-1865), an acknowledged *diva del mondo* during the 1820s, famed not only for an extraordinary if flawed voice, but also for the performance gesture modes.

Littlejohn<sup>14</sup> claims that the difficulty in performing Norma's role lies in its dramatic challenge no less than in its musical challenge. Therefore, perhaps "only six sopranos (Giuditta Pasta, Maria Malibran, Giulia Grisi, Lilli Lehmann, Rosa Ponselle, and Maria Callas) met both challenges at once and have achieved something near to the full potential of this role."<sup>15</sup>

Other articles about Norma deal with gender issues, politics, femininity and friendship. Clément<sup>16</sup> portrays the feminine image of recalcitrant women, including Norma. Smith<sup>17</sup> finds correlation between love and politics. She compares between *Norma* and *Aida* since "they share the trope of romantic triangulation in which one man is the shared object of desire between two women."<sup>18</sup> André<sup>19</sup> notes the emergence of a different type of a female heroine during the Romantic period, the 'second woman'. André also rejects the idea of the operatic heroine 'as only or exclusively weak and helpless', preferring to envisage her character as more complex than one who simply suffers and 'expires'. Lalli<sup>20</sup> analyzes the enigma of the two women Adalgisa and Norma. He claims that their personalities complement each other and that Adalgisa is not needed in the finale because Norma has overcome the temptation to yield to the treacherous side of her character and instead, has made the ultimate sacrifice of acknowledging her higher calling. Yohalem<sup>21</sup> describes the origins of Norma's image, thus relating to Soumet's play and the differences between the adaptation of the original plot and Bellini's libretto. He also relates to the history of the Druids and their beliefs while emphasizing the theatrical aspects of the drama. Yohalem discusses the complex nature of Bellini's heroine as priestess, lover and leader, but he does not examine the intensity of each of her relationships and their

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<sup>14</sup> David Littlejohn, 'The Ultimate Art' in *Essays around and about Opera*, University of California Press, (Berkeley, 1992), 156-171.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 156. See also, Alan Blyth, 'Norma: Maria Callas', *Opera* (2004), 52-3.

<sup>16</sup> Catherine Clément, 'Furies and Gods, or Wanings of the Moon', in *Opera or the Undoing of Women*. tr. Betsy Wing, University of Minnesota, (Minneapolis, 1988), 102-6.

<sup>17</sup> Patricia Juliana Smith, 'O Patria Mia: Female Homosociality and the Gendered Nation in Bellini's *Norma* and Verdi's *Aida*', in *The Work of Opera: Genre, Nationhood, and Sexual Difference*, ed. Richard Dellamora and Daniel Fischlin, Columbia University Press, (New York, 1997), 93-114.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 93.

<sup>19</sup> Naomi André, *Voicing Gender*, Indiana University Press, (Bloomington, 2006), xiii.

<sup>20</sup> Richard Lalli, 'The Norma Conquests', *Opera News*, 70, no.8 (2006), 34-8.

<sup>21</sup> John Yohalem, 'The three faces of Norma' *Opera News*, 66, no. 5 (2001), 34-7.



importance in understanding her personality. Moreover, His discussion does not deal with Bellini's musical treatment of the text.

My article examines the multifaceted nature of Norma's personality from five different aspects: as a leader, daughter, mother, friend and lover. The article focuses on Norma's character as it is presented within the scope of this specific opera. It does not focus on Norma's place within Bellini's oeuvre as a whole, within the *bel canto* repertory, nor its place in 19th-century opera in general. I will illustrate how the various musical moments that Bellini devotes to Norma exhibit the different sides of her personality. Norma is wholly committed to each of the roles that she takes upon herself. As the plot unfolds, Norma's qualities are gradually revealed both to the listener and to Norma herself. Norma discovers the different layers of her character through different kinds of love: love of her people, the Druids, through bold and authoritative leadership, trust in her father, love rooted in deep responsibility for her own children, affection and companionship with her friend Adalgisa, and most of all, a passionate and an existential love to the Roman proconsul, Pollione. My reading of the opera portrays Norma's different facets through the recitatives and arias that are listed in the Table 1.

### **Norma's multifaceted personality**

Norma's voice is heard in 22 different recitatives and arias in the opera. She sings 4 recitatives and arias to her people, 4 recitatives and arias concerning her children, 6 arias and duets about her relationship with her best friend Adalgisa and 8 arias and duets with or about her faithless lover Pollione. Since the only direct dialogue between Norma and her father, Oroveso, occurs at the Finale, I will discuss their relationship in the next section. Table 1 is a survey of Norma's arias at her other different roles:

| Priestess & leader  | Mother  | Friend   | Lover  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <p><b>Act I:</b> (1)<sup>22</sup> <i>Sediziose voci</i> – CD 1: Tr. 7<sup>23</sup></p> <p>Norma's dialogue with her father, trying to maintain peace and discouraging her people from going to war</p> <p>[Norma's entrance, recitative starting with a-capella, dotted rhythm, full orchestration]</p> | <p>(5) <i>Vanne, e li cela entrambi</i> – Act I, CD 2: Tr. 5</p> <p>An agitated instrumental introduction to a recitative arioso, in which Norma asks Clothilde to hide her children</p>  | <p>(6) <i>Adalgisa</i> – Duet, Act I, CD 2: Tr. 6</p> <p>Adalgisa tells her secret to Norma.</p> <hr/> <p>(7) <i>Oh! Rimembranza!</i> – Act I, CD 2: Tr. 7</p> <p>Aria: Norma remembers how she was entranced when looking at her lover's face</p> <hr/> <p>(8) <i>Ah! Si, fa core-</i> Act I, CD 2: Tr. 8</p> <p>Aria: Norma frees Adalgisa from her vows and sympathizes with her.</p> <hr/> <p>(9) <i>Ma di', l'amato quale fra noi si noma?</i> – Act I, CD 2: Tr. 9</p> <p>Recitative: "Tell me the young you love, which one of us is he?"</p> | <p>(4) <i>Ah! Bello a me ritorna</i> – Act I, CD 1: Tr. 10</p> <p>Aria coloratura to Pollione: "come back as you were then".</p> <hr/> <p>(10) <i>Oh non tremare</i> – Act I, CD 2: Tr. 10</p> <p>Aria coloratura: Norma accuses Pollione of betrayal</p> <hr/> <p>(12) <i>Perfido!</i> – Traitor Act I, CD 2: Tr. 14 [Duet]</p> <hr/> <p>(13) <i>Vanne, si: mi lascia, indegno-</i> Act I, CD 2: Tr. 15</p> <p>Aria: Norma banishes Pollione and curses him</p> |
| <p>(2) <i>Casta Diva</i> – CD 1: Tr. 8</p> <p>Norma asks the chaste goddess to spread peace upon earth.</p> <p>[Cantabile aria in F Major, introduction of a flute solo with strings accompaniment, dense texture at the modulation to Dm]</p>  | <p>(14) <b>Act II:</b> <i>Dormono entrambi</i> – Act II, CD 3: Tr. 2</p> <p>Norma approaches her children with a knife with the intent to kill them while they are sleeping</p> <p>[Low strings and clarinets accompany the</p> | <p>(11) <i>Oh! Di qual sei tu vittima-</i> Act I, CD 2: Tr. 11</p> <p>Aria: Norma warns her friend against the man who has deceived her.</p>   | <p>(17) <i>Ei tornerà</i> – Act II, CD 3: Tr. 9</p> <p>Recitative: He will come back repentant</p> <hr/>   |

<sup>22</sup> The numbers in brackets exhibit the order of Norma's arias through the opera.

<sup>23</sup> Numbers of tracks in the CD: *Norma*, Sutherland, Pavarotti, Caballé, Ramey; Orchestra and Chorus of the Welsh National Opera, Conducted by R. Bonynghe, Decca 414476-2, 1988.

|  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
|  | recitative preceding the aria <i>Teneri, teneri figli</i> . This aria changes with a recurring recitative in order to express uncertainty]   |  |   |
| <p>(3) Norma stops the people from vengeance. <i>Fine al rito</i> – CD 1: Tr. 9</p> <p>Short aria followed by chorus: Norma Completes the rite and waits to call her people when “God demands the blood of the Romans”.</p> <p>[Orchestrated by brass and percussion in dotted rhythm]</p> | <p>(15) <i>Deh! Con te, con te li prendi</i> – Act II, CD 3: Tr. 4</p> <p>Aria: Norma begs Adalgisa to take her children, support and protect them</p>   | <p>(16) <i>Mi chiami, o Norma!</i></p> <p><i>Deh! Con te, con te li prendi,</i></p> <p><i>Si, fino all’ore estreme</i> –</p> <p>Act II, CD 3: Tr. 3 [Recitative], Tr. 4 [Aria], &amp; Tr. 6 [Duet]</p> <p>Adalgisa asks Norma for mercy of her children and they both promise to be faithful to each other till the end.</p> | <p>(19) <i>In mia man alfin tu sei</i> – Act II, CD 3: Tr. 13</p> <p>Pollione is in her hands. She is the only one who can cut off his bonds. [Aria in F Major]</p>                     |
| <p>(18) <b>Act II:</b> <i>Guerra, Guerra!</i></p> <p>CD 3: Tr. 11</p> <p>Norma, full of anger and vengeance, urges her people to go to war</p> <p>[A choral hymn by Norma and a mixed choir, <i>ff</i>, heavy brass and percussion sections culminates in a pastoral heaven like aura]</p> | <p>(22) <i>Deh! Non volerli vittime</i> –</p> <p>Act II, CD 3: Tr. 18</p> <p>Norma to her father: “Please don’t make them suffer for my heinous crime”</p> <p>(An accompanied aria)</p> <p>Norma’s last words: <i>Ah più non chiedo</i> – “I ask for nothing more, I shall happily mount the pyre” as she separates from her father.</p> |  | <p>(20) <i>Già mi pasco ne’ tuoi sguardi</i> – Act II, CD 3: Tr. 14</p> <p>Duet: Norma takes pleasure in the look that Pollione gives her; she can make him as miserable as she is.</p> |
|  |  |  | <p>(21) <i>Qual cor tradisti, qual cor perdesti</i></p> <p>Duet: Act II, CD 3: Tr. 16</p> <p>“You tried in vain to leave me and now you are with me”</p>                                |

Table 1

The many arias that relate to Pollione emphasize the effect of the troubled relationship on Norma. Norma's love for Pollione forces her to give up everything she has: her position as a revered ruler, her friendship with her assistant Adalgisa, and ultimately, her children. These events take place only after Norma learns of her lover's betrayal. Only then do all her other relationships as leader, friend and mother fall apart as well.

The five facets of Norma's personality: leader, daughter, mother, friend and lover are presented below with an emphasis on text- music relationship.

### **Who Is Norma?**

#### **Norma the Leader**

We are waiting for Norma's entrance. She appears in a dramatic mode as a decisive leader in a set of three sequential sections [*Scena e Cavatina*]: an opening theatrical recitative in *largo e maestoso*, an aria cantabile and an *allegro assai maestoso*. From this point onward, Norma is constantly on stage till the end of the opera, except for scene 1 in Act I which presents Adalgisa and Pollione as lovers. In the opening recitative in E flat major *Sediziose voci*, Norma sings a-cappella while massive orchestral chords in dotted rhythm separate the phrases. Norma urges her people not to hurry for war. She wants to delay the violence and gain some time so as not to fight her enemy who is her lover. The a-cappella singing, which is separate from the accompaniment, signifies Norma being the one and only while the forceful dotted eighth notes reinforce Norma's assertiveness as the undisputed ruler.

Only in measure 10 (Ex. 1) do the winds deviate from the dotted rhythm and begin shifting to prolonged notes, when Norma mentions the "fate of Rome". At first glance, there seems to be no significance to this fact, since the listener is not yet aware of Norma's complex relationship with the Roman ruler. But in retrospect, these hardly noticeable details in the musical texture point to hidden turmoil. When Norma mentions "the fate of Rome", she suddenly realizes that the fate of Rome is linked to her own destiny. Thus, her assertiveness, which is reflected by the dotted rhythm, begins to falter, invaded by a more contemplative, hesitant texture.

Another device that is used to express the underlying tension is the use of tremolo throughout the orchestration. The tremolo appears as the only accompaniment in the strings at three different places, carrying a different interpretation at each appearance: 1) in mm. 16-20, the first tremolo is heard, when Oroveso, Norma's father, asks "for how long will you have us oppressed? Have our homes and temples not been tainted enough by the Roman eagles?" In this instance, the tremolo represents the trembling anger, the thirst for revenge and deep concern that the Romans will interpret their lack of response as a weakness. 2) In mm. 23-25, the second tremolo is heard, when Norma answers: "it will fall to pieces, if any of you dares to unsheathe it before time." The tremolo appears specifically on the words *E infranta cada* ("it will fall in pieces"), and symbolizes the downfall of Norma's people which would most certainly come if an attack is launched too soon. 3) In mm. 35-43, the third tremolo is heard with an ascending dotted figure in the basses; when Norma claims that Rome's fate is known to her from the secret books: "by her own voices it [Rome] will die". While Norma presents her prophetic powers, she is in fact aware of her impossible situation. This time the tremolo represents the downfall of Rome as a roar of victory, but it can be interpreted also as her fear of the unknown as well. In between the tremolo 'sections' there are dramatic responses of chorus (tenors and basses) and orchestra in *ff* (mm. 5-6, 21-22, 27-28 [*marcato assai*], 32-34) sometimes with a shift to a minor mode in the middle of the measure (mm. 5, 27). This sharp division of tremolo only versus full orchestra emphasizes Norma's firmness and positions her as the ultimate figure on stage with minimum interruption during her decisive speech.

This dialogue between Norma and her father leads to Norma's most famous aria, *Casta Diva*.<sup>24</sup> Norma's enchanting aria *Casta Diva* in F major<sup>25</sup> transmits tranquility, faith, and confidence. This is the famous prayer to the goddess who lets the beautiful new moon shine upon the earth and gives the people courage and faith. The aria (Ex. 2) opens with an introduction of 15 measures, scored for strings, flute solo and woodwinds (oboes, clarinets and horns). The rhythm of the violin accompaniment swings in 12/8, the long melodic line is ornamented and spans a wide range of an octave and a half, from f1 to b flat 2. The

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<sup>24</sup> This role is considered one of the most difficult for sopranos and is hard to believe that Maria Callas performed it 89 times. Other references concerning the difficulties of Norma's operatic role: Kimbell, *Norma*, 107-119; Littlejohn, *The Ultimate Art*, 156-171; Drake, *A perfect voice*, 67-78; Limansky, *Norma*, 551-5.

<sup>25</sup> See Hirshberg's analysis of the cavatina, *Music and Drama*, 58-9.

cavatina consists of two verses in strophic form. Bellini constructs a long, drawn-out melody which develops slowly, each musical phrase connecting to the next through a common note that bridges the harmonic changes. At the same time, the harmonic tension gradually intensifies: the verse, which opens with simple harmonic progressions of tonic-dominant, culminates with active harmonic progressions (II6M and II diminished chord) and open chromatic chords.<sup>26</sup>

The pastoral atmosphere in this aria portrays the image of a composed, trustworthy persona. We are introduced here to another side of Norma the leader. While in the opening recitative, Norma comes across as a tough commanding leader, in *Casta Diva*, her feminine side is portrayed as a gentler leader who derives comfort from the Gods and assures her people of a better future. “*Casta Diva* is that miraculous exercise in the balance between *bel canto* and florid vocal tracery.”<sup>27</sup> This aria is the heart of *bel Canto*: very sophisticated singing, less boisterous from the post-romantic one. It is rich with ornaments which are not inserted as subordinate or insignificant material, but represent a psychological state and status. It is the poetic moment when everything stops – time, body and actions. When Norma is alone with the moon, the world is dumbstruck and disappears. The human being becomes a medium of purified expression, using the music that is emanating from him.<sup>28</sup>

While men are calling for a battle, the priestess speaks about divinity that can bring about peace as opposed to anger, selfishness and war that will only bring about destruction. The future lies in the power of forgiveness, self sacrifice and peace. In that sense, *Casta Diva* foreshadows later scenes in the opera and is the basis upon which Bellini constructs his work: Adalgisa's readiness to sacrifice her personal happiness so that Norma can get back what she owns by right and Norma's readiness to send her children with Adalgisa and let the young woman find her bliss with Pollione in Rome flow from the music the audience has already heard in *Casta Diva*.

In the summarizing *allegro assai*, the cabaletta that concludes the *Scena e cavatina* in E flat major, Norma asks her people to complete the rite in the temple (*Fine al rito*).

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<sup>26</sup> Hirshberg, 59-60. See also Knapp's analysis of *Casta Diva*, *The Magic of Opera*, 173, and Littlejohn's description, *The Ultimate Art*, 158-9, 162.

<sup>27</sup> Wallace Brockway and Herbert Weinstock, *The Opera, A History of its Creation and Performance: 1600-1941*, Simon & Schuster, (New York, 1941), 161; same authors in *The world of Opera: The Story of Its Origins and Love of Its Performance*, (Pantheon books, 1962), 148-154; see also Donington, *Opera and Its Symbols*, 82-3.

<sup>28</sup> Earl of Harewood identifies a double prayer in *Casta Diva*, *The New Kobbé's*, 495.

With winds and brass sounding from far away, she promises that her voice will thunder when needed. Again she orders them to wait, using a forceful tone and accompanied by dotted rhythms in the strings. Although we are impressed by Norma's restraint and courage, here comes the moment when an exterior fear steals into Norma's thoughts in the first Act. It occurs at the culmination of the recitative arioso when she says to herself in a small weak voice: "I shall punish him....but my heart will not let me." When Norma mumbles *Ma punirlo il cor non sa* for the duration of six measures, we begin to doubt the leader. There is an immediate change in texture and timbre: the full orchestra and chorus in the *Allegro maestoso* are reduced to a recitative *pp poco più lento* accompanied by strings only. Norma's secret love to the Roman ruler prevents her from leading a rebellion against him.<sup>29</sup>

While Norma of the first Act is introduced as a leader, she does not speak to her people till close to the end of the second Act. That is because she is mostly involved with her personal saga of love. Norma does not share her feelings, doubts or concerns with her family and people until she is certain of her final decision. Only when she realizes that Pollione will never return her love, does she call her people to war: *Guerra, Guerra!* (for a war). Her vendetta stems from her personal grief. The awaited moment of attacking the enemy arrives as Norma, Oroveso and the crowd sing a militant hymn accompanied by a full orchestra in *ff* (Ex. 3). This battle hymn ends with a heavenly pastoral choral on the words *A mirare il trionfo de' figli ecco il Dio sopra un raggio di sol!* ("Behold our god, watching his sons' victory, on a ray of sunshine!")<sup>30</sup> This music, which is fueled by revenge, is moving ahead vigorously by all participants without a break. It is different from Norma's former authoritative singing and accompaniment which is more sustained and controlled.

In sum, Norma's voice as a leader portrays several leadership qualities. When she sings a-cappella, we hear the determined leader; when she is accompanied with full orchestration and dotted rhythm, we hear the authoritative leader; when she is accompanied with brass and extra percussion in *ff*, we hear the leading warrior; and when she sings the serene, symmetrical, lyric aria, we hear a leader with faith, deep in prayer. But there are also fleeting moments of uncertainty that are woven into the Norma's persona as a leader.

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<sup>29</sup> Hirshberg adds that the cavatina represents Norma the priestess, while the cabaletta represents Norma - the woman, *Music and Drama*, 59.

<sup>30</sup> See also Deathridge's interpretation on *Guerra, Guerra! Reminiscences of Norma*, 224.

These moments first sound insignificant, but actually they hint of the complicated situation that will be revealed soon.

### **Norma the Daughter**

The figure of the father and the image of the leader are both central in Romantic Italian opera. The image of a dominant father appears in half of Verdi's operas.<sup>31</sup> Oroveso, Norma's father is the High Priest and a leader himself. He opens and closes the drama and his character is consistent throughout the plot. We encounter his calm, trustworthy persona four times during the opera. In the first three encounters, there is no exhibition of personal emotions between Oroveso and his daughter Norma. Only in the fourth encounter, at the end of Act II, in the Finale, does Oroveso express his emotions. The first time we meet Oroveso is at the beginning of the opera, after the *Introduzione*, (*Ite sul colle, o Druidi*) when he instructs the druids to wait for the 'silver crescent of the new moon' to be revealed. He encourages his people and instills faith that 'Norma will come and (Irminsul) liberate the Gauls from the enemy eagles.' He assures the druids that Norma has the power to determine when and how her people should rise up against the Roman oppressors.

From a musical point of view, the opening scene introduces Oroveso after a long, glorious and majestic instrumental prelude. A lyrical melody in thirds is played in the low strings (mm. 3-6, 13-16) and introduces Oroveso's bass voice at a high register (mm. 46-69), Oroveso is not threatening here. His goal is to instill a feeling of safety and emotional power. The sense of authority that he radiates inspires the Druids to respond, first in unison (mm. 71-74), then in a festive, optimistic prayer in dotted rhythm (mm. 81-92). Tenors and basses sing *marcato con devota fierezza*, and Oroveso joins them *con forza* (mm. 101-138), indicating that he is part of his people. The second time that Oroveso appears is in the middle of Act II: *Guerrieri! A voi venirne*. Again, he advises the soldiers 'to swallow the

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<sup>31</sup> Stephen d. Ellis, *Father-Son Relationship in the Life and Operas of Giuseppe Verdi*, Dissertation, (Union for Experimenting Colleges and Universities, 1987); Robert Erwin Minor, *A Study of the Father-Son Relationship in Giuseppe Verdi's Operas, I Due Foscari, I Masnadieri, and Don Carlos*, Dissertation, (1986); Gerald A. Mendelsohn, 'Verdi the Man and Verdi the Dramatist', *Nineteenth Century Music*, 1, no. 1, (1978), 110-142; Peter Brooks, 'The Grand Inquisitor', *Verdi symposium*, (2001), 613-623; Harold S. Powers, 'Fathers and Sons: A Response to Peter Brooks on the Grand Inquisitor', *Verdi symposium*, (2001), 637-649.



anger' in their hearts so that 'Rome will think that Pollione has died'. The third time Oroveso appears is in Act II - Scene 3 (*Nè compi il rito, o Norma?*). He patiently asks Norma to 'complete the rites and indicate the victim.' He witnesses Norma's uncertainty when she cannot strike Pollione with the sacred knife.

At the end of Act II, Norma addresses her father as *padre*, ignoring their common status as High Priests. Oroveso and the Druids are anxious to know if Norma is guilty. It starts with the bold demand of Oroveso and the Druids *Norma! Deh! Norma, scolpati!* with repeated sixteenth notes in strings and cut off phrases by the chorus. Norma approaches her father in a public confession, and after she reveals her unbelievable secret, she begs him to save his grandchildren, his flesh and blood, even though they are the children of the Roman enemy as well. Oroveso sends her away, calling her *Empia!* (sinful woman) in descending octaves accompanied by a soaring solo oboe. But Norma's pleading in an operatic cadence on the word *padre* is a constitutive moment that lowers the chorus to *sotto voce* in unison and leads up to Norma's last aria *Deh! non volerli vittime* (Ex. 11) in which she presents her ultimate request 'please don't make them suffer'. This aria will be discussed in more detail in the 'mother' section of this article.<sup>32</sup>

In front of the amazed public, Norma does her best to assure her children's future. She is no more a proud decisive leader, but a fragile person. Although Oroveso is astounded and cannot comprehend or accept Norma's betrayal of her duty and her people, he is reconciled at last and promises to take care of his grandchildren. Moreover, he actually sympathizes with Norma's agony and defines the tragedy in serene simplicity: 'Love has conquered,' he asserts in the last minutes of the drama. This moment not only supplies hope for the orphans to be, but stresses the depth of human understanding, responsibility and commitment between father and daughter.

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<sup>32</sup> For the "groundswell" effect in the finale, see Joseph Kerman and Thomas S. Grey 'Verdi's Groundswells', *Analyzing Opera*, Ed. Carolyn Abbate and Roger Parker, University of California Press, (Berkeley, 1989), 154-6.

### A Mother

The second scene of Act I open with the recitative *Vanne, e li cela entrambi* that occurs at Norma's house, far away from the altar. Here we encounter a totally different Norma, a hurt, terrified mother. Norma is troubled by the unknown future of her children, but has no solution for her present situation. She has mixed feelings towards her children: she loves and "hates" them at the same time. Finally, she asks Clotilde her confidant, to hide them.

The instrumental opening preceding the recitative reflects Norma's ambivalent feelings towards her children by displaying abrupt shifts in mood (Ex. 4). A stormy tremolo *agitato* is heard in the strings, as the first violin enters in measure 2 with an ascending melody in *crescendo*, stopping abruptly in measure 6. Oboes and clarinets answer in *piano ralentando*, bringing on a different pace and temperament, their eighth notes whispering of a far away memory, tentatively ending on a fermata (mm. 7-8 & 15-16). As the orchestra stops at measure 16, strings and bassoons declare an ascending a-c-f that descend to g#. This motive which ends with a diminished seventh intensifies the drama and continued by the resumed tremolo in violins and flutes. A diminished seventh chord in measure 20 leads to phrases with numerous pleading sigh-motives. Measure 26 introduces a solo oboe that will soon appear as the countersubject to Norma's recitative. The oboe motive ends in a descending semi-tone which is also emphasized by the first violin group. The tempo of the instrumental introduction is very turbulent while that of the recitative is very hesitant. Bellini portrays Norma the mother, with features that suggest an insecure terrified image: changing tempos, sudden stops, and an orchestral dialogue which ends without resolution, numerous sigh-motives, a-symmetrical phrases and the lamenting timbre of the oboe.

Whenever Bellini desires to emphasize profound emotional situations he uses the orchestra as his tool, as if emotions are too intense to be expressed by words. This is shown in the opening *Introduzione* of Act II (Ex. 5), as well where the orchestra conveys Norma's inner turmoil. Norma's extreme emotional state is expressed by quick changes in contrasting dynamics, from *ff* in m. 1 to *pp* in m. 5; sudden pauses and fermatas after extended chords (m. 2, 4, 11); a continuous ascending melodic line which starts in the bass register and culminates on a leading tone (mm. 5-10, 12-17); and a full texture throughout, the only

exception being the touching cello aria *con dolore*, when the texture is reduced to strings only (mm. 27-41). The lament of the cello fades into a quietly threatening tremolo as Norma appears holding a lamp and a knife, planning to kill her children. This is a terrifying moment, maybe the most breathtaking moment of the whole opera. Killing your own children is far worse than killing yourself in the name of love.

The theme of “the mother killing her children because of the lover/husband who betrayed her” is, of course, an old story. The primary example is Medea but there are dozens of other examples<sup>33</sup>. It is impossible to deal with this issue purely from the point of view of modern motherhood. In ancient Greek thought (carried on to some extent to Europe), the greatest tragedy that could happen to a man is that he would have no male successor.<sup>34</sup> Killing the children is the greatest punishment; in fact, it is the only way a woman lover can punish her male lover. Killing the lover is a much weaker punishment, since even if he dies, he will still have an heir to his name. At the end of this scene, Norma cannot bring herself to murder her children. She is so overwhelmed by the horrific thought that she has almost carried out her intent that she cannot bring herself to sing. Instead, the cello picks up her tune and expresses her feelings.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>33</sup> See the following adaptations and versions:

Margaret Garner was an enslaved African American woman in pre-Civil War America who was notorious (or celebrated) for killing her own daughter rather than allow the child to be returned to slavery. Her story was the inspiration for the novel *Beloved* (1987) by Toni Morrison, as well as for her libretto for the early 21st century opera *Margaret Garner* (2005), composed by Richard Danielpour. See also Francesco Cavalli *Giasone* (opera, 1649); Jean-Baptiste Lully *Thésée* (opera, 1674); Antonio Caldara “Medea in Corinto” (cantata for alto, 2 violins and basso continuo, 1711); Marc-Antoine Charpentier *Médée* (tragédie en musique, 1693); Georg Anton Benda *Medea* (melodrama, 1775) text by Friedrich Wilhelm Gotter; Luigi Cherubini *Médée* (opera, 1797); Saverio Mercadante *Medea* (opera, 1851) libretto by Salvatore Cammarano; Darius Milhaud *Médée* (opera, 1939) text by Madeleine Milhaud; Samuel Barber *Medea* ballet (later renamed *The Cave of the Heart*) in 1947 for Martha Graham and derived from that *Medea's Meditation & Dance of Vengeance* Op. 23a in 1955; Jacob Druckman's 1980 orchestral work, *Prism*, is based on three different renderings of the Medea myth by Charpentier, Cavalli, and Cherubini; Gordon Kerry *Medea* (opera, 1993), text by Justin Macdonnell after Seneca; Michael John LaChiusa *Marie Christine*, (Broadway musical); Mikis Theodorakis *Medea* (1991) the first in Theodorakis' trilogy of lyrical tragedies, the others being *Electra* and *Antigone*; Rockettothesky *Medea* (2008). For a comparison between *Medea* and *Norma*, see Naomi André, *Voicing Gender*, 158-164.

<sup>34</sup> In Jewish tradition, having no son means no one to say the *kaddish* (part of the mourning rituals in all prayer services as well as at funerals and memorials).

<sup>35</sup> A similar device is used by Bellini in his opera *La Sonnambula*. Edward Dent mentions that in the duet in Act II, the character Elvino is too overcome with emotion to sing, so instead, the orchestra plays the melody which Elvino will sing later, *The Rise of Romantic Opera*, 174-5. See Rosselli, *The Life of Bellini*, 90-1 for how the devised scene of renunciation worked back into the opera.

After the introduction, Norma starts with a hesitant recitative *Dormono entrambi*<sup>36</sup> (mm. 58-89), followed by the aria *Teneri, teneri figli* accompanied by strings only (mm. 90-108) and the recitative *Di che son rei?* (mm. 109-133) which ends with her meeting with Adalgisa.<sup>37</sup> The tension is built in the text and music simultaneously. Recitative: Norma approaches her sleeping sons and expresses her thoughts concerning their coming fate. She is accompanied by ascending semi-tones in 32<sup>nd</sup> notes *p* (Ex. 6: mm. 79-82); disrupted melodic lines (mm. 75-79, 114-117)<sup>38</sup>; and a recurring sigh-motive (Ex. 7: mm. 83-88)<sup>39</sup>. Aria: Norma confesses of the voices inside her. The static chords accompanying the descending lyric melody of the aria (Ex. 8: mm. 90-107) reinforce the impossible dilemma that is presented in the text: “can I kill them? What have they done wrong?” (*io li svenerò? Di che son rei?*). Recitative: the text is emphasized with the repetition of the same note on “they are Pollione’s sons, that is their crime” (m. 113), the use of tremolo at the most striking moment when Norma raises her hand with the knife (mm. 119-122), and the descending melodic line when she has decided *not* to kill the children (Ex. 9: mm. 125-128). Through this section, there are frequent tempo changes from *Andante* to *Lento* and to *Agitato* in order to stress Norma’s erratic emotions (mm. 87, 110 and 125).<sup>40</sup> We see that Bellini uses the music to shape and reinforce Norma’s hesitations. Filled with despair, she is overwhelmed by an impulse to kill her children, but motherhood triumphs over unrequited love.<sup>41</sup>

Norma chooses Adalgisa to be the future stepmother of her children. She trusts her even though she is the new beloved of her ex-lover, her children’s father, Pollione. Despite being a duet, in *Deh! Con te, con te li prendi* in C major, Norma and Adalgisa do not sing together but alternately. It is a dialogue of convincing and negotiating her children's fate. But when Adalgisa tries to bring hope to Norma's heart she is actually repeating Norma's

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<sup>36</sup> See Knapp's analysis, *The Magic of Opera*, 175.

<sup>37</sup> Rutherford finds that the dramatic recitative provided by Bellini and Romani is clearly structured to facilitate physical movement and gesture, *La cantante delle passioni*, 127-131.

<sup>38</sup> Measures are numbered in those three sections consecutively.

<sup>39</sup> Mary Ann Smart writes about 'the musical language of pain in the early nineteenth Italian opera' in 'Bellini's Unseen Voices', *Mimomania: Music and Gesture in Nineteenth-Century Opera*, University of California Press, (Berkeley, 2004), 69-100.

<sup>40</sup> Smart claims that “Bellini’s operas...are saturated with sigh figures: brief, highly conventional melodic patterns used to imitate the sounds of the body in pain or emotional distress.” All those shifts in tempo and gestures of human grief indicate Norma's psychological state, 71. See also Dent's description for these moments, *The Rise of Romantic Opera*, 175.

<sup>41</sup> Earl of Harewood, *The New Kobbé's*, 495.

tune. Norma's part in the duet is vigorous and proud. She is sure of her decision (mm. 5-30).<sup>42</sup> The duet opens with a massive chord in *ff*, stops at a fermata and continues with a lightweight optimistic flowing tune that revolves around the major scale degrees I- IV- V (Ex. 10). This melody does not fit the desperation that is expressed in Norma's request from her friend. Norma's pleas, "please be moved by the suffering of my heart" appear in a circular melody in sequences (mm. 21-27). This pleading "dance" sounds too nice to utter Norma's concerns. When she speaks about *tanto strazio del mio cor* ("the suffering of my heart") the music does not fit the words or reflect suffering; rather, it portrays a joyous atmosphere. This shows Norma's wish to maintain the image of the noble leader and respected woman. Although Norma is definitely an aggressive and demanding person as a leader, she does not dare to expose her weakness to the outside world, including her friend. So a cognitive dissonance has been created here between text and music.

The last time Norma beseeches for her children's life is in public and takes place in front of Pollione, her father and people. Her last aria at the final scene *Deh! non volerli vittime* takes place minutes before she climbs up the pyre, after her secret was revealed. At this stage, Norma's indiscretion is exposed and her fate is known and determined. The aria is subdued, written in e minor, *piano* throughout (Ex. 11). The low strings play a pizzicato pedal point on E, the violins play a repetitive sextuplet, omitting the first beat and the horns repeat the same notes intermittently. Norma's intonation is restrained and she usually repeats the same short stepwise phrases (mm. 1-5). All the above characteristics create a static atmosphere, drained of emotion. However, when Norma approaches her father with the words *Pensa che son tuo sangue* ("remember that they are your blood" - mm. 10, 14), double dotted notes appear, expressing her despair and anxiety. Descending notes convey her pleas and are intensified chromatically on *abbi di lor pietade* ("have mercy on them" - mm. 15-18).

Norma the mother is a tortured soul who finds it impossible to sing. Consequently, some of her arias (in the mother-roll) have assumed the role of recitative. Instead of using the aria to state and declare emotions, Norma adopts the rhythms of ordinary speech to express her inner thoughts and feelings. Not expressive melody, but bits and pieces of

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<sup>42</sup> See Kerman's analysis, *Opera as Drama*, 220.

syllables convey her fears, as if recitative style better portrays her conversation with herself. It seems that Bellini deliberately did not set Norma in the 'artificial' pose of singing when she is trapped and terrified of her intention to murder her own children. So he supplies her with hesitant, frozen, non-advancing recitatives that echo more naturally the speechless horror.

In sum, at home, in her private sanctuary, Norma is free to be herself, but in front of other people, she is obliged to maintain the confidence of a leader. Nevertheless, even in public, Norma's anxiety for her children's fate is clear. In Norma's duet with Adalgisa, the melody is too cheerful to fit the text. The incongruity between text and music creates the sense of artificiality, Norma's struggle to keep her façade in front of her friend. In the last aria, when Norma faces her father and tribe, the music is repeated static and inactive, illustrating how Norma is frozen but decisive, trying to ask for mercy for the last time. She keeps the minor mode while her people answer in major *sottovoce* still shocked from the news and the unexpected farewell. Norma the mother and Norma the leader are in constant conflict, neither allowing the other to function in full capacity.

### **A Friend**

The story of Norma and Adalgisa is of two friends who have fallen in love with the same man; they know that they can no longer serve God because they have succumbed to mortal love. The difference between the two women lies in their status: while Norma is the revered high priestess; Adalgisa is a lowly servant who is afraid (at the beginning) to share her appalling secret with her supervisor. But Norma, due to personal experience, is aware that no individual, however devout, is immune to love. Even though she is overwhelmed to find out that her own lover is her girlfriend's new 'object' of love, Norma puts the blame on Pollione alone. She recognizes Adalgisa's purity and thus their friendship becomes stronger and is elevated to a bond between two women of equal level, regardless of their status. Norma identifies with her protégé and believes that they were both seduced and conquered by a terrible man. Bellini demonstrates the strong bond between the two women by giving them the same melodies. Even when there is another character involved in the scene, they stay close and support each other.

Norma's and Adalgisa's first duet *Adalgisa* (Act I, Scene 2) is divided to 4 parts, which slowly forges the bond between the two women: 1) An introduction in an accompanied recitative [*Andante sostenuto* in B flat major (mm. 1-13)]: this section starts with monotonous chords played mainly by strings and projects a feeling of tension leading up to the revelation of the secret between the two women. 2) Adalgisa's confession, *M'abbraccia, e parla*, [*Andante* in B flat major (mm. 13-47)]: in this accompanied recitative the accompaniment is usually laconic. It appears on significant words such as "love" (*Amore* - m. 17) and after "remorse" (*rimorso* - m. 21) in an accented *f*, or in *pp morendo* (mm. 42-43) where Adalgisa's "attention was on that handsome face". Since this is a turning point in the plot, the text sounds more dramatic being written mostly a-cappella when the accompaniment turns up in between phrases only.

3) The memoirs aria *Oh! Rimembranza!* [*Moderato assai* in f minor (mm. 49-114)].<sup>43</sup> A solo flute (Ex. 12: mm. 51-58) sings an introductory melodic line opposite a 12/8 swinging motion in the first violin. This texture of flute, woodwinds and strings is similar to the texture of the aria *Casta diva*, in which Norma sings the famous prayer to the goddess who lets the moon shine and gives them courage and faith. Bellini specifically uses the flute to create an aura of eternal tranquility: he used it when the priestess approached a force majeure such as the goddess, and will use it later on, when Norma confronts her fate. Such moments are of spiritual elevation and deep concentration. Here, Bellini uses this texture when Adalgisa speaks of Pollione's seduction, as it plunges Norma into reveries of the past, remembering the time when she herself fell in love with Pollione. The identical stories of Adalgisa and Norma in the memoirs aria are represented by identical recurrent melodic lines (Norma: mm. 52-55; Adalgisa: mm. 60-63 or 85-88).

4) Annulment of vows *Ah! Sì, fa core:* [*Più animato* in C major (mm. 115-164)]. Bellini gradually introduces the sympathy and agreement between the two women: mm. 115-135 are a festive and ornamented aria coloratura in which Norma releases Adalgisa from her religious obligations and annuls her vows. Norma forgives her and encourages her "to be united with her beloved". In mm. 135-156 Adalgisa is relieved since "her long suffering is calmed" so she repeats Norma's exact melody. In most ensembles, Norma does

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<sup>43</sup> See about "unison of hearts" in the female duet by Pierre Brunel who is being cited by Littlejohn, *The Ultimate Art*, 170.

not sing together with the other actors. Her melodic line is distinctly separate from those of the others. From measure 151, however, the two women sing in parallel thirds throughout the aria, and continue singing in parallel thirds even during their shared cadenza, which highlights, significantly, the text “it is not a sin to be in love”. With her friend, and only with her, Norma behaves (sings) as one does with a true partner. Since Norma sings the upper voice, then one can make a case for another interpretation: that Adalgisa “follows” Norma that it is she who tries to agree with Norma and wants to be similar to her. The first and second violins seal this duet in unison (mm. 159-164), expressing the unison of souls in empathy and love.

The scene of revelation: [*Scena e Terzetto – Finale I*] *Ma di’, l’amato quale fra noi si noma?* in C major starts at the opening of the next terzet. Norma is interested to know “who is the young man? Which one of *us* is he? It is inconceivable that her friend’s beloved is her own lover Pollione. Her amazement is shown by an immediate change in the accompaniment: instead of two identical lines in the violins, only the first violin moves in nervous 16th notes. Compare to the last duet that ended with total *unison of souls*, one persona (symbolized now by one violin) is not ‘part of the deal’ when the subject of discussion is Norma’s lover.<sup>44</sup> From the moment Norma discovers that Pollione has betrayed her, she changes her tone, and at that moment, Pollione himself appears on stage.

The texture is stormy with intense dynamics: *sf* (mm. 23, 24), a crescendo ending in subito *ppp* (m. 30), and *ff* (m. 59). Norma is furious; her melodic line climbs in sequences each time she calls Pollione *fellon* (traitor – mm. 50-53). The rhythm is syncopated in ‘polonaise’ style. This kind of a militant manner conveys certain characteristic rhythms such as the frequent division of the first beat with accentuation of its second half. Also the ending of phrases on the third beat of the measure project anger and an aggressive mood, and the whole orchestra plays *marcate* (mm. 59-62). These angry musical gestures are aimed only at the traitor, not at Norma’s female friend. We know this because of the stark difference in the music whenever the text refers to Pollione as opposed to the moments when the text refers to Adalgisa.

The next duet turns to a terzet *Oh! Di qual sei tu vittima* (Ex. 13). Bellini divides the three characters (Norma, Adalgisa and Pollione) into couples. Norma opens the *Andante*

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<sup>44</sup> See Littlejohn’s reference to Norma-Adalgisa roles concerning timbre, intonation and range, 163-4.



and sounds decisive and authoritative. She uses the high register of her soprano voice in phrases full of breaks and 'breathing' starting with repeated accented notes to express anger (mm. 2-18). She takes on the role of the high priestess, more an advisor, less a friend. Norma and Pollione are no longer a couple, so Adalgisa and Pollione are paired instead (mm. 21-35). When later, both women sing together, it may portray them as the victims opposite to the seducer (mm. 35-53).

The last meeting of the two women in the opera is a dialogue that occurs after the 'murdering' scene at the beginning of Act II. This *Scena e Duetto* is organized in the following format<sup>45</sup>: 1) a recitative (*Mi chiami, o Norma!* mm. 1-36) in which Norma confesses that she has decided to put an end to her life, but first she makes Adalgisa swear that she will take her children to the Roman camp. The recitative is accompanied by strings, mostly in tremolo, thus representing Norma's painful decision. 2) A duet (*Deh! Con te, con te li prendi*) in which Norma sings a tranquil melody in moderate tempo in C major. The tune is comprised of symmetrical units of 4+4 repeated phrases in antecedent-consequent format of V-I (mm. 6-9 & 10-13). However, when Norma reaches the refrain *Adalgisa, deh! ti mova tanto strazio del mio cor* ("Adalgisa, please be moved by the suffering of my heart"), the melody wanders, stressing Norma's pleading (mm. 21-30). Adalgisa follows Norma with her own melody, asking persistently that Norma not abandon her children. But only when Adalgisa declares that she intends to tell Pollione everything does she revert to Norma's melody from the beginning of the duet (mm. 43-67).

From the above observations, we see that Bellini uses the same melody for his heroes whenever he intends to show empathy, agreement and involvement while the orchestral accompaniment reflects the changes in the mood of the speakers. For example, When Adalgisa encourages Norma to resume her responsibilities as a mother (mm. 31-42), her intense plea is expressed by the strings, which change from steady eighth notes (in Norma's request) to triolas with a missing first beat (in Adalgisa's response). When Norma refuses to beg for Pollione's love (mm. 68-73), strings and bassoons express her anger, moving in syncopated triolas in *ff* following an accented second beat. When Norma urges Adalgisa "leave me, go" (*Parti, va*), the strings accompany her words with a 'polonaise'

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<sup>45</sup> See also Hirshberg, *Music and Drama*, 81.

aggressive militant rhythm (mm. 74-79), showing her objection to any kind of contact with Pollione. Thus, change in attitude or opinion affects the texture immediately.

3) Duet - cavatina (*Mira, o Norma, a'tuoi ginocchi*) *Andante* in F major. The text consists of two verses, four lines each. Adalgisa presents the subject of the cavatina: "O Norma, look at these dear children of yours at your knees. Be moved by pity for them, even if you have no pity for yourself." Norma repeats the theme *Ah! Perché la mia costanza* ("Oh why do you want to undermine my steadfastness with soft sentiment?") and she continues: "when a heart is close to death it has no more illusions, no more hope". Here again, Bellini uses similar melodic lines for both Norma's and Adalgisa's texts to reflect the closeness, support and similar world view of the two women.<sup>46</sup> The theme is first represented by each character separately, and then sung together in parallel thirds by both women.

4) Recitative (*Cedi, deh! Cedi!* – "Please give way!") Norma is convinced that Adalgisa's intention is pure – her friend is willing to leave her lover for the sake of their friendship. The tempo changes to *Allegro*, and the urging rhythms in the accompaniment with dramatic pauses that are accentuated by fermatas indicate that this is a turning point in the dialogue. 5) Cabaletta *Si, fino all'ore estreme* ("Yes, you will have me as your friend"). Norma and Adalgisa pledge allegiance to each other and promise each other an eternal friendship. This duet in an F major *Allegro* follows the characteristics of their previous conversation *Ah! Si, fa core*: identical melodic lines of cheerful singing in parallel thirds reflect the firm friendship between them. After this duet, Adalgisa is no longer seen or heard because she has accepted her role and will dutifully fulfill Norma's wish and take care of Norma's children.<sup>47</sup>

In sum, though the orchestral accompaniment plays a role in depicting the friendship and self sacrifice of the two women, it is mainly through melodic manipulations that Bellini achieves this goal: understanding, empathy and similarity of situations are repeatedly expressed by parallel or identical melodic lines. In addition, since the two women reinforce each other and are optimistic concerning the future, their arias are in

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<sup>46</sup> Kerman emphasizes that "when music comes back in an opera, the dramatic function is generally to show one event or action is experienced in terms of another", *Opera as Drama*, 220.

<sup>47</sup> See the following references for Norma and Adalgisa's relationship: Catherine Clément in her 1980 essay as quoted by Littlejohn, *The Ultimate Art*, 169-170; Smith, *O Patria Mia*, 94 and Lalli, *The Norma Conquests*, 37.

major and in fast tempo. Not one moment of jealousy or conflict exists between them, but constant support and loyalty. The music implies that Bellini has a special interest and admiration towards women. Norma and Adalgisa are immersed in their private passion, but at the same time, they are both aware of each other. They know they will never betray their loyalty to each other; they will stay even when there is a chance to escape.

### **The Lover**

Pollione arouses such opposing and intensive emotions (love-hate-jealousy and revenge) in Norma that the music is designed accordingly. Norma's phrases are agitated, of wide range and many leaps; the orchestra is massive, using a lot of tremolo and additional percussion instruments. The bond between Norma and Pollione's is very different than the bond between Norma and Adalgisa. Pollione usually does not maintain a tune of his own. His tune is controlled by the woman he has betrayed. Norma, on her part, is eager to maintain her calm, so her outbursts are controlled and very few. The love duet appears at the end of the opera and does not depict unification of hearts, only tragedy.

The first aria concerning Pollione *Ah! Bello a me ritorna* occurs towards the middle of Act I, in close proximity to Norma's thought of punishing the Roman ruler (at the end of the previous aria *Fine al rito*). Norma sings to herself while her father Oroveso and her people (chorus) alternately sing about the Day of Judgment. *Ah! Bello a me ritorna* in F major is in duple meter, optimistic, fast, chromatic (on *a me ritorna*) and full of embellishments. The aria moves in simple harmonic progressions of tonic-dominant, repeated twice and concludes with a joyful festive postlude in dotted rhythm. All the above create a festive atmosphere and portray on the one hand, Norma's hope for the return of her beloved and on the other hand, her people's anticipation for defeating the rival.

While the aria *Ah! Bello a me ritorna* illustrates Norma's wishful thinking about her lover; the next aria *Oh non tremare* illustrates her disillusionment. Norma confronts Pollione right after she discovers that he is actually Adalgisa's lover. All the characters in this scene are trembling: Adalgisa, who is between the Devil and the deep blue sea, is afraid to lose her friend's support and be blamed for taking away her lover, and Pollione, who is

recruited to defend his young lover is dumbstruck in front of his ex-lover. Norma is the only character in this scene who trembles out of jealousy, rage and anger, not fear. She warns Pollione, full of power and authority: *trema per te, fellow, pei figli tuoi* ("tremble for yourself, you traitor, and for your children"). The music reinforces Norma's fury: it begins aggressively *con tutta forza* with tremolo in the strings. Norma's vocal line ascends in rage, but is interrupted by frequent pauses (mm. 42, 46, 49, 52) and fermatas (m. 53) projecting her choking anger. After a torrent of ascending and descending embellishments in 16<sup>th</sup> notes on the word *felon* ("traitor" - mm. 54-58), the entire orchestra responds with repetitive notes in *fortissimo* pounding the message home.<sup>48</sup>

The next "reunion" appears in the finale of Act I, in the terzet of Norma, Adalgisa and Pollione *Vanne, si: mi lascia, indegno*. By now, Norma has realized that Pollione is no longer interested in her. She sends him away in anger, swearing that her curse will follow him wherever he goes. Pollione tries to defend himself, claiming that he is powerless, ruled by his new love, but ends up losing both women as Adalgisa does not want to be the cause of Norma's sorrow.

When Norma curses Pollione, her music is *agitato assai* in g minor (Ex. 14). Bellini creates an emotional storm *perpetuum mobile* with the violins' triplets, the violas' tremolo and the basses' staccato. Norma's vocal line starts with short descending phrases separated by short breaks as if to imitate her breathing. When Pollione reacts, the accompaniment turns into ascending eighth notes in pizzicato, as an opposition to Norma's movement. Adalgisa enters (m. 130) on the last quarter of the measure producing incongruent asymmetrical phrases to his, while her melody is similar to Norma's and different from Pollione's. Bellini keeps Adalgisa and Pollione as a couple, yet not of one mind. One special moment occurs in measures 147-151, when Norma, Adalgisa and Pollione sing three different texts in unison, showing how they are each holding onto their opinion. Bellini takes this scene to a climax, adding percussion such as timpani, cymbals, and tam-tam to reinforce Norma's rage, Adalgisa's pent-up anguish and Pollione's misfortune.

In the third scene of Act II, in the recitative *Ei tornerà*, and similar to previous moments (Scena & Duet in Act I or the introduction to Act II), Norma talks about her private thoughts. She tries to convince herself (supported by Adalgisa's faith) that Pollione

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<sup>48</sup> See also Littlejohn cites Brunel, *The Ultimate Art*, 162.

will beg to return and ask for forgiveness. Longings are actually presented before the recitative in an instrumental introduction, 17 measures of *Andante maestoso* with a melancholy melody "sung" by basses and bassoons, the woodwinds responding intermittently. Later, in the duet *In mia man alfin tu sei* (Ex. 15)<sup>49</sup> Norma confronts Pollione and gives him the last chance to change his mind. Norma alternates between emotional arguments (Pollione has discarded their love, she has almost killed their children) and her authoritative power (she is the only one that can unchain him; she will take revenge upon hundreds of Romans). When she plays the trump card, promising she will punish Adalgisa, Pollione breaks down. He begs for Adalgisa's life, offering himself instead.

Musically, this duet can be divided according to the emotional intensity of the conversation between the two lovers-opponents: 1) demanding an oath and confession: *Allegro moderato* in F major (mm. 1-53): 10 measures of a cantabile instrumental prelude in strings and clarinet precede Norma's entrance. The violins accompany Norma's line *molto espressivo* and maintain a quasi peaceful atmosphere despite the dramatic text. Norma is restrained. Only on specific words which are sung on high notes does she hint at the underlying strain. For example: "she can (*posso*) release him" (m. 15), "*Adalgisa fuggira*" (m. 23), or when she believes she can actually carry out her plan to kill her children (*consumar* – m. 48).

2) Pollione's rage: *Più mosso* (mm. 53-60) strings in *pp* and tremolo. First violins move in a restless staccato ascending motion repeating the same 16<sup>th</sup> note fragments. This texture stresses how much is Pollione is agitated from the news regarding their children. 3) Norma's threat of a large scale revenge (to kill the Romans and punish Adalgisa on the pyre) and Pollione's pleading: (mm. 61-87) in A flat major. This section starts with a militant accompaniment in dotted rhythm *marcato*, and a stormy leaping melody (mm. 61-67). When Norma mentions Adalgisa, (identifying Pollione's weakness) the melody rises gradually and chromatically in sequences without any breaks, using trills till it reaches *ff* with a pedal point on a diminished II (g flat) in the basses (mm. 68-72). Finally, Pollione begs mercy for Adalgisa (mm. 74-80). His melodic line is descending and disrupted when

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<sup>49</sup> See also Clément's description of the aria *In mia man' alfin tu sei*, *Furies and Gods*, 105-6.

he offers to give up his own life. The violins' accompaniment changes to a pattern of 3/16 and this section ends with Norma's promise in a recitative (mm. 80-87), declaring that she is determined to hurt him through his precious lover.

4) The concluding section of this duet (mm. 88 and on) *Più animato* opens with Norma's words *Già mi pasco ne'tuoi sguardi*. Norma rejoices Pollione's downfall and the fact that she can make him as miserable as she. When she expresses her joy of revenge at measures 88-100, violins in pizzicato accompany her melody in which the notes are emphasized and repeated. This affect sounds like a victory song, rejoicing at finding the means to bend her enemy. When Pollione continues begging for mercy for Adalgisa's life (mm. 100-136), the strings' accompaniment changes gradually from disrupted eighth notes in *pp* (m. 101-106) to continuous eighth notes in pizzicato (m. 107-113) then to militant repeated rhythm (mm. 117-124). From measure 117 onward, the accompaniment is energetic in a 'polonaise' style. Bellini thickens the texture in order to portray Pollione's intensified pleadings, and does not supply him with an independent tune of his own. Pollione is given Norma's melody instead, thus showing his utter dependence on Norma (compare mm. 106-110 with mm. 88-91).

Starting at m. 137 (*vivo Più*), both Norma and Pollione sing the same melody in parallel thirds, each to a different text. This device may hint at Pollione's attempt to attain sympathy and convince Norma not to harm Adalgisa, or it may indicate of their sealed destiny, since they are both miserable. Norma cannot realize her unrequited love to the Roman proconsul and is forced to punish her girlfriend in order to avenge; Pollione cannot live without his new beloved and asks for mercy. At this point, Bellini brings forth an *Allegro* postlude for full orchestra in dotted rhythm *ff* (mm. 145-155) to accompany Norma and Pollione, as if publicly proclaiming the fact that both are trapped in their cruel love.

The only "love" duet during the whole opera *Qual cor tradisti, qual cor perdesti* takes place in public, minutes before the opera ends and marks the dramatic climax of the plot. Till now, we have been introduced to Norma and Pollione's relationships through memories, confrontations and accusations. Only now does Norma express a wish to be united with her lover in life and death. Only now does Pollione realize how brave and honest the mother of his children is, thus falling in love again: not when she demands repentance but when she decides upon self sacrifice. But words of love have no meaning or

value at this moment, because real love between them is now impossible. This duet is accompanied throughout with fast and quiet 32<sup>nd</sup> tremolo beats in the timpani, and a steady accompaniment in the strings. Norma's tune which is repeated by Pollione consists of a five note ascending motive with a short break before the fifth note. This motive climbs higher each time it appears and descends on the words *tu sei con me* ("you are with me"), *vita e morte* ("in life and in death") and on *sarò con te* ("I shall still be with you"). These characteristics utter the trembling emotion of the two lovers and create an atmosphere of immobility and eternity.

In sum, when Norma responds to Pollione, it is in a mix of emotions and Bellini uses an abundance of musical devices to that effect. There is a correlation between mood-text and music including change in orchestration: the relaxed tune matches the façade of control and restraint; the tremolo and ascending melody convey stress; descending cut off phrases present pleas and mercy; or a resolute a-cappella recitative pass on Norma's strict verdict. Meaningful words such as the significant name of Adalgisa, or words concerning the action Norma is going to commit (can, carry out etc.) are stressed by the orchestration as well. Additional musical devices, such as special effects (trills, tremolo, an interrupted motive, sustained notes); rhythm (galloping, disrupted, dotted); tempo (vivo, agitato, fast, slow); timbre and texture (timpani, use of special percussion instruments, low or high voice range, unison singing and full orchestra), are also used to portray Norma's emotions. Whenever Norma encounters her lover, in thought or in an actual confrontation, she has a strong reaction towards him. Bellini uses these musical means to show how strongly Pollione's presence affects Norma's decisions and actions.

Table 2 summarizes Bellini's musical characterization of Norma's main roles:

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|--|
| <u>Leader</u> : (decisive) <i>Largo e maestoso</i> recitative – a cappella and accompanied by full orchestra, dotted rhythms, militant hymn, pastoral choral; (comforting) cantabile aria with instrumental introduction in solo flute, long drawn out melody.   |
| <u>Mother</u> : (troubled) instrumental opening and a hesitant recitative with frequent tempo changes, stormy tremolo, abrupt stopping, extreme change in dynamics, diminished seventh chords, sigh motives, lamenting cello, solo oboe, static chords, aria in a recitative style, no correlation between music & text, a-symmetrical phrasing. |

|   |
|---|
| <u>Friend</u> : (strong bond) arias in major mode, same melodies, parallel thirds, voices in unison, symmetrical units of repeated phrases. |
|---|

|   |
|---|
| <u>Lover</u> : (fury & revenge) change in accompaniment, syncopated / dotted rhythms, high register, phrases full of breaks, repeated accented notes, wide range of melodic lines, leaps, fermatas, massive orchestration & additional percussion instruments, tremolo, Pollione has no independent tune. |
|---|

Table 2

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This paper described Norma's five facets as they are depicted in the opera: Norma the leader, Norma the daughter, Norma the mother, Norma the friend and Norma the lover. In four of the five facets, Norma is an unpredictable person, thus her roles are not typical at all. As a leader, she delayed the attack of her people's enemy; as a daughter she does not expose her depth of feelings till the last minute; as a mother she almost kills her own children; as a friend she is not jealous of her friend who stole her lover. But only in the role of a lover does Norma behave in an expected manner. As a lover, Norma is moody, vulnerable, insecure, and as a result, manipulative. She takes advantage of her status as a dominating ruler. This behavior can shatter and overshadow the God-fearing image of Norma and she might be perceived as an untrustworthy person. When the heroine is torn between two major forces, love and duty, love wins. Norma loses her senses, sacrifices herself for unrequited love, and betrays her nation in the process.

In each of the five facets that constitute Norma's personality, there are two opposing states: the noble and authoritative Norma in contrast to the loving but wounded Norma who seeks comfort and refuge. As a leader, Norma is authoritative towards her people but seeks comfort from the Gods she worships. As a daughter, Norma is a decisive dominant ruler like her father, but begs for help to save her children. As a mother, Norma is authoritative towards Adalgisa when she asks her to take care of her children but agonizes about the fate of her children in the safety of her home. As a friend, Norma is authoritative when she annuls Adalgisa's vows to allow her to love, but is then hurt at the revelation of who that



lover is. As a lover, Norma is authoritative towards Pollione as she has the power over his life and freedom but at the same time is hurt at his betrayal. In the end, the pain of unrequited love conquers her, and the solution she chooses is extreme; she must die on the pyre to try and regain both her honor and her love. Thus, the noble Norma and the wounded Norma are eventually united.

From the powerful opening till the final crisis, this opera is driven by the unclear loyalties of the priestess who betrays her nation, herself and also experiences betrayal by others. Norma is both the Druid warrior and the rebel. She delivers the message of priestly justice but is a captive of the society whom she rules. But Norma's duplicity is hidden from the other characters, who see her only in her duties as a mystic priestess. Before Norma enters, Pollione describes her as a furious avenger, and then she appears in full majesty, in total control of herself and her people. Only later does Norma reveal her passion to Pollione, a passion that is not in line with her elevated position. It is at that point that Norma allows the audience to enter her inner sanctum.

The layers of Norma's personality are revealed in a process of surprising turns and false expectations throughout the opera. Norma is a woman who can forgive despite her deep jealousy and who turns vengeful feelings towards herself. The love duet between Pollione and Norma is not genuine. We expect a love duet to be passionate and emotional but in reality, Pollione and Norma exchange tunes but never sing together. Warmth and the ability to love are instead shifted to the evolving relationship between Norma and Adalgisa.

Pollione and Norma have no time to realize their love, because the same moment Pollione comprehends that he has been mistaken about Norma, he loses her. Norma's role in the relationship starts off as a strong woman of faith and status but ends as a broken woman pleading with her chaperon. When Pollione expects and fears that Adalgisa is about to be punished on the pyre, he is stunned to see that it is actually the mother of his children. The fearless Norma expresses a calm authority, a long way from the furious woman she was when she called for war. She goes to her death together with Pollione, but we do not hear any appeasing duet. Even in such a public moment, Norma's words are heard as a kind of a daydream, expressing a melancholic surrender.

The irony of Norma's status is fully exploited in the opera. When Norma appears for the first time, she is an isolated public figure who reveals her emotions to no one but

herself, while her people sing a different tune. From the beginning, Norma is depicted as an inaccessible figure, but her loneliness is tinged with a hint of someone who is familiar with love. Her children, a living testimony of her deeds, are not capable to comfort her or fill in the void. On the contrary, they even enhance her loneliness. On the other hand, when Norma hears Adalgisa's confession of her love to Pollione, she does not feel lonely anymore, and the music expresses this by evoking the sad memory of happiness that she once had. The strong and happy connection between the two women sparks hope for a solution of the conflict. But this is of course false hope and Pollione's entrance throws Norma back to her loneliness with a new feeling of a bitterness, cruelty and frustration. Betrayed by her lover, Norma prepares for her death, just to be surprised again by Adalgisa's attempts to instill new hope. No one but Adalgisa believes that Norma could conquer Pollione's heart again.

The final crisis in *Norma* presents one last ironic turn when Norma expresses remorse and solves her problems in a concession act. For a long time, Norma was caught in the mercy of her ambivalent desires, Pollione's actions and the demands of her people. Her decision to confess and face the consequences enables her to expropriate control even from fate itself. However, once Norma takes control of her life, she also gives up her life: the chance to live, to love and to raise her children, as she knows her punishment would be death. And even death cannot resolve the conflict between patriotism and love. Norma chooses to die according to the tradition against which she has committed a crime and in doing so, she reinforces the holy power she has served - she hands herself to the Galian leader. Pollione indeed sings of eternal love, but her people's chorus hastens to warn that she will be cursed also in her death. So when the curtain falls, Norma returns to her loneliness.

One of the major tools through which Bellini demonstrates Norma's psychological states is the orchestra. Although criticized for his orchestration,<sup>50</sup> Bellini is known to be a skilled operatic dramatist.<sup>51</sup> Norma's character is intensified through Bellini's music. As we have seen, the orchestra has a significant function during the dramatic moments of the opera.<sup>52</sup> The bel canto melody is supported by an accompaniment that fits the text, the

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<sup>50</sup> Knapp, *The Magic of Opera*, 170, 175.

<sup>51</sup> The passage *Dormono entrambi* (in the beginning of act II) for instance, demonstrates such a constructing.

<sup>52</sup> See other references to Norma's orchestration: Littlejohn, *The Ultimate Art*, 161-2, and Grout, *A short History*, 360.

persona and the mood of occasion. A peaceful accompaniment can hide a deliberate restraint of the character; the use of different kinds of tremolo and frequent tempo changes (during ecstatic moments) indicate changes in temperament or atmosphere; an employment of solo instruments such as flute, oboe or cello imitate the soloist in his / her aria; and independent instrumental introductions sometimes substitute or prepare the heroine in key arias. Bellini designs the melody according to the emotional state of the figure: sigh-motives and interrupted melodies resemble human responses such as breathing, crying or mourning; joyful melodies express an accomplished purpose or plan, and a wide melodic range can symbolize aspirations not yet fulfilled or weak points of the characters.

However, Bellini's music also enhances false expectations, thus strengthening the dramatic plot. For example: the calming melody of the flute in the introduction of *Casta Diva* gives no hint of Norma the sinner; Bellini deliberately depicts Norma as a strong calm person and does not reveal her personal problem; The women's duet should reflect jealousy, but instead, it is a cheerful song of identical melodic lines in parallel thirds. Another surprising example is the final love duet which turns out to be not a love duet but a declaration of intentions. Norma uses words as *crudel Romano* repetitively while Pollione asks for her forgiveness. These words do not express love, but rather aloofness on Norma's part. Although Norma and Pollione are going to be at last united on the pyre, they sing successively, never together.

Bellini told one of his librettists that Norma, "is exploring the human soul in slow motion on different levels and allowing for sudden, swift changes of direction as well."<sup>53</sup> I believe that indeed, the human soul is best understood through the roles it takes on through life. Norma's personality derives from her multiple roles in life – lover, priestess, friend, mother and daughter. Bellini uses each role dramatically and musically to reveal all the levels of Norma's character, step by step, from the most obvious traits to her innermost insecurities.

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<sup>53</sup> Letter to Carlo Pepoli, in Vincenzo Bellini, *Epistolario*, ed. (Luisa Cambi, 1943), 400, as cited by Deathridge, *Reminiscences of Norma*, 226.

Ex. 1: Bellini, *Norma*, Act I, *Scena e Cavatina*, *Sediziose voci* mm. 5-26

16

NORMA.

Ce - sta di Di - va, ce - sta di Di - va che i - na-  
qua-ram di as-qua-ram di as-

MUSICA DI GIULIO

19

- gen - ti Que - sto sa - cre, que - sto  
ra-gi-ly, Lee up om, Lee up

Ex. 2: *Norma, Cavatina con Coro, Casta Diva*, mm. 16-21

*Allegro feroce.*

*f*

7

13

*Refrain.*

Quer-ai! quer-ai!  
 Wer-fest! Wer-fest!

*Conte.*

Quer-ai! quer-ai! le Gal-li-cha sal-vo Quer-ai! le ha quer-ai! ce pro-  
 Wer-fest! Wer-fest! die ten-gy wif stes-as fin with hat of her

*Quarante ans d'ant.*

Quer-ai! quer-ai! le Gal-li-cha sal-vo Quer-ai! le ha quer-ai! ce pro-  
 Wer-fest! Wer-fest! die ten-gy wif stes-as fin with hat of her

Ex. 3: Act II, Scena VII, Coro, *Guerra, Guerra!* mm. 1-20



79

- tu-gee-  
 - me-lee,

Ah! no: piem-mer!  
 Ah-cher! ah, no-zer!

me-je-er,  
 they will die-

Musical score for "The Rose Tree" featuring vocal parts and piano accompaniment. The score includes lyrics in English and Italian. The piano part features a prominent bass line with chords and a melody in the right hand. The vocal parts are written for a soprano and a tenor/bass.

Ex. 6: Act II, *Dormono entrambi*, recitative, mm. 79-82

83

87

*a piacere.*

pre - de E in fron - te mi si sol - le - va il crin - I figli uo -  
per - pace to - with the own fa - ce - rai Whoe! clay wine

Ex. 7: Act II, Norma: Andante, mm. 83-89

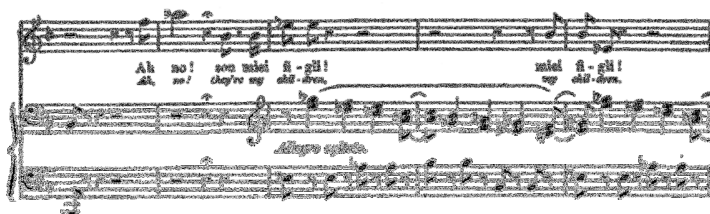
90

94

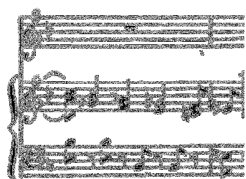
[illegible]

Ex. 8: Act II, Norma, mm. 90-97

123



128

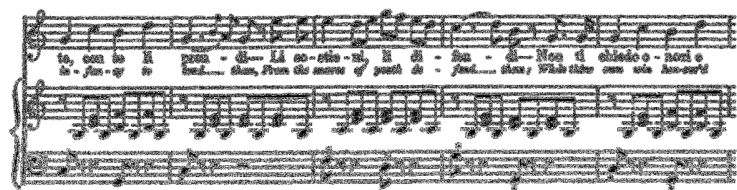


Ex. 9: Act II, Norma, mm. 123-129

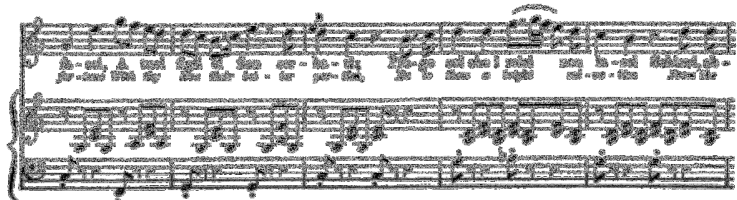
1



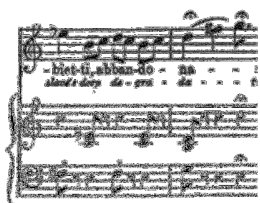
6



11



16



Ex. 10: Act II, Duet, Deh! Con te li predi, mm. 1-17



1 *And. moderato.* NORMA.  
Deh! non voler - li vit - ti-me Del mio fa - ta - lo er -  
Pio - ter the harm - lus in - no-cents! Here'd in mine er - ring

5 *And. moderato.*  
Deh! non tener - mi al - lo - so, Quel' in - no-cen - te a -  
Non mi de - ter - mi - no, Quel' in - no-cen - te a -

9 *And. moderato.*  
Per - so che son io son - no - ah - bi di lei più -  
Non mi de - ter - mi - no, Quel' in - no-cen - te a -

13 *And. moderato.*  
Ah! non tener - mi al - lo - so, Quel' in - no-cen - te a -  
Non mi de - ter - mi - no, Quel' in - no-cen - te a -

16 *And. moderato.*  
Ah! non tener - mi al - lo - so, Quel' in - no-cen - te a -  
Non mi de - ter - mi - no, Quel' in - no-cen - te a -

“Norma.” (178)

Ex. 11: Act II, Finale, *Deh! Non volerli vittime*, mm. 1-18

50 *Moderato assai.* DUETTO.  
bran - za! Io fui co - si, io fu - i co - si ra -  
non - brance! Tien - ti - non t'ha, che s'er - ra Tar - ra -

*Andante.*  
pi - ta al sol mi - ser - lo la vol - to, Ma - non m'a-ccol - ti  
reg - er - ra - non t'ha, che s'er - ra Tar - ra -

NORMA. *Andante.*  
tu! So - gui, t'a - col - to, So - la fur - ti - va, ul  
mi! non t'ha, che s'er - ra Tar - ra -

Ex 12: Act I, Scena VIII, *Oh, rimembranza!* mm. 50-60

TERZETTO.

1 *Andante marcato.* **NORMA.**  
Oh! di qual sei tu vit - ti - ma Cru - do e fu - nesto in -  
O how his art de - cates ad thou! Love her'd ye, too com -

5  
- gan - nel Fia cho co - stui co - so - no - re, l'avei me -  
day! my die in, a ge - sto that the de - to

8  
- ho - na, l'avei me - to Fia in l'avei me - to -  
- ho - na, l'avei me - to Fia in l'avei me - to -

12  
- ho - na, l'avei me - to Fia in l'avei me - to -  
- ho - na, l'avei me - to Fia in l'avei me - to -

Ex. 13: Finale Act I, *Oh! Di qual sei tu vittima*, mm. 1-14 100

**NORMA.** *Allegro agitato.*  
Van - ne, si!... mi la - scia in - do - gro, Fi - gli ob -  
From my sight, and from re - mem - brance, To the

104  
- Ma pro - met - to - to - Ma - le - det - to del mio co - re Non po -  
let my death re - ate that his - tori about a time of my - since by the

108  
- dal d'un an - po - to - Ma - le - det - to del mio co - re Non po -  
care with what / let him, if... the same with what let him. From my

Ex. 14: Finale Act I, *Vanne, si: mi lascia*, mm. 100-111

**DUETTO.**

*Allro moderato.*

**NORMA.**  
In mia man al fin tu sei  
In my grasp although I

**POLLIONE.**  
so - i, Non po - tui spe - rar tant no - di; Io lo po - so. Tu non  
how this, For such And Ie - ted I bear me; And can live ya. Should I

**NORMA.** **POLLIONE.** **NORMA.**  
do - i. Io lo vo - glia. E co - me? M'odi. Pel tuo Di - o, poi a - gli  
crave this? I so will it. But wherefore? Hear me: Saver by And that price me

tu - i Oti - ver dei, che d'e - ra in po - i. A - dal - gi - so fug - gi -  
me - ra, Saver by gods that guide the Ro - man, A - dal - gi - so to re -

Ex. 15: Act II, Scena x, *In mia man alfin tu sei*, mm. 1-23