

Belle ciarle

Description

In his *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Oper um die Wende des 18. und 19. Jahrb.* Ludwig Schiedermair describes Johann Simon Mayr's *Belle ciarle e tristi fatti* as his best comic opera. Premiered in November 6 1807 at Teatro La Fenice in Venice to a libretto by Angelo Anelli, the opera had a reasonable success. However, it had a short run and it lasted until 1813 until it appeared again, this time at Teatro alla Scala in Milano, as *Imbroglia contro imbroglia*. The reason for its resurrection was a complete failure of Guglielmi's *La presunzione coretta* and Mayr's Venetian score saved the season and a review in *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* appeared on June 30, 1813. The reviewer mentioned some good singing but noted especially Mayr's eccentric orchestration to create local colour as well as accentuated dramatic situations. For example the three part *Ständchen* in the second act accompanied by winds and basses *pizzicati* and the following aria with extensive obligate guitar solo. The sordinated trumpets in the first act finale to mock the nasal sound of the Venetian lawyers is also a good example of Mayr's sublime comic details of which the opera is full of.

Since 1813 there is no record of further performances of this comic jewel. In consequence the source situation is fairly simple. The autograph is housed in Archivio Ricordi, Milano and there is a fair copy in Deutsche Staatsbibliothek in Berlin. The copy seems to have had a close relationship to the autograph as an autograph recitative that is missing in Mayr's score has been glued into the copy. They seem to have been used in rehearsals as the few cuts indicated in one source is identically reflected in the other. The autograph if *Belle ciarle* contains is an interesting articulation sign that is not yet clear at present state of research. In N. 18 the aria of Marianna (p.447 of the full score) there is an articulation sign in both strings and winds which interpretation is still a mystery:



Det källkritiska partiuret med åtföljande kommentar ingår i Giovanni Simone Mayr Werkausgabe (Casa Ricordi, Berlin) och har editionsnummer Sy.8011.