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ABSTRACT

This paper provides a formal analysis of Giovanni Bottesini's most important operatic paraphrases for double bass and piano within a larger context and explore their connection with the original operas. The absence of this connection is one of the main problems found when performing these works. Starting with a brief exploration of the plot of the operas, the analysis here presented traces in detail the melodic transformations that Bottesini implemented in each of his operatic renditions. As conclusion, it offers a set of suggestions that may help the performer to strengthen the connections between the instrumental virtuosic repertoire and the emotional potential of the operatic realm.

KEY WORDS

Giovanni Bottesini, double bass music, opera paraphrases, musical analysis

TÍTULO

Estableciendo las delimitaciones en las paráfrasis operísticas de Giovanni Bottesini (1821-89)

RESUMEN

Este trabajo proporciona un análisis formal de las más importantes paráfrasis operísticas de Giovanni Bottesini para contrabajo y piano en un contexto amplio que explora su conexión con las óperas originales, cuya ausencia es uno de los principales problemas que se encuentran al interpretarlas. Comenzando con una breve exploración de la trama de las óperas, se procede con un detallado rastreo de las transformaciones melódicas que Bottesini implementa en sus paráfrasis. El conjunto de sugerencias que se ofrece como conclusión puede llevar a los contrabajistas a fortalecer las conexiones entre el repertorio virtuosístico instrumental y el potencial emocional propio de la ópera.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Giovanni Bottesini, música para contrabajo, paráfrasis operísticas, análisis musical

Realizó estudios de música (piano y contrabajo) en la Pontificia Universidad Javeriana (Bogotá) y obtuvo sus títulos de maestría y doctorado como discípulo de Albert Laszlo en Universidad de Cincinnati (Beca Fulbright). Es profesor de la Facultad de Artes de la Universidad Javeriana y desde 2008, y del Conservatorio de Música de la Universidad Nacional de Colombia desde 2009. Ha mantenido una intensa actividad como contrabajista dentro y fuera del país y es miembro fundador de la Orquesta Nueva Filarmonía (2014). Vinculado desde 2012 a la Sección de Música de la Subgerencia Cultural del Banco de la República como coordinador musical, intérprete, autor de escritos y asesor artístico. Desde 2019 está vinculado como profesor a la Maestría en Musicología de la Universidad Nacional.

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Tracing the lines within Giovanni Bottesini's Operatic Paraphrases (1821-89)

Jaime Ramírez Castilla

Giovanni Bottesini (1821-1889) is considered the most important and influential nineteenth-century composer for the double bass. During his lifetime he was known as “the Paganini of the double bass” as his compositions expanded the technical and expressive demands of his instrument beyond the expectations of his contemporaries. Nowadays a considerable part of his output for the double bass is still required repertoire in syllabi, competitions and recital programs. It is well known that the relationship between Bottesini and his operatic context was determinant factor for his compositional output. On the other hand, this relationship is overlooked as an easy way to contextualize any piece by Bottesini; paradoxically this tendency could also be superficial and shortsighted if there is not a clear idea of which specific materials are taken from the opera (or the vocal literature in general) and developed by Bottesini.

Very often the interpretation of Bottesini's music could lead into a dilemma of “virtuosity” versus “musicality,” leaving as a result an estrangement from the original purposes of the composer; the resulting performance could be reduced to a cartoon-like interpretation centered on instrumental pyrotechnics somehow detached from its initial artistic intention. It is not a strange situation to find reports about performances of Bottesini's music such as:

The Bottesini *Second Concerto* provides Streicher with ample opportunities to display his virtuosity. The first movement has numerous difficult running note passages which he handles with ease. In the second movement he plays the melodic line with a beautiful sound and nicely defined phrasing.

Finally, in the last movement, one is impressed by his great stamina and ability to find just the right tempo to bring out the character of the music¹.

(...) a poetic, well in tune and sonorous performance, but not always captivating. (...) inspired more for their difficulty than musical interest. (...) mere digital dexterity in Bottesini was a disappointment².

Although it would be misleading to narrow every aesthetic influence on Bottesini to his relationship with the operas of his time, a good alternative to propose a better informed performance of this works would be to identify which specific materials are borrowed and how the operatic context affected other instrumental genres. In a large number of instrumental works from the nineteenth-century the operatic repertoire provided a source of inspiration, as well as opened the mind of various composers to a wider palette of thematic interconnections, instrumental needs and new technical devices. Luigi Dallapiccola points out that for Italian composers seems impossible to separate melodic composition from vocal music; in his own words “Italian opera composers of the Nineteenth-Century disregarded all tradition relating to purely instrumental music”³.

Following this connection between opera and instrumental music, especially in the Romantic period, it is important to see how the simple and long-breadth melodic style, for which Vincenzo Bellini was recognized, determined the melodic expression of instrumental repertoire. As Carl Dahlhaus points out:

Without exaggeration, we could even maintain that the melodic style of Bellini’s arias, above all his cantabiles, was the quintessence of what the Nineteenth-century, with astounding unanimity, understood by melody in the strong sense of the term. Opera audiences dissolved in euphoric transports at the sound of *Casta diva*, *Ah! Non creda mirarti*, or *Qui la voce sua soave*. Moreover, their enthusiasm was shared unquestionably by composers as diverse as Chopin, whose nocturnes clearly betray the influence of Bellini, and Wagner⁴.

Following the influence of Bellini, along with the need of more flexible and continuous musical forms, the operatic fantasia easily provided a new source of almost inextinguishable

¹ Marvin Topolsky, “Recordings Reviewed – Streicher, Neidlinger and Karr; review of Ludwig Streicher’s recording of *Concerto no. 2 in B minor* by Bottesini”, *International Society of Bassists*, I, 3 (1975), pp. 57-8.

² Rodney Slatford, “39th International Competition for Musical Performers”, Geneva, 28 August – 9 September 1983”, *International Society of Bassists*, X, 2 (1984), pp. 15-6.

³ Luigi Dallapiccola, “Words and Music in Nineteenth-Century Italian Opera”, *Perspectives of New Music*, 5, 1 (autumn- winter, 1966), pp. 128.

⁴ Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, translated by J. Bradford Robinson, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989, p. 155.

musical reference and supported the careers of traveling virtuosi such as Franz Liszt and Sigismund Thalberg. It is within this scope that Bottesini's output can be reconsidered.

Bottesini's use of the fantasy as a formal structure signals an approach to operatic paraphrasing that resonates with the same formal approaches of other composers focused on instrumental virtuosity and are not especially linked to the composition or performance of operas. Bottesini's paraphrases tend to follow a uniform structure where after a short opening section by the piano and eventually a flourishing entrance by the soloist with a cadenza-like material, each piece progresses through different sections based on specific materials borrowed from the original opera. Furthermore, each of these selections are separated by piano interludes that either develop additional materials from the opera or present newly composed material. For the closing section, the soloist provides a final virtuoso showcase that may include one last thematic reference to the opera.

In general, most of the sections borrowed from the original operas consist of transcriptions or arrangements that simultaneously become progressively more technically challenging for the performer and surprisingly astounding for the audiences. From this point of view, the piano interludes may allow the soloist to regain the energy for each upcoming operatic rendition, and they also provide tonal and rhythmic variety. Since one of the characteristics of this virtuoso repertoire is the technical exhibition on the instrument, most of the thematic material for these purposes has to be transcribed in the most comfortable and resounding tonalities for the double bass. Having a certainly restrained tonal palette, determined in great part for the most efficient harmonics on the instrument, the piano interludes allow the pieces to have more interesting tonal and rhythmic fluctuations between the paraphrasing sections by the soloist.

One of the main purposes of this writing is to point out those specific materials that Bottesini borrowed from each opera, thereby clarifying the connections between the double bass part and the original sources. In order to optimize this recount of materials, I will provide a small introduction for each opera, and then I will focus on each of the materials borrowed, especially on those rendered in the double bass line. To summarize the melodic tracing for each individual opera, a small formal diagram will illustrate the general structure of each paraphrase along with all the thematic relationships between the works of Bottesini and Bellini.

Fantasia sull'opera "La Sonnambula" di Bellini

Bellini's opera *La Sonnambula* was premiered in Milan on March 6, 1831, and its success further bolstered the composer's glowing reputation, which he achieved after the premiere of *Il Pirata* (1827), his third opera, and *I Capuleti e I Montecchi* (1830). After *La Sonnambula*, the rising career of Bellini continued, in spite of a few setbacks, with successful productions

such as *Norma* (also premiered in 1831) and *I Puritani* (1835), which granted him the recognition as the leading composer of Italian operas of his generation.

The plot for *La Sonnambula* is set in a pastoral environment at the south of Switzerland; in a village gathered for the wedding of Amina and Elvino, where the unexpected arrival of a long-lost nobleman (Rodolfo) awakes Elvino's jealousy, which is strengthened by an ill-hearted innkeeper (Lisa) and by Amina's sleepwalking. By the end of Act I, Amina's somnambulism takes her to Rodolfo's room, and when she is found asleep in the nobleman's couch the next morning, Elvino's rage exploits calling the wedding off and infusing the villager's rejection to Amina. In the second act, the conflict is resolved when Amina appears again sleepwalking, now across an old mill bridge above the whole opera cast, and talking in her sleep about her love for Elvino and his heartbreaking rejection. Then, Elvino softly wakes Amina up and together renew their love vows closing the opera with a joyful celebration⁵.



Bottesini's *Fantasia sulla "Sonnambula"* is one of his earliest compositions and was probably composed during his student years. According to Gergely Járdány, Bottesini's operatic paraphrases correspond to "his first creative period between 1835 and 1845"⁶. Although for many of these works the exact composition date is unknown, it is documented that Bottesini included his *Fantasia sulla "Sonnambula"* along with *Fantasia sulla "Straniera"* in his concert programs from 1840 at the Teatro Comunale of Trieste, and at the Teatro Sociale in Crema; these concerts marked the beginning of a successful, and uninterrupted, career as a touring soloist. Thereafter, Bottesini's *Sonnambula* constantly returned in many concert venues throughout Europe and the Americas being played by the composer with piano or orchestral accompaniment⁷.

⁵ For general information on the context of the opera and its plot please see Julian Budden, Elizabeth Forbes, and Simon Maguire, "La Sonnambula", *Grove Music Online*, Oxford University Press, January 01, 2002, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>. Accessed on August 25, 2018.

⁶ Gergely Járdány, liner notes to *Bottesini: Operatic Paraphrases for Double Bass and Orchestra*, Bellini, Donizetti, Paisiello, Gergely Járdány, double bass, and Hungarian State Opera Orchestra conducted by Pier Giorgio Morandi, Hungary: Hungaroton Records Ltd., HCD 31915, 2000. According to Gaspare Nello Vetro, Bottesini's first compositions date as early as 1836 and include *Variazioni sopra un tema nella opera "La Straniera"* and his *Tre grandi duetti*. See Gaspare Nello Vetro, ed., *Giovanni Bottesini*, Parma: Centro Studi e Ricerche dell'Amministrazione dell'Università degli Studi di Parma, 1989, p. 191. Thomas Martin also points out Bottesini's first compositions as student pieces, see Thomas Martin, "In Search of Bottesini," *International Society of Bassists*, X, (1983), p. 6.

⁷ Paul Brun, *A New History of the Double Bass*, Villeneuve d'Ascq, France: Paul Brun Productions, 2000, pp. 226-31. For more information about Bottesini's concert tours see Martin, "In Search of Bottesini," pp. 6-12; X, 2 (1984), pp. 6-12; XI, 2 (1985), pp. 25-39. For information specifically on Bottesini's tours in America please see Andrew Edward Palmer, "Giovanni Bottesini in the United States, 1848-1854", D.M.A. diss University of Memphis, 1995, and Jeff Brooks, "Giovanni Bottesini's First American Tour," *International Society of Bassists*, XV, 2 (1989), pp. 15-19.

In his *Fantasia*, Bottesini borrowed materials from three different sections of Bellini's opera. These sections are separated by short piano interludes composed from material that is not taken from Bellini. After the piano introduction followed by the entrance cadenza in the bass part, the first section on borrowed material is based on Bellini's quintet "D'un pensiero e d'un accento" from the finale of the first act. Bellini's original finale is considerably long and richly orchestrated, meanwhile Bottesini summarized the main melodic materials from the quintet and condensed them in the double bass part⁸. Example 1 shows Bottesini's opening bars of the paraphrase paralleled with Amina's first bars in the quintet.

Bottesini's <i>Sonnambula</i> , mm. 27-33	Bellini's <i>Sonnambula</i> , opening bars by Amina in "D'un pensiero e d'un accento." from Act I.
	
<p>EXAMPLE 1. Beginning of Bottesini's first borrowed material from Bellini's <i>La Sonnambula</i> compared to the opening bars by Amina in "D'un pensiero e d'un accento." from Act I.</p>	

Right after the *Andante cantabile* section, the first piano interlude prepares the transition to a theme and variations between bars 68 and 124. This fragment corresponds to the second material borrowed by Bottesini where the double bass starts with a rendition of Amina's caballetta "Ah! Nongiunge uman pensiero," which closes the opera with a joyful celebration; in this number Amina's virtuosic ornamentations for the repetition of her material after the brief choir interjection fits perfectly for Bottesini's brilliant variations that follow the presentation of the theme by the soloist. Example 2 shows the presentation of the theme by the double bass in Bottesini's *Fantasia* contrasted with Amina's first measures in her closing number.





⁸ Jaime Ramirez-Castilla, "Musical Borrowings in the Music for Double Bass of Giovanni Bottesini: A Reconsideration Beyond the Operatic Paraphrases", D.M.A. diss, University of Cincinnati, 2007, pp. 58-67.

Bottesini's <i>Sonnambula</i> , mm. 27-33	Bellini's <i>Sonnambula</i> , opening bars of Amina's "Ah! Non giunge uman pensiero" at the end of the opera
EXAMPLE 2. Beginning of the theme and variations section from Bottesini's <i>Sonnambula</i> compared with its original source found in Bellini's finale for his opera.	

As it happens in most of Bellini's operas, the melodic material for important sections is anticipated by the orchestra. These orchestral introductions help to set the mood for the singer's entrance; depending on the instruments in charge for these introductions there might be slight differences in rhythm and articulations from the melodic lines of the singers. Example 3 provides the woodwinds introduction for Amina's final number; although Bellini kept the exact rhythm in both sections, there are differences in the articulation of the sixteenth-notes of the third bar of the fragment.

EXAMPLE 3. Woodwinds introduction for Amina's entrance at the end of Bellini's <i>Sonnambula</i>

The last section of borrowed material from Bellini's opera by Bottesini appears just after the second piano interlude. This is a very short passage based on the first eight bars of Elvino's part in his duet with Amina "Ah vorrei trovar parole" from Act I; the comparison between the *Fantasia* and its original source can be found in Example 4. This brief section progressively gains more energy until leading into a brilliant coda that closes the *Fantasia* with bravura and triumphal character.

Bottesini's <i>Sonnambula</i> , mm. 137-148	Elvino's first measures in the duet "Ah vorrei trovar parole" from Bellini's Act I
	
	
<p>EXAMPLE 4. Comparison between the last fragment borrowed by Bottesini and its original source in Elvino and Amina's duet from Act I.</p>	

As a closing summary for the recount of Bottesini's borrowings, Diagram 1 shows the formal structure of Bottesini's *Sonnambula*. This diagram offers a brief description of each section along with their tonal centers and the thematic relationships between Bottesini's *Fantasia* and Bellini's Opera.

	Section I	Section II	Section III	Section IV	Section V	Section VI	Section VII
Bottesini	mm. 1 – 26	mm. 27 – 51	mm. 52 – 67	mm. 68 – 124	mm. 125 – 136	mm. 137 – 165	mm. 166 – 203
	Allegro vivo Introduction by the piano and opening <i>cadenza</i> by the soloist	Andante cantabile	<i>Allegro</i> Piano interlude	Theme and two variations with a short piano interlude between variations I and II.	Piano interlude	Moderato	Brilliant and energetic finale.
	Key: A – F#m – (A)	A	A	A	A	A	A
Bellini		Act I, <i>Finale</i> Quintet “D’un pensiero e d’un accento.”		Act II, <i>Finale</i> Amina’s <i>caballetta</i> “Ah! Non giunge uman pensiero.”		Act I, Scene 1. Elvino’s part from the duet “Ah Vorrei trovar parole”	
		Keys: E \flat		B \flat		A \flat	
	All the material for this section was newly composed by Bottesini with no direct associations to Bellini’s opera.	In Bellini’s opera, the quintet is gradually constructed; Amina starts with the theme, followed by Elvino until the quintet is completed. Bottesini condensed all the melodic materials in a continuous double bass line.	The first interlude in the <i>Fantasia</i> consists of newly composed material by Bottesini with no references to the opera.	In the opera, Amina’s entrance is briefly anticipated by the woodwinds. After the first presentation of the theme by Amina a short choir interjection is followed by Amina’s repetition with virtuosic ornamentation. Apparently Bottesini fit the idea of an ornamented repetition, providing two sparkling variations separated by a short piano interlude.	This section continues with the radiant character of the previous variations, providing a sense of closure. As in Section III, this interlude is newly composed material.	The last paraphrased material consists of the first eight bars from Elvino’s response to Amina in their duet. Neither the orchestral accompaniment, nor the remaining of the melodic lines from Bellini’s number are developed by Bottesini; instead, bass line leads into a short <i>cadenza</i> that connects this section with the closing section of the whole piece.	As in many operatic paraphrases, Bottesini’s <i>La Sonnambula</i> closes with a dazzling coda-like final virtuoso display along a wide range of registers in the bass. This section is also composed new material without any explicit paraphrase to the opera.

DIAGRAM 1. Giovanni Bottesini, *Fantasia sulla “Sonnambula” di Bellini*. Formal Diagram: Basic formal structure on the whole work and thematic relationships from Bellini’s opera⁹.

⁹ The measure numbers for Bottesini’s work are taken from Giovanni Bottesini, *Ausgewählte Stücke für Kontrabaß und Klavier*, Klaus Trumpf (ed.), Leipzig: Deutscher Verlag für Music, 1984, pp. 35–7.

Fantasia sulla “Norma” di Bellini

Norma was premiered at Teatro alla Scala in Milan on December 26, 1831. Despite an unsuccessful first production, the opera gained popularity soon enough to be produced in many cities in the years after its premiere; since then, *Norma* has still retained its popularity and commercial success in our present times. The opera is set on the libretto by Felice Romani which at the same time is based on a French play, also titled *Norma*, by Alexandre Soumets; Norma is a Gallic druid priestess that revives the classic tragedy of Euripides' *Medea* who kills her two children as a revenge against her unfaithful husband. Although in Soumets' play Norma turns mad after killing her sons and jumps into an abyss, in Romani's libretto Norma overcomes her rage, and instead of slaughtering her children, she turns herself into a druid sentence marked by her own and her husband's ritual sacrifice.

Along with its connection with the Greek tragedy, *Norma* is subliminally fueled by a political theme that remained at the core of the Italian society in the 1830s; in the opera, Norma was a druid priestess who had secretly fallen in love with Pollione, the leader of the Roman troops that occupied the Gaul and subjugated the Celts. The druids keep waiting for a rebellion that would grant them the freedom from the Romans, but instead, by the end of the opera, they find out that their spiritual leader has betrayed her people and formed a family with the enemy. This is why the act of revenge against the lover's betrayal from *Medea* is now changed by a ritual sentence purging with fire the treason of the druid's leader and her lover¹⁰.

According to Gaspare Nello Vetro, there is not an extant autographed *Norma* manuscript by Bottesini; the existent source corresponds to a copy made in Turin in 1938 by Pasquale Forgione, who was a double bassist and a composer and claimed that the original manuscript was owned by an unknown orchestra professor¹¹. On the other hand, the complexity of the work along with the structural similarities shared with other paraphrases upon Bellini's operas might be sufficient evidence of its authenticity. Furthermore, it is important to keep in mind that many of these pieces were intended to be performed by their own composers, usually on concert tours; it is well known that in the case of Bottesini, the same piece was often readapted and modified, depending on the particular occasion where the performance would take place. These constant changes affected not only the length of the works but also the tonalities, along with the inner form and even their titles. Flavio Arpini

¹⁰ For a deeper view on the relationship between Italian music and Italian politics during the mid 1800's, see Mary Ann Smart, "Italian Music and Italian Politics in the Parisian Salon" in *19th-century Music*, 34, 1 (summer, 2010), pp. 39-60.

¹¹ Gaspare Nello Vetro, "Elenco delle Composizioni e delle Edizioni", *Giovanni Bottesini*, Nello Vetro (ed.), Parma: Centro studi e Ricerche dell'Amministrazione dell'Università degli Studi di Parma, 1989, p. 174.

points out that constant re-editions of the same works make very difficult to certify the authenticity of many versions along with the actual dates for their compositions¹².

If indeed composed by Bottesini, his *Fantasia sulla "Norma"* offers a more mature compositional language nurtured by the awareness of a wider span of thematic bonds along the work and a deeper relationship with the original score. Bottesini provided a wealthy web of motivic connections along with a more fluid dramatic line shared with equal prominence in the bass part as in the piano part. From the beginning of the piece, Bottesini generated a symbiotic union between the double bass and the piano to portray the opening of *Norma's* second act with its renown solo for the violoncello section that was also borrowed by Frédéric Chopin in his *"Cello" Etude*. In the opera the solo line of the *celli* would serve as the basis for Norma's *"Teneri, teneri figli"*. Example 5 shows the lines between the bass part and the singer for this section.

Bottesini's <i>Norma</i> , mm. 20-31	Bellini's <i>Norma</i> . Act II, "Teneri, figli"
<p>EXAMPLE 5. First double bass entrance in Bottesini's <i>Norma</i> compared with "Teneri figli" from Bellini's Act II¹³.</p>	

The next section of borrowed material also demonstrates Bottesini's awareness of the melodic fluidity and instrumental integration in Bellini's operas; as mentioned before, some of the most noteworthy numbers in Bellini's operas are introduced by the orchestra as a way to set the atmosphere that would enhance the expressive character of the singer. When Bottesini paraphrased these kind of shared materials between orchestra and soloist, he also acknowledges the subtle differences in rhythm and articulation that the voice part could have against the orchestral introduction; in these situations Bottesini follows the same

¹² Flavio Arpini, "I Concerti di Giovanni Bottesini: Problemi della Definizione del Testo Musicale," in Giovanni Bottesini Concertista e Compositore: Esecuzione, Ricezione e Definizione del Testo Musicalei, Flavio Arpini (ed.), Crema: Centro Culturale S. Agostino, 1996, pp. 115-29.

¹³ If otherwise annotated, the music examples in this section for the comparisons between Bottesini's and Bellini's *Norma* are taken from Giovanni Bottesini, *Fantasia Sulla "Norma di Bellini"*, Mario Ricciuti (ed.), Bologna: Edizioni Bongiovanni, 1984 and from Vincenzo Bellini, *Norma*, Opera in two Acts with Libretto by Felice Romani, Milan: G. Ricordi, 1898. In the examples for Bottesini's Beatrice the bass part is written for solo-tuning, therefore these examples would sound a tone higher.

pattern from the material presented by the singer but keeps part of the rhythmic variances that were initially presented by the orchestra. Examples 6 and 7 summarize two occasions where the bass line absorbs some of the differences in rhythm and articulation from the orchestral introduction at the same time that produce a warm rendition of the voice line. Example 7 corresponds to the famous “Casta diva” which is in part very responsible for the popularity that the opera (as well as the Fantasia) has maintained alive in our present days.



Bottesini’s <i>Norma</i> , mm. 68-82	Bellini’s “ <i>Ah, bello a me ritorna</i> .” Act 1, Scene 4.
<p>EXAMPLE 6. Comparison between Bottesini paraphrase of “<i>Ah, bello a me ritorna</i>” and its original material by Bellini.</p>	

Bottesini’s <i>Norma</i> , mm. 114-121	Bellini’s <i>Norma</i> . “ <i>Casta diva</i> .” Act I, Scene 4. mm. 63-73.
<p>EXAMPLE 7. Bottesini’s rendition of “<i>Casta diva</i>” compared with the original material by Norma.</p>	

The last section of the paraphrases (mm. 143-191) also provides a striking example of thematic integration that only Bottesini could have developed in a mature state of musical reflection. The final section starts with the soloist playing the melody that initially in the opera was presented the Celts choir and later passed to Oroveso; Norma’s father and Druid leader. As the choir’s “*Dell’auratua profetica*” and Oroveso’s “*Si: parlerà terribile*” integrate, the bass line leads into a virtuoso finale on original material that provides the

triumphal energy to close the whole work in a tone of victory; but right before the end this sparkling-coda ends up in a magnificent return of Oroveso's line that enhances even more the bravura character that closes the fantasia.

Example 8 provides the initial measures of Bottesini's theme along with the first interjection of Oroveso after the choir part.

Bottesini's <i>Norma</i> , mm. 144-153	Bellini's <i>Norma</i> , "Sì; parlerà terribile." Act I, Scene 1.
	
<p>EXAMPLE 8. Last material borrowed by Bottesini in <i>Norma</i> compared with Oroveso's original entrance in Act I.</p>	

Again, as with the other operatic paraphrases, a closing diagram (Diagram 2) summarizes the most relevant formal and tonal relationships of the piece contrasted with the materials borrowed from Bellini's opera.

	Section I	Section II	Section III	Section IV	Section V	Section VI	Section VII
Bottesini	mm. 1 – 58	mm. 59 - 68	mm. 69 – 104	mm. 104 – 110	mm. 111 – 131	mm. 133 – 142	mm. 143 - 191
	Opening piano introduction and first entrance of the double bass.	Piano interlude	Allegro moderato Theme followed by a virtuoso finale	Maestoso Piano interlude that serves as short transition	Andante sostenuto assai	Allegro Piano interlude that concludes the previous section	Andante con moto – piú mosso
	Keys: F#m – A	Cm	C – G – C	C – A	A	A – E	A
Bellini	Act II, <i>Introduzione</i> and Scene 1 Norma's "Teneri, teneri figli..."	Opening <i>Sinfonia</i> mm. 25 – 27 and 76 – 79	Act I, Scene 4 Norma's "Ah, bello a me ritorna"	Act I, Scene 4	Act I, Scene 4 Norma's "Casta Diva"	Act I, Scene 4 Orchestral closure for the previous scene	Act I, Scene 1 Choir's "Dell'auratua profetica" and Orovoso's "Sì; parlerà terribile"
	Keys: Dm – F	Cm (25 – 26) and Bb (76 – 79)	F – C – F	C	F	F – Bb	G
	The <i>Fantasia</i> opens, emulating the beginning of Bellini's Act II. The entrance of the bass line corresponds to the famous cello line from the opera that bars later would reappear in Norma's "Teneri, teneri figli..." Bottesini's bars 23 – 37 might represent the original cello line whereas the repeated variation from bars 38 – 58 match the line taken by Norma.	This is a brief passage that builds tension up as it arrives to dominant in order to prepare the entrance of the bass in the next section.	The sections starts with the bass portraying Bellini's orchestral introduction to Norma's main theme. Bottesini emulates Norma's material but keeping the dotted rhythm from the opening accompaniment. The section closes with a short variation that leads into an ecstatic finale.	The interlude is mainly based on the dotted rhythm orchestral material that closes the Scene 4 of Act. I.	The bass initially presents material corresponding to the orchestral introduction to Norma's famous aria. As a varied repetition, the bass presents "Casta diva" while the piano emulates the choral and orchestral accompaniment. The bass line ends with a virtuosic fioritura that adopts the closing gestures from the original aria.	The piano part consist of a literal orchestral reduction of the original score.	The final section begins with the bass taking a theme initially presented on the choir and then transferred to Norma's father Orovoso. This section is interpolated with a virtuoso display by a solo line that would reappear after the Orovoso's material is completed in order to close the whole work.

DIAGRAM 2. Giovanni Bottesini, *Fantasia sulla "Norma di Bellini."* Formal Diagram: Basic formal structure on the whole work and thematic relationships from Bellini's opera¹⁴.

¹⁴ The measure numbers for Bottesini's work are taken from Bottesini, *Fantasia Sulla "Norma di Bellini"*.

Before concluding the subject of Bottesini's *Norma*, it is important to point out the influence of Bellini on Chopin's writing and how Bottesini returns to *Norma* acknowledging this reference. As mentioned above, the introduction to the second act of the opera was later adopted by Chopin in his *Piano Etude Op. 25, no. 7* (composed in 1834). This etude became popularly known as the "Cello" Etude and is intended to develop in the pianist the ability to sustain the long-breathed melodies for which Bellini was so influential in his time. Well aware of this connection, Bottesini returned to *Norma* but this time through Chopin's rendition to present a modified transcription of the etude in a refreshing arrangement for voice, double bass and piano where the bass part keeps the same line that maintained in the *Fantasia sulla "Norma."* Now under the title "*Tutto il Mondo Serra,*" or also "*Chopin Terzetto,*" Bottesini provides additional evidence of his deep impression and knowledge of Bellini's work, as well as marks a stretch bond with his alleged "illegitimate" *Fantasia*.

Bellini's introduction for Act II with the introduction of the cello soli.	Chopin, <i>Piano Etude Op. 25 no.7 in C-sharp minor</i>	Bottesini, <i>Tutto il Mondo Serra</i>

EXAMPLE 9. Chopin's *Etude* based on the introduction of *Norma's* Act II. Bottesini's arrangement for voice, double bass and piano upon Chopin's *Etude*.

Souvenir de “La Beatrice di Tenda

Bellini's *Beatrice di Tenda* is a tragic opera in two acts on a libretto by Felice Romani after a play under the same title by Carlo Tebaldi Fores. The opera premiered on March 16, 1833 at Teatro La Fenice in Venice. *Beatrice di Tenda* is Bellini's penultimate opera, composed after *Norma* and shortly before *I Puritani*; furthermore, this opera marks the end of the collaborations between Bellini and Romani.

The plot of the opera is set in the Castle of Binasco (Milan) by the year 1418. Beatrice is a widow whose new husband, Duke Filippo, is only interested in Beatrice's possessions. The mix of confusion and jealousy prepares the perfect conditions for Filippo having Beatrice unfairly arrested for her falsely attributed infidelity. Beatrice and Orombello, who secretly loved Beatrice but was never reciprocally corresponded, are incarcerated, judged and tortured to death. The moments of rage by many of the characters throughout the opera are balanced with overwhelming expressions of remorse and tender forgiveness.

Bottesini's *Fantasia “Souvenir de ‘La Beatrice di Tenda,’*” as it is titled in its original version is also one of his earliest compositions for the double bass; apparently, *Beatrice di Tenda* was also included in Bottesini's concert from 1843, which is considered Bottesini's debut as a professional musician. According to Ovidiu Badila, this fantasia was so successful that Bottesini kept including it in his programs, and over the course of the years he modified the piece so its structure would resemble his other fantasias¹⁵.

Bottesini borrows melodic material for the double bass line from three different sections of the opera; as in the other pieces included here, these internal paraphrases are announced by a short introduction and separated from each other by a short interlude and the last paraphrase (mm. 150-185) leads directly into a brilliantly virtuosio finale. Bottesini's *Beatrice* opens with the piano introduction alluding the middle part of the orchestral *Preludio* (mm. 25-48 from the original opera); this introduction is smoothly connected to the first entrance of the double bass as a *Recitativo* that would resemble Beatrice's part later in the opera (Scene 5 from Act 1) where Bellini returned to the same material from the *Preludio* to prepare Beatrice's “*Respiro io qui.*”

The first melodic material in the double bass part that holds a thematic connection with the singers' part appears between measures 35 and 68; in this section Bottesini emulates Agnes' “*Ab! Non pensar che pieno*” from the begging of Act I. In the opera, Agnes' first part is shortly interjected by Filippo and then she provides an ornamented repetition; Bottesini took advantage of this virtuosio repetition and also presented the material twice, but its reappearance is an octave higher. These materials are presented in Example 10.


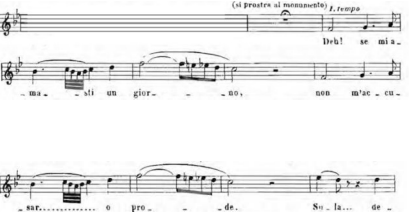
¹⁵ Ovidiu Badila, Liner notes to *The Best of Bottesini Vol. I: Fantasias and Variations*. Ovidiu Badila, doublebass, and Antonella Contantini, piano, Genova, Italy: Dynamic, CDS 122, 1994. CD.

Bottesini's <i>Beatrice di Tenda</i> , mm. 35-43	Bellini's <i>Beatrice di Tenda</i> . Agnes' "Ah! Non pensar che pieno"
<p>EXAMPLE 10. Comparison between Bottesini's rendition of "Ah! Non pensar che pieno" and Bellini's original line by Agnes in Act 1¹⁶.</p>	



In the section between bars 81 and 135 from the *Fantasia*, Bottesini rearranged two materials that appeared in the opera at different times. Initially, in the opening *Preludio* Bellini introduced the melody that later would precede Beatrice's "Il mio dolore" later in the first act; in Beatrice's line, Bellini only used the first eight bars from the *Preludio* following a melodic development with more freedom. When Bottesini reused this material, he clearly was alluding to Beatrice's number, but instead of paraphrasing just the first eight bars from "Il mio dolore"

Bottesini decided to connect Beatrice's fragment with the original source from the *Preludio* providing a twenty-bars long rendition. Example 11 points out the connection between Bottesini's complete melody and Beatrice's "Il mio dolore".

¹⁶ Unless otherwise annotated, the music examples in this section for the comparisons between Bottesini's and Bellini's *Beatrice di Tenda* are taken from Giovanni Bottesini, *Fantasia Beatrice di Tenda*, Gergely Járdányi (ed.), Budapest: Akkord Music, 2000, and from Vincenzo Bellini, *Beatrice di Tenda*, Opera in two Acts with Libretto by Felice Romani, Milan: G. Ricordi, 1870. In the examples for Bottesini's *Beatrice* the bass part is written for solo-tuning, therefore these examples would sound a tone higher.

Bottesini's <i>Beatrice di Tenda</i> , mm. 83-101	Bellini's <i>Beatrice di Tenda</i> . Middle section from <i>Beatrice's "Il mio dolore"</i> from Act I
	
<p>EXAMPLE 11. Comparison between Bottesini's material and Beatrice's "Il mio dolore" from Act I</p>	

Example 12 provides another example where Bottesini rearranges an ensemble section and condenses the melodic material in the bass line. In Act II, before "Al tuo fallo ammenda" is fully consolidated, Beatrice begins introducing the theme briefly, and gradually each character introduces a new motive until the complete melodic line is collectively constructed. In Bottesini's paraphrase the originally dispersed materials are united into a continuous line that keeps the same character and simplicity of Beatrice's entrance since its very beginning.

Bottesini's <i>Beatrice di Tenda</i> , mm. 150-159	Bellini's <i>Beatrice di Tenda</i> . Beatrice and Agnese's parts in the quintet "Al tuo fallo ammenda" from Act II.
	
<p>EXAMPLE 12. Bottesini's arrangement for the bass on Bellini's "Al tuo fallo" quintet from Act II.</p>	

Despite the poor success of the original opera, Bottesini's *Fantasia on Beatrice di Tenda* proves to be more than a transcription exercise and approaches the opera with remarkable

commitment. Instead of providing a list of singable tunes for the double bass, Bottesini creates a deep study of the opera and its thematic connections; different sections are reconstructed in order to provide a fluid rendition with a coherent formal structure and organic development. Diagram 3 summarizes the most relevant relationships between Bottesini's *Fantasia* and Bellini's opera along with the tonal structures for each section

	Section I	Section II	Section III	Section IV	Section V	Section VI	Section VII
Bottesini	mm. 1 – 34	mm. 35 – 68	mm. 69 – 80	mm. 81 – 135	mm. 135– 149	Despite mm. 150 –185	mm. 186 - 227
	Piano introduction and Recitativo by the bass (mm. 18 – 34)	Cantabile section with a 12 bars-melody that repeats an octave higher; the ending for each presentation is slightly varied.	Allegro Piano interlude	Meno mosso followed by a Più mosso virtuoso display on the double bass.	Piano interlude	Andante	Andante – Allegro - Andante
	A – E – (A)	A	E♭– C	C	C – E	A	A – E – A
Bellini	Opening Preludio, mm. 25 – 48. This material reappears at the beginning of Act I, Scene 5.	Act I, Scene 1. Agnese's "Ah! Non pensar che pieno"		Opening Preludio, mm. 58 – 81, and later on Beatrice's "Il mio dolore" from the finale for Act I.		Act II, "Al tuo fallo ammenda"	Act II, Finale. "Angiol di pace all's anima"
	B♭. E (Act I, Sc. 5)	B♭		B♭		E♭	A♭
	Bottesini opens the piece, transcribing the middle section from Bellini's Preludio. Then, at the opening of Scene 5 from Act I, Bellini used the same material preceding Beatrice's "Respiro io qui"; the voice line has a few cadenza-like gestures that seems to be paraphrased by Bottesini in the Recitativo.	In the opera, Agnese's line is briefly interjected by Filippo; after that Agnese repeats her material with a more virtuosic gesture. Bottesini kept the repetition of the melody changing the end and transposing the repetition and octave higher.	This transition is mainly based on Bottesini's original material. Nevertheless along the opera "quasi-tremolo" sixteenth-figures followed by rests are very prominent. The rhythm that closes the interlude seems to paraphrase the orchestral accompaniment from Agnese and Orombello's duet from Act I, Scene 3.	Bottesini rearranged the line that is shared by different instruments in the opening Preludio (mm. 58 – 81). Bellini returned to this material in the orchestral introduction for Beatrice's aria from Act I, and also in the aria itself; but in this section only the first eight bars are taken from the prelude. Bottesini developed the whole melodic material from the Preludio and connected it with a virtuoso closing variation.	Another transition based on original material by Bottesini. The rhythm from 77 to 80, from the previous interlude, returns between bars 135 and 140.	In the opera, Beatrice opens the section and is followed by Orombello; gradually the other characters join in with brief motives until the quintet is fully empowered. Bottesini's borrowing condenses the repetition of small melodic cells and provides the uninterrupted melodic material.	In the original Orombello and Beatrice's final duet an eight-bars melody is presented by Orombello, and quickly repeated by Beatrice. In Bottesini's rendition the first eight bars lead into a brilliant finale with a short return of the main theme eight bars before the triumphal closing of the Fantasia.

DIAGRAM 3. Giovanni Bottesini, *Fantasia "Beatrice di Tenda"*, Formal Diagram: Basic formal structure on the whole work and thematic relationships from Bellini's opera¹⁷.

¹⁷ The measure numbers for Bottesini's work are taken from Giovanni Bottesini, *Fantasia Beatrice di Tenda, per contrabasso e pianoforte*.

Fantasia sui “I Puritani”

I Puritani was the last opera composed by Bellini; it was premiered at the Théâtre Italien in Paris on January 24 of 1835 and Bellini died at the age of 33 on September 23, 1835. The contract for the opera was signed in Paris on 1834, and due to recent conflicts between Bellini and his traditional librettist, Felice Romani, during the production of *Beatrice di Tenda*, the composer decided to work with a new writer: Carlo Pepoli. Pepoli was the descendant of a noble Italian family and was a revolutionary journalist residing in Paris with almost no experience as a librettist.

Pepoli's libretto is based upon the play *Têtes Rondes et Cavaliers* by Jacques Ancelot and Joseph Xavier Saintine; the initial title for the libretto was “*I Puritani e I Cavalieri – Opera-seria in due Parti*,” but then it was later modified to “*I Puritani*” partly because of the popularity of Walter Scott's novel *Old Mortality* published in 1816 and translated a year later under the title *Les Puritains d'Escoffe*¹⁸. The plot for the opera is set in England around the 1640s during the English Civil War. As in many of Bellini's stories, the main characters are immersed in an impossible-love relationship as they belong to rival families or opposite political forces; in *I Puritani*, Elvira (daughter of Lord Valton, a Puritan supporter) has been promised in marriage to Sir Riccardo Forth (also a leader of the Puritan forces). The conflict arises when Elvira confesses her love for Lord Arturo Talbo (a Royalist) who escapes from prison trying to save Enrichetta (widow of the late King Charles I) from a certain death; as Elvira sees her lover (Arturo) escaping with another woman, who is disguised as wedding bride, she assumes that she has been betrayed by Arturo and loses her mind. As the opera reaches the third act, Elvira and Arturo (who is still a fugitive) meet again and clear out this romantic confusion promising each other not to be separated again; the only problem for the couple is the death warrant on Arturo's head. As the newly reunited lovers confess their love, soldiers commanded by Riccardo apprehend Arturo and prepare his execution. Right before the end of the opera, soldiers reappear with the happy announcement that the Royalist were defeated and Oliver Cromwell has pardoned all the prisoners; a surprising twist in the plot provides the joyful and lasting reencounter of Elvira and Arturo.

Bottesini composed two paraphrases on *I Puritani*: a duo concertante for violoncello, double bass and orchestra composed under the title *Duo concertant sur les thèmes des Puritains, pour violoncello et contrabasse*, which Bottesini performed during the 1851 concert seasons in London and Paris with his cellist friend Alfredo Piatti, and the *Fantasia “I Puritani”* that he played for the first time as an encore to his concert at La Scala on July 22, 1858. Both versions share a large amount of the material borrowed from Bellini's opera, and both are also

¹⁸ See Simon Maguire, Elizabeth Forbes, and Julian Budden, “I Puritani”, *Grove Music Online*. January 01, 2002. Oxford University Press. Accessed on August 25 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

highly challenging from a technical and musical point of view, suggesting a more mature composer in comparison with the previous *fantasias*.

In his *Fantasia* for double bass and piano, Bottesini provides borrowed material in the bassline in two different moments, but in both of them he transcends the act of transcribing in order to rearrange the music from different characters, integrating them into a single and continuous thematic material. First, between mm. 55 and 91, the solo line uses different fragments from the quartet “*A te, o cara*” from Act I. Initially the soloist develops the opening bars of Arturo’s line (this material had been previously introduced by the woodwinds) and eight bars later connects it with another melody in double stops (m. 63) that condenses Giorgio and Lord Valton’s response to Arturo, and finally it connects again with a new line that represents Arturo and Elvira’s interjections. Example 13 shows the connection between the fragments of the opera and the bassline.

Bottesini's <i>I Puritani</i> , mm. 55-69	Bellini's <i>I Puritani</i> , quartet “ <i>A te, o cara</i> ” form Act I.
<p>EXAMPLE 13. Material from Bellini’s quartet “<i>A te, o cara</i>” developed through the bass line by Bottesini¹⁹</p>	

Between measures 105 and 138, Bottesini borrows a material again from Arturo’s part, but develops the material by suggesting a virtuoso variation for the repetition of the previously presented theme; the initial transcription comes from the vocal line in Arturo’s “*Nel mirarti un solo instante*” from Act III. Example 14 shows the connection between the

¹⁹ Unless otherwise annotated, the music examples in this section for the comparisons between Bottesini’s and Bellini’s *I Puritani*, are taken from Giovanni Bottesini, *Fantasia “I Puritani” Yorke Complete Bottesini: for Double Bass and Piano*, Rodney Slatford (ed.), vol. 2, London: Yorke Edition, 1978, pp. 19-38, and from Bellini’s *I Puritani*, Opera in three Acts with Libretto by Carlo Pepoli, Milan: G. Ricordi, 1897. Reprint edition, New York: E. F. Kalmus, 1960.

two pieces. The varied repetition (omitted in the example) is based in different patterns of scales and arpeggios above a continuous rhythmic pattern that prolongs the harmony from the thematic material that opened this section.

Bottesini's <i>I Puritani</i> , mm. 104 - 120	Arturo's " <i>Nel mirarti un solo instante</i> " in Act III from Bellini's <i>I Puritani</i> Arturo's " <i>Nel mirarti un solo instante</i> " in Act III from Bellini's <i>I Puritani</i>
<p>EXAMPLE 14: Arturo's "<i>Nel mirarti un solo instante</i>" initially transcribed on the bass part</p>	

Although the remaining parts of the *Fantasia* in the bass line present newly composed material, in the piano part there is a rich web of interconnected references to different parts of the opera. As mentioned before for other paraphrases, in Bellini the orchestral accompaniment has a leading role along the dramatic discourse of the opera; many times, the orchestra prepares the audience by anticipating the main melodic elements that would be presented by the singers, and at other times, the accompaniment from previous sections reappears in different numbers unifying the thematic material and providing an organic flow for the opera. In Bottesini's *I Puritani*, the piano accompaniment also has this unifying functions as borrowed material from the orchestra when the bass line is silent or is presenting a completely original line; this can be seen between bars 149 and 183, where a newly composed material for the bass is supported by the accompaniment from a previous interlude (bars 92-104) that also serves as a thematic development for Elvira's "*A tusorridi*" which was never presented on the bass part. Diagram 4 summarizes all the thematic relationships between the opera and Bottesini's *fantasia* as well as indicates the sections where the piano is also borrowing equally important material from the opera.

	Section I	Section II	Section III	Section IV	Section V	Section VI	Section VII
Bottesini	mm. 1 – 54	mm. 55 – 91	mm. 92 – 104	mm. 105 – 138	mm. 139 – 148	mm. 149 – 183	mm. 184 – 286
	Piano Introduction and flourishing entrance by the bass (mm. 52 – 54)	Cantabile - Poco meno	<i>Allegretto</i> Piano interlude	<i>Espressivo</i> bass entrance after the interlude and variation	Piano interlude	Continuation of the material borrowed in Section III	Cantabile leading into a short <i>cadenza</i> that prepares a brilliant finale.
	G	G – Em – G	Em – G	G	G – Em	Em	G – D – G
Bellini	Opening <i>Sinfonia</i>	Act I, Scene 3 Quartet “ <i>A te, o cara</i> ”	Act II, Scene 3 Elvira’s “ <i>A tu sorridi</i> ”	Act III, Scene 2 Arturo’s “ <i>Nel mirarti un solo instante</i> ”	Act III, Scene 2 <i>Più mosso</i>	Act II, Scene 3 Elvira’s “ <i>A tu sorridi</i> ”	
	D	D – Bm – D	Bb – Gm	C	C	Gm	
	Bottesini’s introduction is based literally on bars 1 - 50 from Bellini’s orchestral introduction to Act I.	Bottesini placed on the bass Arturo’s opening part along with the dotted rhythm form woodwinds accompaniment. The ensemble section is portrayed by the double stops in the bass part and then is transferred to the piano part. The virtuoso accompaniment displayed on the bass when the piano has the thematic material emulates the orchestral accompaniment to the ensemble singing.	The interlude is based on the woodwinds accompaniment that prepares Elvira’s entrance. In Bellini’s opera this material will reappear at the end of Act 3. Bottesini completed the transcription of this accompaniment in bar 150 (Section VI).	In bars 105 to 119 Bottesini transcribed Arturo’s line but added the dotted rhythm from the instrumental introduction. Bars 120 to 138 are a variation from the preceding section where the bass provides a virtuoso accompaniment above the same harmonic patterns of the initial theme.	Bottesini’s material is loosely based on the orchestral accompaniment for Elvira and Arturo’s duet that closes the Scene 2.	Bottesini continued in the bass line the material that followed, in Bellini’s original, the accompaniment for Elvira’s aria. The interlude from Section III presented the first eight bars of Bellini’s material; this section starts from the ninth bar of that material. In bars 170 to 183 the bass provides the accompaniment meanwhile the piano returns the melodic material from the interlude in Section III.	Original material; not borrowed from Bellini’s opera.

DIAGRAM 4. Giovanni Bottesini, *Fantasia “I Puritani”*. Formal Diagram: Basic formal structure on the whole work and thematic relationships from Bellini’s opera²⁰.

²⁰ The measure numbers for Bottesini’s work are taken from Giovanni Bottesini, *Yorke Complete Bottesini: for Double Bass and Piano*, pp. 19–38. Although Bottesini’s original piece was composed in A major, to be played with solo scordatura, Slatford provides an edition in G major to be played in orchestral tuning.

The case of two more works: *La Straniera* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*

Although *La Straniera* is technically speaking a “*Fantasia*,” it does not have many textual references to the original opera. Most of the work is based on newly composed material except from a theme and variations in the middle of the work; the only paraphrased material corresponds to Valdeburgo’s part “*Giovin rosa, il vergine*” from his duet with Isoletta in the first act of the opera. Apart from this reference, there are no more connections with Bellini’s opera. With *Lucia di Lammermoor*, the situation is similar to what happens with *La Straniera*; the original title of the piece is *Fantasia su motivi della “Lucia di Lammermoor” di Donizetti*; and just as the title implies, the work does not provide a direct thematic reference to original opera; probably because the vocal style of Donizetti, the long-breath melodies are not presented in the bass part and the piece is limited to a virtuoso writing.

Both pieces are expressive and worth studying, but for the purposes of this paper, this situation defies the possibility of tracing the lines of the original operas along the double bass paraphrases.

Conclusions from the “Tracing Process”

After reviewing the compositional techniques and the different approaches that Bottesini adopted for this selection of operatic paraphrases, various similarities arise creating connections with a wider span of contexts and also point out challenging enterprises for the performers.

Most of these works can be divided into sections. The *Fantasias* included in this study seem to be organized in seven sections containing introductions and piano interludes in between more relevant, or thematically exposed regions, for the soloist. In almost every internal section devoted to the soloist there is a direct reference to the paraphrased opera, in many cases these references transcend the technique of literal transcriptions and become a recomposition that synthesizes larger amounts of material through a fluid and organic melodic line in the double bass part and also in the accompaniment.

Accordingly, in many sections the melodic material presented in the bass solo is not exclusively presented in the vocal parts of the original operas; many vocal sections are prepared by an instrumental introduction, which without being exactly the same as the vocal lines, that anticipates the most relevant melodic materials. When Bottesini presented his renditions of this material, the differences between the instrumental accompaniment and the vocal sections are integrated; in this way Bottesini kept the warmth emotion or expressive qualities of the voice at the same time that developed an idiomatic language for the double bass adapted through the motivic development and formal growth more typically found in instrumental literature.

Additionally, the solo sections interplay with introductions and interludes that could be based on newly composed material. Most of the tonal structure of the works is determined by the idiomatic writing for the instrument; therefore, the borrowed materials do not keep the same tonalities presented in the original operas and may generate a static state for the tonal discourse. From this point of view the piano interludes are essential for the dramatic unfolding of the compositions, as they could provide additional paraphrases and intensify the thematic connections throughout the piece; they also allow the soloist to recover the strength needed to play the remaining sections, and provably more important: they provide tonal variety at the core of each work as they also prepare different changes of meter, tempo and timbre.

Lastly, the operatic paraphrases provided Bottesini with a large number of compositional devices and the possibility of combining them into a large-scale form characterized by improvisatory and experimental character. At the same time it allowed him to gain the attention from audiences whose aesthetic expectations were determined in part by the success of Italian opera and as well its influence on other instruments' virtuoso repertoire, especially the piano and the violin²¹

Closing Tips and Suggestions to Grasp the Vocal Qualities Through the Double Bass

At this point, the reader probably has a more comprehensive recollection of the specific materials that Bottesini transferred into the double bass line along each of his most popular operatic paraphrases. The next challenge would be finding a way to enhance the vocal and emotional qualities demanded by the composer; one of the main purposes of this research is to point to the variety of expressive possibilities that the performer could explore from his awareness of the thematic relationships with each opera. Some of the suggestions in order to expand the performers expressive possibilities are:

Have a close contact with different versions of each opera upon which the paraphrase is based. Nowadays is progressively easier to access larger amounts of information, on the other hand our time seems to be more limited for anything. This is why it is important to maximize our attention, especially to every detail that could enhance our interpretation of the work.

Just as important to know the original operas borrowed by Bottesini, it is also very important to pay close attention to different instrumental paraphrases by virtuosi compo-

²¹ Jaime Ramirez-Castilla, "Musical Borrowings in the Music for Double Bass by Giovanni Bottesini: Reconsideration Beyond the Operatic Paraphrases," D.M.A. diss., University of Cincinnati, 2007, p. 67.

sers that could have borrowed the same materials in many different ways. In special Liszt and Thalberg have composed their own operatic paraphrases on the same operas used by Bottesini; sometimes, composers like Liszt even composed more than one paraphrase on the same opera. Knowing the kind of instrumental virtuosity exploited by other composers might enrich our perspective just as Chopin's renditions of *Norma* affected Bottesini's recomposition of the same material.

Try to apply different techniques used by singers to reinforce their command of the texts in relationship with the music. Carol Kimbal has written extensively on effective drills and exercises to help singers find an emotional and rational connection with the text; reading aloud the texts (in its original language and in its translation) used in each paraphrased section would allow the performer to identify different emotional descriptors that could guide a sustain a richer as well as a more serious performance²². Be aware of the expressive power of the text in connection with the timbre, dynamic range and different articulations that can be transferred through the double bass. Furthermore, examine different approaches to performance practice of *Bel Canto*; Martha Elliott's observations on this issue can be illuminating for a bass player who needs to find a singer's voice through his instrument²³.

In order to find a better connection between the bass lines and the opera texts, Nicola Malagugini points out how Bellini's passed hours around the texts, repeating different words and finding their implicit directions; knowing that the text was the basis for the music from Bellini's perspective, it is important to stress the difference in the symbols that sometimes confuse phrasing with bowings. Especially in a context where most (if not all) of Bottesini's pieces were intended for his own performance, most of the articulations annotated on the page might be not as precise if the text initially set for the music is not considered. As a resource, Malagugini proposes to write the texts above the bass lines to correct the phrasing through the bow²⁴.

Finally, as a closing thought, probably the most important suggestion for every performer, and especially when working with Bottesini, would be to place the expressive power of the singing voice as guiding light for the technical dexterity. As in many occasions seasoned musicians recommend "Sing what you play and play what you sing."

²² See Carol Kimball, *Art Song: Linking Poetry and Music*, Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2013, pp. 57-103.

²³ See Martha Elliott, *Singing in Style: A guide to Vocal Performance Practices*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006, pp. 126-159.

²⁴ See Nicola Malagugini, "Le Fantasie di Bottesini alla luce della Poetica Belliniana", *Note Musicali Trimestrale dell'Istituto Superiore di studi musicali idi Caltanissetta*, II, 3 (2012), <http://www.nicolamalagugini.it/it/news/dettaglio/publicazioni>. Accessed 25 August 2018.