Gluck and the Map of Eighteenth-Century Europe
Conference Program

Friday, 17 October, 2014
2:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Session 1: Singers and Dancers

Welcoming remarks (Dr. Brian Locke)

Did Gluck Write for the Singers of the Paris Opéra?
Annalise Smith, Cornell University

Opera historiography presents Gluck as a composer who shaped his operas on the basis of his aesthetic ideals, not as a response to the qualities or demands of singers. In fact, when he went to Paris in 1773, his opera *Iphigénie en Aulide* was already composed and he had to instruct the singers in how to conform to his exacting standards. I will argue, however, that Gluck's subsequent works for Paris owe more to his dealings with singers than has previously been recognized. In 1769, the Académie Royale de Musique had a strictly hierarchical standing company of fifty-two singers in which only the premiers sujets, two to three singers in each voice type, were chosen to create new roles. Gluck worked primarily with Rosalie Levasseur, Joseph Legros, and Henri Larrivée. While this trio created the main roles in *Alceste*, *Armide*, and *Iphigénie en Tauride*, they also performed in operas as diverse in style as *Amadis de Gaule* by J.C. Bach and *Roland* by Piccinni. These singers did not share Gluck’s aesthetics, specialize in his musical style, or conform to his dramatic ideals. They were merely the best choice among a limited selection.

Philidor's *Ernelinde, princesse de Norvège* was revived in Paris shortly after Gluck's arrival, and a comparative, analytical score study indicates that Gluck's revisions to *Orphée* are modeled on Philidor's Italianate model. I assert that there are clear parallels between the two works that suggest that Gluck catered to the singers' demands in light of their experiences singing Ernelinde. At the most basic level, Gluck gave the singers more time on stage, as demonstrated by additional arias and ensembles for the main characters. Yet Gluck also compromised on his reformist ideals. The preface to *Alceste* condemned vocal display, yet in Paris Gluck added a florid ariette for the haute-contre Legros to sing at the end of Act I of *Orphée*. The virtuosic style of this piece finds a direct correlation in the role sung by Legros in *Ernelinde*. Though Gluck later eschewed such dramatic displays of virtuosity, similar Italianisms can be observed in later works such as *Armide*.

From Vivaldi to Gluck: On the Road with Anna Girò
Eleanor Selfridge-Field, Stanford University

The singer Anna Girò (1710-after 1749) is normally associated with Antonio Vivaldi, who cherished her performances for their dramatic qualities. Girò made her stage debut at 13 in Treviso. By 1730 she had also sung in Venice, Bologna, and Florence. Over the next decade she appeared in operas in Ancona, Ferrara, Mantua, Milan, Pavia, Turin, and Verona,
while remaining mainly in Venice. She appeared with Faustina Bordoni and other luminaries of the opera world in Venice and elsewhere.

The final decade of her career (1739-1749) is pertinent to the turmoil that confronted Gluck as he attempted to establish himself as a composer. Vivaldi produced his last opera in 1739, went into hiding in 1740, and died in 1741. Girò, who had taken an independent direction years earlier, seemed to cope well with the need to depart from the standards of the *dramma per musica*. She also fared well in bilingual contexts and adapted to the requirements of traveling troupes, while coping with venues that were less than opulent and works that were more mongrel as time passed. In her final decade Girò appeared in five works produced by one or both Mingotti (in Graz), one in Vienna, three in Milan (one of which was Gluck’s *L’Ippolito*), two in Ferrara, and one each in Piacenza and Venice. Since libretti for pastiches given by traveling troupes often failed to name singers, it is possible that Girò appeared in other works, mainly in private venues in Austrian and Bohemia, during this same decade.

A dozen arias from Gluck’s *L’Ippolito* survive in the Swiss National Library. At least six of them were for Girò. They contrast sharply in character to the arias she had sung in Vivaldi’s operas, testifying to Girò’s considerable musical adaptability. The diversification of her career in its final decade offers evidence of her mastery of other styles as well. Girò married a nobleman from Piacenza in 1748 but took a curtain call with the Mingotti troupe when she appeared in the pastiche *Lucio Papirio dittatore* (Graz, 1749).

**Crossing Boundaries: Opera, Ballet, and Generic Mixtures in Parma and Vienna**

Margaret Butler, University of Florida

Important points on the eighteenth-century musical map, Parma and Vienna were the two greatest centers for French opera and ballet outside Paris around 1750. The Habsburg-Bourbon alliance united the cities’ powerful families; its variegated cultural and political milieu formed the backdrop for some of mid-century Europe’s most innovative stage entertainments.

In the years preceding Tommaso Traetta’s operas that synthesized French and Italian styles (of which *Ippolito ed Ariccia*, a reworking of Rameau’s *Hippolyte et Aricie*, is the most famous example), Parma mounted productions of French operas that were modified in creative ways. Falling between the two groups of works—French operas with additional arias and ensemble scenes on the one hand, and Traetta’s Italian operas with French dances and choruses on the other—was an adaptation that has up to now escaped notice: the repurposing of *Anacréon*, an entrée of Rameau’s opéra-ballet *Les surprises de l’amour*, as the balletto *Anacreonte* (1759) by Parma’s creative team: the poet Frugoni, court music director Mangot (Rameau’s brother-in-law) and choreographer Delisle. Vienna was to sponsor a similar reworking a few years later: Gluck’s opéra-comique *Cythère assiégée* as the ballo pantomimo *Citera assediata* (1762), choreographed by Angiolini. In this paper I examine the adaptation processes evident in these cross-over pairs, exploring issues of authorship, reception, cosmopolitanism, and the fluidity of texts as the genres intermingled in each cultural center. Although the ballets conveyed different messages to their respective audiences, both carried significant political implications. The transformations they represent point to a generic fluidity that united disparate communities, one whose importance merits reevaluation.
The many versions of Gluck’s *Orfeo ed Euridice* have long enticed choreographers to assume the role of overall stage director in bringing the opera to the stage. Dalcroze’s experimental efforts working with the designer Adolph Appia, at Hellerau in 1912, yielded a new gestural language that aligned Gluck’s handling of the myth with modernist aesthetics. In the 1970s, the choreographer Pina Bausch directed Gluck’s *Orfeo* and *Iphigenia in Tauris* as what she called *Tanzopern*—an approach David Levin has recently referred to as *Choreographieoper*. Mark Morris, Lucinda Childs and Christian Spuck have subsequently directed *Orfeo* in ways that reflect their individual choreographic styles.

Building on Levin’s appraisal of Bausch’s operatic endeavors, this paper focuses on stage director Robert Carsen’s production of *Iphegénie en Tauride*. Carsen’s career as a director developed out of his training as an actor, yet his affinity for dance—a formally significant element of much eighteenth-century opera that has often been deemphasized in modern productions—was revealed in striking ways in his 2003 Paris production of Rameau’s *Les Boréades* (designed by Michael Levine). Carsen’s 2006 stagings of *Orfeo* and *Iphegénie en Tauride* were developed at the Chicago Lyric Opera in conjunction with the designer Tobias Hoheisel, and have since been mounted in other cities. In both productions, choreography and groups of dancers are integral to the gestural language and dramatic narratives throughout. In *Iphegénie en Tauride*, Carsen multiplies the eponymous protagonist’s plight through a generous process of character doubling—another strategy of integration that derives its energy from the work’s own bold efforts to overcome formal fragmentation. Carsen’s approach, as I will demonstrate, absorbs this impulse and realizes its potential across different dimensions, with choreography playing a central role.

**7:30 pm: Concert 1, featuring the WIU Symphony Orchestra, cond. Dr. Richard Hughey**

- Gluck, *Sinfonia to L’innocenza giustificata*
- *Don Juan* (shortened version by the composer)
- Mysliveček, Violin Concerto in D major (Stephan Schardt, soloist)
- Mozart, Chaconne from *Idomeneo*
The 'Failure' of the Giants: Pasticcio, Dramaturgy, and the Problem of Meaning in Gluck's Early Career
Brian Locke, Western Illinois University

Gluck's half-year sojourn in London—starting in late 1745, amid the tumultuous days of the Jacobite rebellion—provides a quandary for historians of his career. After eight successful opere serie with original music for theaters in Northern Italy, Gluck produced only two theatrical works for London, termed “pasticcios” by most biographers. The first of these, La caduta de' giganti (“The Fall of the Giants,” 7 January 1746), drew on almost twenty of his own preexistent arias. The plot, credited to the King’s Theatre director, Francesco Vanneschi, was an allegorical occasional piece dedicated to William, Duke of Cumberland that enacted the victory of the Olympian gods (the Hanoverian forces) over the rebellious Titans (Bonnie Prince Charlie and the Catholic Scots). Besides this general concept, however, its allegory rarely stays coherent: a love-quadrangle emerges among the Olympians, while the Titans comment on the gods' tyranny. As Barclay Squire quipped in 1915, “It is hardly to be wondered at that this precious farrago met with but little success.”

The main line of historiographical argument frequently places the pasticcio as an anomaly within a composer’s authorial identity; for several reasons, however, Gluck's two London operas figure problematically in this paradigm. The genre was something of a London specialty by the 1740s, especially prized when the composer acted as “pasticheur,” selecting the arias for their suitability to the task. Furthermore, the political agenda of the Caduta production (with a poetic English translation out of the Occasional Masque tradition) cannot be ignored, even if Gluck served merely as a convenient musical interloper.

In this paper I investigate Gluck and Vanneschi’s dramaturgy for Caduta, problematic though it may be. Indeed, Gluck’s transplanted arias may have conveyed little narrative coherence to anyone but himself: any specific intertextuality—between, say, Tigrane, Sofonisba, and Caduta, if it existed for the composer—would be lost on a London audience unacquainted with his previous operas. As I suggest, we may reconsider Burney’s statement that Gluck “then studied the English taste; [and] remarked particularly what the audience seemed most to feel” in light of larger, musico-dramatic relationships. Far from abandoning the genre, Gluck continued elements of pasticcio, with greater attention to dramaturgical outcome, for the remainder of his career.

Gluck, Boccherini, and the Cosmopolitan Fandango
Michael Vincent, University of Florida

The cosmopolitan ideal pervaded the social, political, and intellectual spheres of the Enlightenment. A neoclassical notion of stewardship over humankind hearkened to the stoics. Seneca wrote of two commonwealths: one of boundless universal brotherhood and the other fixed geographically and determined “by the accident of birth.” Music in
particular affords complex insights into the cosmopolitan map of Enlightenment Europe. This art form—even without words—potentially binds together notions of geography, identity, and philosophical assumptions about the world.

Both Gluck and Boccherini worked away from their homeland, adapting their music and identities to suit the demands of their patrons. They spent their early careers in Italy: the epicenter of the galant style. Still, the fluidity of their musical languages demonstrates that each composer adapted himself to his own environment. The fandango in Gluck's *Don Juan* differs drastically from Boccherini's string quintet, later self-borrowed as a guitar quintet. While Gluck’s is decidedly cosmopolitan, Boccherini’s blends regional Spanish elements with transnational formal features. An analysis of the fandangos points to some obvious differences in geographical and political situations, but also distinctions of personal identity and philosophical assumptions about the world.

Boccherini’s particularities cannot be explained away because of isolation. Indeed, Boccherini repurposed the chaconne from *Don Juan* in his symphony G. 506, suggesting his familiarity with Gluck’s fandango. The fact that Boccherini lived in Spain might suggest that his fandango holds cultural authority over Gluck's just by virtue of geography, but this “accident of employment” does not resolve the question of cultural authority. Cosmopolitanism by its very nature is not defined by geography. Gluck could be said to be a kind of cosmopolitan authority by virtue of his vocational circumstances. The theatre bred a certain kind of international awareness, often expressed tangibly through the characters on stage. Boccherini’s cosmopolitanism, on the other hand, depended upon the abstract language of chamber music. The autonomy of each composer, their compositional choices, and the reasons behind their particularities reveal a nuanced map of a cosmopolitan Enlightenment.

**Empress Maria Theresa’s China Craze and Gluck’s *Le cinesi***

Hayoung Heidi Lee, West Chester University of Pennsylvania

It is an enigma that one-act opera *Le cinesi* (1754), about three bored Chinese ladies putting on a play, was the audition piece that helped Christoph Willibald Gluck to gain the Habsburg court’s recognition. As a small-scale entertainment of *azione teatrale*, this work is rather insignificant among the composer’s later reform operas, such as *Orfeo ed Euridice* or *Alceste*. And little that is known about this work is a brief comment on the beautiful décor and visual effects seen at the premiere, which were in the chinoiserie style that produced a "beautiful and astonishing sight." Additionally, a battery of cymbals, triangle, and drums heard in the overture conveyed what was then a fashionable, "exotic" sound, frequently heard in "Turkish" pieces. While the opera’s entertaining and decorative charm might have undermined its scholarly significance, I argue that *Le cinesi* reveals the composer’s intimate understanding of the aesthetic sensibilities and imperial identity of the Habsburgs in the eighteenth century.

Empress Maria Theresa, who was in attendance at the premiere of *Le cinesi*, was known for her Asian interest reflected in her extensive collection of Asian lacquered boxes, porcelain and the notable decoration in Vieux-Lacque Zimmer in Schönbrunn. In recent scholarship, the style of chinoiserie has been elevated from a superficial and decorative function to its significance in shaping Habsburg’s imperial image. As examined by art
historian Michael Yonan, Maria Theresa’s deep interest in Chinese art and products exhibited “Vienna’s position as leader not of a monarchical state but of a multicultural, polyglot empire.” In this new context, I show how the opera symbolizes another instance of the Empress’s growing Asian acquisition (And it is known that the teenage Empress herself participated in an earlier version of Le cinesi by Antonio Caldara in 1735). Yet while the opera emphasizes the immense vogue for China, it also shows ambivalence towards the "eccentric and rare [Chinese] customs," as declared by the only male character of the opera, who has just returned from Europe. Thus, Gluck’s Le cinesi dramatizes the tension between admiration for and the critical attitude towards China, as evident in eighteenth-century European porcelain collections, dramas, travelogues, and writings on Chinese music.

Women in love: Gluck’s Orpheus as a source of romantic consolation in Vienna, Paris, and Stockholm

John A. Rice, independent scholar

“Je me figurais être Orphée,” wrote Countess Sophie Fersen after attending a performance of Gluck’s Orpheus och Euridice in Stockholm in 1777. She was writing to Prince Alexander Kurakin, with whom she had been involved in a brief and passionate love affair, despite her engagement to a Swedish nobleman. Kurakin had left Stockholm for St. Petersburg a few weeks earlier. After receiving no letters from him since his departure, she feared (correctly) that he intended to break off the relationship.

Countess Fersen was not the only young woman with a broken heart who found romantic consolation in Gluck’s Orpheus. Already during the first run of performances in Vienna in 1762, Princess Isabella of Parma, recently married to Archduke Joseph (soon to be Emperor Joseph II) wrote mournfully to her sister-in-law Maria Christina, whose company she much preferred to Joseph’s. She identified herself with Orpheus as a way of expressing the depth and hopelessness of her love. And shortly after the premiere of the Paris version in 1774, Julie de Lespinasse wrote to her beloved Comte de Guibert, who was far from Paris, that Gluck’s opera aroused in her a mixture of pain and pleasure: "Je voudrois entendre dix foix par jour cet air qui me déchire, et qui me fait jouir de tout ce que je regrette: j’ai perdu mon Eurydice, etc.”

The operatic character whose plight consoled these women was not a woman who had lost her lover, but a man who had lost his wife. The singers who portrayed him differed greatly: in Vienna a contralto musico sang in Italian; in Paris an haute-contre sang in French, in Stockholm a tenor sang in Swedish. Yet all three singers managed to stir up similar responses in young female members of their audience. In this paper I will explore the emotional states of these women (as documented in their letters) and offer some explanations for their identification with a male character from Greek mythology, as brought to life by Gluck’s music and the men who sang it.

12:00 pm – 2:00 pm: Lunch
Gluck’s *Telemaco* (1765) has long perplexed scholars for its unusual hybrid nature. A *dramma per musica* in two acts featuring elements of *opera seria*, *festa teatrale*, and *tragédie lyrique*, *Telemaco* highlights Circe’s magic island as a closed realm where everyone is her captive. Scholarship has misunderstood the opera, dismissing Coltellini’s libretto as “ill-shaped” and Gluck’s music as an uneven juxtaposition of pre-reform and reform elements. One interesting yet overstated exception by Max Loppert (2003) posits *Telemaco* as a societal clash between Circe’s old world and the captives’ new and suggests a disparity between Act 1, which “races along” in an continues unfolding of new events, and Act 2, which “proceeds in apparently more digressive mode.”

I take a different viewpoint. By taking Coltellini’s *argomento* as initial clue and re-examining Act 1 through the lens of its literary sources, I contend that the locale itself—the magic island as a circular, static domain—may offer new clues to the understanding of the opera’s dramaturgy and the psychology of its personages. Coltellini’s characters reflect or blend features from their literary equivalents from both Homer’s *Odyssey* and Fénélon’s novel *Télémaque* (1699), and the setting features elements from the magic islands of both Circe and Calypso. Circe’s entrance aria (*da capo*) suggests that she herself remains a captive of her own world’s immobility. Asteria’s clinging to past memories of Telemaco in her cavatina recalls the nymph Calypso’s nurturing qualities and her island’s eternal features. Telemaco’s ineffective impetuosity, shown through formal inexperience, recalls that of his literary counterpart. Ulysses’s yearning for his impending return through cunning attempts at obscuring form (to evade Circe) reflects “the man of twists and turns” ("polytropos"; *Od. 1.1") and his art of rhetorical persuasion. I claim that Gluck’s expression of the characters’ longing and identity, achieved through manipulation of forms and textual re-composition, implies multiple temporal directions—past (Asteria), present (Circe and Telemaco), and future (Ulysses). This suggests not so much a diachronic unfolding of events, as Loppert would have it, as a series of synchronic focalizations (points of view) revolving around a circular domain that allows no narrative advancement.

**Vinci’s *Didone* and Gluck’s Most Revolutionary Assault on *Opera Seria***  
*Kurt Markstrom, University of Manitoba*

Modern musicology has tended to diminish Gluck’s domineering role in eighteenth-century opera reform, putting forward important predecessors in Jommelli and Traetta, as well as significant anticipations of his reform in the operas of Handel and Rameau,
emphasizing the collaborative effort behind the production of his landmark *Orfeo ed Euridice*. And yet this cautionary spreading of the fame, cannot take away its truly revolutionary character. Perhaps the most revolutionary aspect of *Orfeo ed Euridice* is that the traditional alternation of *secco* recitative and da capo aria is omitted. The number of arias is greatly reduced; the arias are shorter and in a variety of forms, with the da capo and its extravagant use of coloratura and extended orchestral ritornellos completely avoided. The *secco* recitative is replaced by accompanied recitative.

The idea for the consistent use of accompanied recitative may have come from the progenitor of mid-century opera reform, Francesco Algarotti, namely, from his description of how the “greater part of the last act of Didone” by Leonardo Vinci was composed in accompanied recitative and how “Virgil’s self would be pleased to hear”. For Gluck and his reforming collaborators, Calzibigi and Count Durazzo, what could be a higher recommendation than Algarotti, unless it be Virgil himself? Therefore, Gluck’s revolutionary dispensing of continuo-accompanied recitative, setting the precedent for nineteenth-century opera, probably originated from Algarotti’s description of Vinci’s use of accompanied recitative in Act III of *Didone Abbandonata* from 1726.

In singling out Vinci’s *Didone*, however, Algarotti is actually misrepresenting the composer. Although there are six accompanied recitatives in Act III which makes it stand out in the context of *opera seria*, these half dozen accompanied recitatives extending from between ten and twenty measures, can hardly be considered to represent “the greater part of the last act”. Although Gluck’s most violent assault on the numbers structure of Italian *opera seria* may have been inspired by Algarotti’s misrepresentation of *Didone*, Vinci was among a select group of composers, which included his rival Nicola Porpora, who cultivated a more extensive use of the accompanied recitative in their operas, providing a precedent for later reform-minded composers such as Jommelli and Traetta. The replacement of the *secco* recitative by accompanied recitative, however was made possible only by Calzibigi’s revolutionary transformation of the libretto, by the introduction of extended dramatic tableau based on the divertissements of French opera that not only introduce substantial choral and ballet sequences into Italian opera but, in the process, greatly reduced the amount of text to be set as recitative.

7:30 pm: Concert 2, featuring the WIU Symphony Orchestra, cond. Dr. Richard Hughey

All-Gluck program

- Sinfonia to *Ipermestra*
- *La Caduta de’ Giganti* (reconstructed fragments of the 1746 opera)*
- Sinfonia to *Telemaco*
On 29 May 1778 Mozart wrote to his father from Paris:

Yesterday I went for the second time to see Count von Sickingen, the electoral palatine envoy (for I had already dined there once with Wendling and Raaff), who, I do not know if I have already written you this, is a charming man, a passionate amateur, and a true connoisseur of music. There I spent eight hours quite alone with him. We were at the keyboard morning and afternoon until ten o’clock in the evening; all kinds of music was played—also praised, admired, reviewed, discussed, and criticized. He has nearly thirty opera scores.

Eugene K. Wolf and I first brought the collection of Carl Heinrich Joseph von Sickingen to the attention of musicologists, after discovering the first half of his thematic catalogue (in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin—Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Musikabteilung mit Mendelssohn Archiv, Mus. ms. theor. Kat. 860). We knew that part of the catalogue was missing, since the catalogue in Berlin ends on page 32 in the middle of Gluck’s Alceste. Although we feared the rest of the catalogue had been lost, I recently found the second half of the catalogue intact (in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Mus. ms. 9978; formerly in Schloss Ehreshoven). The second half begins on page 33, with the remaining numbers of Gluck’s Alceste, plus another four complete operas, almost 200 arias, 34 symphonies, chamber music, and 24 ballets. Works by Ignaz Holzbauer and other Mannheim composers dominate the collection, but it also contains operas by Jommelli, Piccinni, Traetta, Majo, Salieri, J.C. Bach, Schweitzer, and Gluck. I have identified most of the copies by matching the pagination to the catalogue.

In addition to Alceste, Sickingen’s collection included a copy of the pasticcio, incorporating Prologo d’Apollo and the Atti di Bauci, d’Aristeo, and d’Orfeo (Parma, 1769). Not surprisingly, Sickingen also owned copies of Traetta’s operas for Parma—Ippolito ed Aricia (1759) and I Tindaridi (1760)—reflecting a strong interest in operatic reform. Mozart became familiar with these operas, and his concert aria for Aloysia Weber, K. 316 (completed on 9 January 1779), was inspired by Gluck’s aria in Alceste.

**Mapping Gluck’s Pluralist Identity in Eighteenth-Century German Print Culture**

Estelle Joubert, Dalhousie University

In his Beschreibung einer durch Deutschland und die Schweiz im Jahre 1781, the famous bookseller Friedrich Nicolai offers fresh insight into the circulation of Gluck’s operas and the construction of the composer’s identity within the German-linguistic area: “In this respect it will not help much that Gluck’s full scores have appeared for posterity. That which will be respected as the most excellent musical features, cannot, as the
Reichardt printed anecdotes and music, thereby creating rules set forth in Kunstmagazin an analysis of Gluck’s setting of “the composer.” Drawing upon the recent aesthetic philosophies of Kant, Reichardt published Gluck’s reform opera octaves….” Working in Berlin in 1775, Reichardt was one of the earliest supporters of Gluck’s reform operas and wanted to alter northern German critics’ negative perception of the composer. Drawing upon the recent aesthetic philosophies of Kant, Reichardt published an analysis of Gluck’s setting of “Misero! E che farò!” from Alceste in his Musikalisches Kunstmagazin (1782) to demonstrate that Gluck’s music cannot be judged according to rules set forth for other works, since the composer himself brought forth new rules of art and music, thereby creating an entirely new form of dramatic music altogether. In 1792, Reichardt printed anecdotes about Gluck in his journal Studien für Tonkünstler und...
Musikfreunde in order to refute some of the negative claims written by northern German critics, while also furthering his earlier claims about the composer’s inherent genius.

This paper demonstrates the influence of Kant’s aesthetic theories and the prevailing Cult of Genius movement on Reichardt’s understanding of Gluck and his operas. Furthermore, this examination contextualizes Reichardt’s writings within the broader performance and reception history of Gluck’s operas on the Berlin stage, as northern German critics initially rejected Gluck’s works but then embraced the composer as one of their own after a successful performance *Iphigénie en Tauride* in 1795. Ultimately, Reichardt’s writings, coupled with the continual presence of Gluck’s operas in the Berlin repertoire, influenced 19th-century critics A. B. Marx’s, E. T. A. Hoffmann’s, and others’ perception of Gluck and his music, thereby building an aesthetic aura around the composer that lasts to this very day.