

# Nino Rota, *Sonata* for Viola and Piano (1934–1935): Genesis and Performing Alternatives

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## INTRODUCTION

*Il rinnovamento musicale italiano*, a 105-page book by Adriano Lualdi (1886–1971), composer, conductor, critic, and zealous member of the Chamber of Deputies during Mussolini’s regime, offers a concise overview of contemporary Italian music according to Fascist ethics. In fact, the volume combines issues 4 and 5 of *Quaderni dell’Istituto Nazionale Fascista di Cultura*, published by Treves–Treccani–Tumminelli (Milano–Roma, 1931) mainly for the enlightenment of members of the Partito Nazionale Fascista (henceforth PNF).

Lualdi’s *Il rinnovamento musicale italiano* includes a robust *Elenco degli autori moderni e delle loro opere* (pages 83–105), a sort of ‘Who’s Who’ in music in Fascist Italy up to 1931, when the book went to press. Among the likely card-carrying composers of the party, 20-year-old Nino Rota Rinaldi (born 1911) was certainly the youngest.<sup>1</sup> Lualdi divided Rota’s works in two categories: (1) Symphonic and chamber works: *L’infanzia di Giovanni Battista*, solo voices, chorus, and orchestra; *Perchè si spense la lampada*, voice and piano; *Illumina tu o fuoco*, voice and piano; *La figliola del Re*, voice and piano; *Ippolito gioca*, piano, and (2) Theater: *Il principe*

*porcaro* – a short list extracted, in part, from the catalog of Edizioni Ricordi, publisher of Rota’s teenage songs for voice and piano *Perchè si spense la lampada?* (1923), *Illumina tu o fuoco* (1924), *La figliuola del Re* (1925), and the solo piano piece *Ippolito gioca* (1931). More information could have been provided to Lualdi by Rota himself or his mother Ernesta before Nino’s voyage to Philadelphia to study at the Curtis Institute of Music.<sup>2</sup>

After completing his course of studies in composition at Curtis, in 1932, Rota returned to Milan determined to pursue a musical style suitable to his developing aspirations.<sup>3</sup> The result of his search was *Invenzioni* for string quartet (1932), a remarkable work stylistically akin to the music of Gian Francesco Malipiero (1882–1973) and not, as one would have expected, to that of Alfredo Casella (1883–1947) – his pre-Curtis teacher – or to some novel idiom imported from the United States.

*Invenzioni* was premiered by the Quartetto Abbado–Malipiero on 27 March 1933, at the Conservatorio di Musica “Giuseppe Verdi” in Milan for the Amici della Musica Association. Other performances took place at the Conservatoire de Genève on 16 December 1935, by the Quartetto Poltronieri, and on 12 April 1940, at the Accademia di Santa Cecilia in Rome by Le Quatuor de la Reine Élisabeth de Belgique. This concert, attended by the Princess of Piedmont (Marie-José of Belgium, future Queen Consort of Italy), was broadcasted by the EIAR State Radio Network.

Despite some early accolades, Rota never published this work preferring instead to distribute to interested performers copies made by a professional copyist and printed at his own expense.<sup>4</sup> Fascinated by the short form, Rota built his *Invenzioni* upon the models provided by Malipiero in his second and third string quartets, *Stornelli e Ballate* (1923) and *Cantari alla madrigalesca* (1931) in which ‘ostinato and folk-song-like inflections are receding in favor of light, springy neo-madrigalian counterpoint, alternating with interludes of calm meditation that is sometimes recognizably, neo-Monteverdian in character’, wrote John C. G. Waterhouse.<sup>5</sup>

Waterhouse’s appropriate observations may apply to another work by Rota: *Balli* for chamber orchestra (1932), conceived to conform to the requirements of a unique target: Radio Music. In fact, Rota participated successfully in the competition for Radio Music promoted by the Second International Festival of Contemporary Music in Venice, in 1932. This idea of music to be ‘heard’ through the sound waves, and not seen via performance in concert, aimed to introduce sound technology as a necessary element in a new way to listen to music and to perform it.<sup>6</sup>

Echoes of similar stylistic qualities can be detected in Rota’s first soundtrack

for the film *Treno popolare* (1933) by director Raffaello Matarazzo.<sup>7</sup> According to various anecdotal accounts, it appears that Gastone Bosio (1909–1987), the film's debutant producer and member of the d'Amico family circle in Rome, was the one who liaised Rota with Matarazzo, and encouraged the composer to move to Rome from Milan for a month, as a guest of the d'Amico household, and work on the soundtrack of *Treno popolare*, whose title is commonly translated as 'Tourist Train'. It is a 60-minute film dealing with a series of entertaining vignettes aboard a train carrying members of the emerging Italian clerical working class on a state-sponsored summer Sunday day-trip from Rome to the Medieval town of Orvieto, in the countryside where most of the film was shot. The film, inspired by the social realism of earlier Russian filmmakers' 'direct cinema', reflected a key element in Mussolini's populist approach aimed at gaining consensus among the masses. In fact, il Duce wished to promote a kind of lowbrow culture based on standardized forms of leisure and diversion through the novel, propagandistic means of cinema. The soundtrack of Rota's first film consisted of happy propelling rhythms and simple pastoral tunes underscoring the action with a wink at the political and social climate portrayed in the film. As a film, *Treno popolare* was not a success, but a clever ensemble Fox-Trot – 'Treno popolare', a sort of leitmotif heard in the film with some jolly lyrics by Ennio Neri – once published 'in folio', recorded, and radio broadcasted repeatedly, took on a life of its own that contributed to Rota's 'embarrassing' popularity.<sup>8</sup>

10 years passed by before Nino Rota returned to compose for the silver screen.

### TERZA RASSEGNA NAZIONALE DI MUSICA CONTEMPORANEA, 1935

On 2 June 1935, *The New York Times* published a detailed report by Raymond Hall, the newspaper's Rome correspondent, dated Rome, 10 May 1935.<sup>9</sup> It was entitled 'Concert Novelties in Rome – Survey of Italy's New Music Presented in Seven Programs Performed under Auspices of the *Rassegna Nazionale di Musica Contemporanea*'. It read as follows:

One of the most admirable institutions developed by Mussolini's Italy is the Rassegna Nazionale, or National Review of Contemporary Music held every two years in Rome by the National Fascist Musicians Syndicate. An impartial survey of the country's new music forces, creative and interpretative, it is a typical product of the Italian corporate State.

Under the guidance of Chairman Giuseppe Mulè three cardinal principles govern the syndicate's operation. Its paramount function is to foster new talent. This is affected in part through direct contests open to young Italian composers aspiring to the national biennial review, the jury, under Mulè, being composed of Respighi, Molinari, Casella

and Tommasini.

The second principle forms a bond between the new forces and the older generation of moderns. The established figures of contemporary Italian composition are, in turn, invited to contribute an absolute novelty. Not all have a new score ready in time, but enough composers accept to permit several instructive comparisons with the young set in a sort of bird's-eye over the generation's span.

A new feature of the *Rassegna* (its third principle) is a contest for young interpreters and ensembles; they appear in equal measure with the recognized national celebrities. In line with this idea, the contest specified new works scored for voice or solo instruments in the various chamber and orchestral forms.

Then, Raymond Hall delved into a full account of the seven programs glossed over by minimal critical commentaries as shown below (TABLE 1).

There is much to ponder about the substance of these programs, the number and names of participants, and the organizational tightness of the *Rassegna* management. *Radiocorriere*, 14, of 31 March – 6 April 1935, informed the public that the composers were selected by invitation and by a regional selection process. Thus, given the high artistic and political visibility of the members of the jury led by Giuseppe Mulè and including Ottorino Respighi, Bernardino Molinari, Alfredo Casella, and Vincenzo Tommasini: the quality and craftsmanship – if not always the originality – of the works presented were guaranteed.

Works like Franco Alfano's *Tre liriche di Tagore da "Il giardiniere"* for soprano and orchestra, for instance, turned out to be among the best music written by the composer; Malipiero's *Concerto* for piano and orchestra, was a much-awaited premiere; and young Goffredo Petrassi's *Concerto* per orchestra, Luigi Dallapiccola's *Due cori di Michelangelo Buonarroti*, and Nino Rota's *Sonata* for viola and piano, heralded these three composers' long, prosperous careers. Also noteworthy was the participation of Italian Jewish composers like Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Renzo Massarani, Aldo Finzi, and Vittorio Rieti, who, less than three years following the 1935 *Rassegna*, fell victims of the Racial Laws against all Italian Jews and were unceremoniously compelled to leave their country.

Endowed with excellent credentials from his time as a child prodigy, serious studies under Ildebrando Pizzetti and Casella, and diplomas from "Santa Cecilia" and "Curtis", the author of published works, and a composer of popular film music to boot, Nino Rota was certainly one of the 'invited' composers whose work debuted within the Terza *Rassegna*. Rota's *Sonata* was premiered by Giuseppe Matteucci, principal violist of the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, and pianist Pietro Scarpini, another young artist destined for a formidable career. The performance was broadcast 'live' by EIAR on 4 April 1935, in a program beginning at 5:30 in the afternoon.

**TABLE 1. Survey of Italy's New Music presented in seven programs performed under the auspices of the Rassegna Nazionale, Rome, March – April 1935.**

<i>CONCERT NOVELTIES IN ROME</i>		
<i>Survey of Italy's New Music Presented in Seven Programs Performed Under Auspices of the Rassegna Nazionale - Rome, March - April 1935</i>		
<i>The New York Times - June 2, 1935 (Section X Page 5)</i>		
<i>Raymond Hall - Rome, May 10, 1935</i>		
<b>First Concert</b>		<b>Sixth Concert</b>
Bernardino Molinari led off at the <i>Augusteo</i> with the following symphonic works:	<b>Giulio Gadda</b> (Turin, 1899): Trio for oboe, clarinet and bassoon-able (idem). <b>Gabriele Bianchi</b> (Verona, 1901): "Rhapsodies," for string quartet.	<b>Annibale Bizzelli</b> (Arezzo, 1900): Sonata for violin and piano—solidly built. <b>Alfredo Sangiorgi</b> (Catania, 1895): Sonata for clarinet and bassoon. <b>Franco Margola</b> (Brescia, 1908): "Little Rhapsody of Autumn, Tarantella, Rondo," for piano. <b>Vincenzo Davico</b> (Monaco, 1889): "Strambotto e Canzone," for voice and 'cello—pleasing, trifling, melodic bits. <b>Nicola Lojercio</b> (Palmi di Calabria, 1904): "Rondò Rusticano," for violin and piano—unpretending, with some fragments of fresh brio and much rhythmic animation. <b>Salvatore Musella</b> (Naples, 1896): Sonata in C sharp, for 'cello and piano (subtitled "Colorazione di fiamme"—well made, academic music.
<b>Mario Castelnuovo Tedesco</b> : Overture for "Julius Caesar" (absolute novelty)—fluid, but superficial, with a rose-water elegy. <b>Goffredo Petrassi</b> (Rome, 1904): Concerto for piano and orchestra (idem)—Casella's protégé here loses himself in arid imitations of Stravinsky and Hindemith. <b>Giuseppe Savagnone</b> (Palermo, 1902): "Cantata a Bellini," for soprano e orchestra (absolute novelty, prize-winner of national syndacate's cantata contest)—unoriginal, but dignified, sincerely emotive lament (excellent reception). <b>Piero Giorgi</b> (Macerata, 1895): "In Val d'Astico," symphonic suite—descriptive impressions from nature, episodic, derivative. <b>Franco Alfano</b> : Three Lyrics, from Tagore's "Gardenar," for soprano and orchestra (absolute novelty)—aristocratic, finely chiseled line; intimately suggestive, richly orchestrated; the first song of schematic sobriety, the second more plastically modeled, the third exuberant (excellent applause). <b>Riccardo Zandonai</b> : "Colombina," concert overture (absolute novelty)—three clever charming variations on a popular theme from the "Carnegiale di Venezia," destined to become a concert favorite.	<b>Fourth Concert</b>	
	<i>Augusteo Orchestra, Molinari conducting.</i>	
	<b>G. Francesco Malipiero</b> : Concerto for piano and orchestra (absolute novelty)—a highly interesting and original work, robust, typically Malipierian in its rapid concision and its alternation of harsh and poetic episodes rich in fancy and rhythmic play. This is absolute music, with its own internal logic, especially in its personal treatment of the solo instrument—no tinsel, no repetitions: fresh, vigorous themes of archaic Italian folk savor and broadly linear, airy contours, characteristic of the later Malipiero. <b>Vincenzo Tommasini</b> : "Nocturne," for orchestra (absolute novelty)—lunar romanticism of standard pattern, long-lined and cantabile, organically built; not new but has authentic poetry. <b>Renzo Massarani</b> (Mantua 1898): "The Miller," for tenor and orchestra—a pastoral legend. <b>Giovanni Salvucci</b> (Rome, 1907): "Introduction," for orchestra—interesting ideas, but episodic and too prolix; modernistic torment. <b>Lodovico Rocca</b> (Turin, 1895): "Dipytych," for soprano and orchestra—a pair of programmatic melodies, the first elegiacal, the second dramatic; austere nobility, expressive, varied; close adherence; orchestral resource. <b>G. Cesare Sonsogno</b> (Milan, 1906): "The Negro," two movements of the "Tango" for cello and orchestra presented this season by Toscanini in New York (the <i>Augusteo</i> public acclaimed it with enthusiasm, demanding an encore, not granted). <b>Aldo Finzi</b> (Milan, 1897): "The Infinite," symphonic poem.	
	<b>Fifth Concert</b>	<b>Seventh Concert</b>
	<b>Dante Alderighi</b> (Taranto, 1898): Trio for piano, violin and cello. <b>Nino Rota</b> (Milan, 1911): Sonata for viola and piano—fluent, well-built though prolix Scarlattian imitation in which this much trumpeted ex "boy prodigy" has fallen under Casella's tutelage—a flash in the pan (fair response). <b>Cesare Nordio</b> (Trieste, 1891): Humoresque for piano—vivacious, colored, and pianistically effective piece in the nineteenth century manner (well received). <b>Guido Farina</b> (Pavia, 1903): Lyrics for voice and piano—only the second ("Recitative") deserves mention. <b>Riccardo Nielsen</b> (Bologna, 1908): Ricerzare, corale e toccata for piano. <b>Achille Longo</b> (Naples, 1908): Quintet for strings and piano—rich in fluent melodic ideas of typical Neapolitan ardor, distinctly good (well applauded).	<b>Francesco Balilla Pratella</b> (Lugo, 1880): "Per un Drama Orientale," for ten instruments—(Prelude and Snake Dance). <b>Vittorio Rieti</b> (Alexandria, 1898): Concerto for 'cello and twelve instruments—(absolute novelty)—an elegant, clever piece, written with the sure constructive sense and the désinvolture, esprit and m'entousisme typical of this Parisianized sophisticate; rich in unconventional ideas, with fluid interplay between solo acrobat and orchestra and able exploitation of brief savory lyric fragments. In the superficial charm of its facile métier, this is Rieti at his best. <b>Pietro Montani</b> (Lodi, 1895): Fantasia for piano and strings—a post-romantic, brimful of ideas, some strongly dynamic, but hybrid, chaotic and strained. <b>Luigi Dallapiccola</b> (Istria, 1904): "Two Choruses of Michelangelo Buonarroti"—two somewhat obscure texts set with exquisite and fervid fantasy, opulent invention and delicate modern technique. <b>Giuseppe Rosati</b> (Rome, 1903): Prelude for piano and small orchestra—a solidly constructed exercise, with incisive themes and clear developments. <b>Gino Gorini</b> (Venice, 1914): "Divertimento" for flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, two violins, viola and 'cello—the review's bambino, still too immature. <b>Gian Luca Tocchi</b> (Perugia, 1901): Concerto, for two pianos, three saxophones, string quintet and eight instruments—facile, elegant, colorful, prolix.
<b>Third Concert</b>		
<b>Alberto Marzollo</b> (Venice, 1897) "Alpine Sequence," for string quartet—futile program music. <b>Lino Liviabella</b> : Sonata in one movement for violin and piano—clear ideas, solid structure, elegant facture, modern French influence (cordial plaudits). <b>Renzo Rossellini</b> (Rome, 1908): "Poemeti pagani," for piano—four graceful but undisguisedly Debussyan pieces (appreciated).		

In January 1937, Nino Rota sent a parcel to the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. It contained bound white print copies of the autographed translucent sheets for *Sonata* for viola and piano (1934–1935) and *Canzona* for 11 instruments (1935). The parcel was received, and the content archived on 29 January 1937. No cover letter accompanying the parcel was found, but one could assume that the scores were a thank-you gift for the time the composer spent at the institute.<sup>10</sup>

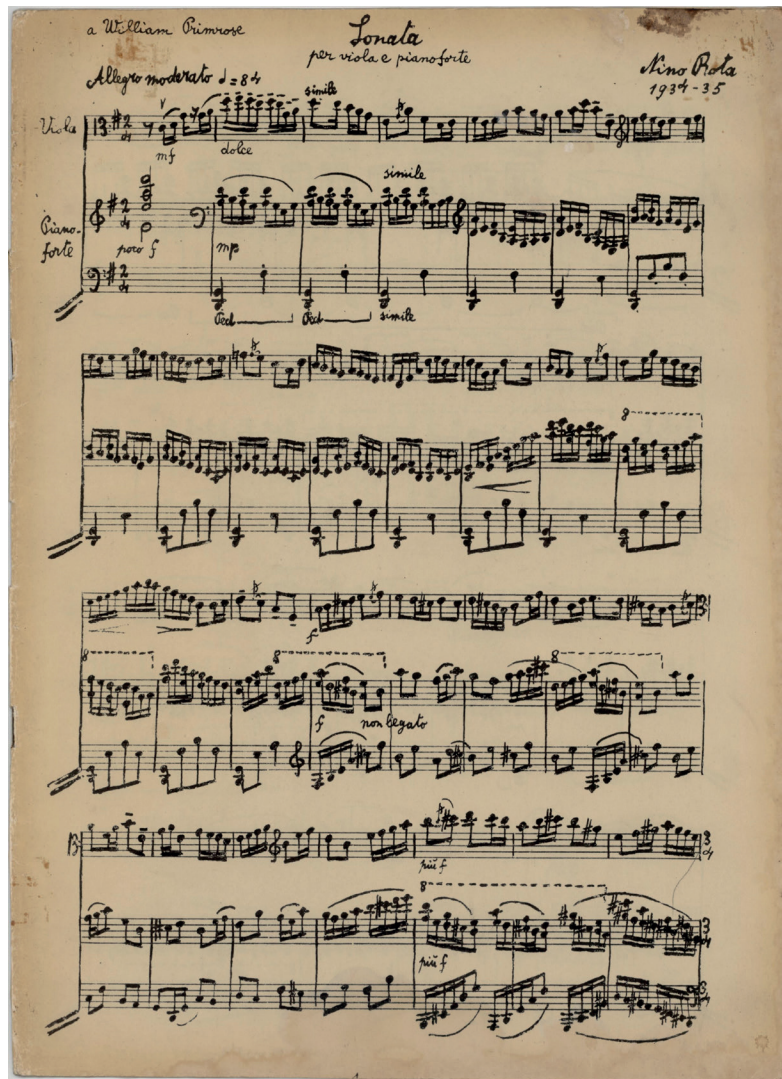
Like *Invenzioni*, Rota never published his *Sonata* for viola and piano, preferring, instead, to provide interested performers with copies of the latest version at hand according to the chronological order discussed in the following pages. Thus, I begin with the *Sonata*'s original version as performed by Matteucci and Scarpini at the Terza Rassegna Nazionale di Musica Contemporanea in Rome on 4 April 1935. This copy was similar to the one preserved at the Curtis Institute and to the version performed by violist William Primrose and pianist David Stimer on 22 October 1953, at a RAI (Radiotelevisione Italiana) studio in Rome for a recording that was broadcast on Saturday, 20 March 1954, at 7:15 p.m.<sup>11</sup>

FIGURE 2. Nino Rota, *Sonata* for viola and piano, white print copy, cover and p. 1. The Curtis Institute of Music – Special Collections, Philadelphia.



The dedication 'a William Primrose' added by Rota to the first page of the translucent original master (FIGURE 3) does not indicate that the *Sonata* was written for William Primrose, but only that a copy was dedicated to him, as the Scottish virtuoso's name did not appear on subsequent copies. No information is available about when William Primrose was given a copy of the *Sonata*. At any rate, in a conversation with Primrose that took place in Provo, UT in July 1979, he regretted having lost his copy, which he was very fond of. In fact, he asked me whether the piece was ever published.

FIGURE 3. Nino Rota, *Sonata* for viola and piano, white print copy with the dedication 'a William Primrose'. Fondazione Giorgio Cini (Venezia), Fondo Nino Rota.



## FROM SKETCHES TO PERFORMING EDITIONS

The FNR is in possession of two large binders containing material pertinent to the *Sonata* for viola and piano. One includes a folder brimming with loose sheets of music papers bearing penciled sketches related to each movement of the work and much more. Rota did not keep his pages in numerical order but affixed dates and occasionally locations at the beginning or at the end of material deemed consequential to his creative process – a tortuous one in this instance – that spanned from 27 May 1934, to 15 March 1935.

No information is available about why he chose the viola/piano combination for his participation to the 1935 Rassegna, a unique feature as Rota's viola *Sonata* was the only work of its kind among the many programmed on that occasion. Such a choice represented a challenge for the composer, who was not too familiar with the idiosyncratic instrument, aside from having experimented with it in the string quartet setting of *Invenzioni*, and indirectly through the approach of others, Malipiero especially. Thus, writing for the viola and balancing the instrument's Mezzo/Alto tone with the piano's middle register remained a constant concern for Rota as evidenced by the numerous preparatory sketches dating back to May 1934 and the evolutionary aspects of this composition over the decades that followed. Here are some remarks on the penciled sketches preserved among Rota's papers:

- First Movement

1. Set of sketches dated 27 May 1934.

This set consists of 12 sheets belonging to an elaborate *Allegro moderato* in 3/4 whose vigorous display of quartal harmonies and academic counterpoint shows the composer involved in a 'learned' type of compositional style suitable for the Rassegna. These sketches, containing enough material for attempting a hypothetical reconstruction of the movement, conclude with the indication *attacca subito*. It is important to keep in mind, at this juncture, that the sketches belonging to the second/third movement, dated 6 August 1934, described later, could have been the intended *segue* to the *attacca subito* indicated here.

2. Set of sketches dated 29 October 1934.

A page indicating an *Allegro non troppo e ben marcato* in 4/4, probably a discarded idea for a first movement.

3. Set of sketches dated 1 November 1934.

A page indicating an *Allegro assai moderato* in 4/4 that is probably another discarded idea for another version of the first movement.

4. A set of four undated pages of preliminary sketches followed by a group of 10 sheets dated 1 December 1934.



This is a relatively fluid sketch of the *Allegro moderato* in 2/4 that became the definitive version of the *Sonata*'s first movement. So, the gestation of this movement alone occupied Rota intermittently from 27 May to 1 December 1934.

- Second Movement

One undated sketch consisting of three sheets containing 52 bars marked *Adagio* in 2/4 written in the key of E major, a factor that made the intended movement very uncomfortable to play on the viola. This sketch, however, proceeds smoothly from the beginning to a fermata leading to an *Allegro* in 4/4 showing a staccato contrapuntal theme alluding to a discarded third movement.

Whether Rota consulted with a violinist/violist about the playability of the E major tonal structure of this *Adagio* it is not known. We know, however, that he transposed the whole movement one step lower when copying it on translucent paper: an excellent decision that resulted in a much more congenial tonality for the viola.

- Third Movement

A sketch dated Milan, 6 August 1934.

It consists of eight sheets of paper marked *Allegretto mosso* in 3/8, which, in effect, constitutes a Scherzo following the second movement without interruption. Although no proofs have surfaced regarding the rationale behind Rota's decision to eliminate this movement from all versions of the *Sonata* after the 1935 original, it appears peculiar that no translucent copies of this movement made by Rota or by any copyist thereafter are to be found in the FNR. Thus, the Radio recording made by William Primrose and David Stimer in 1953 in Rome remains the only extant audio performance of this movement (see footnote 13).

- Fourth Movement

A sketch dated S. Remo, 15 March 1935.

It is a clean 10-page manuscript marked *Allegro* in 2/2. It bears some crossed out sections that could have appeared perhaps too academic and/or prolix. Also, a solo cadenza for the viola, a cumbersome idea notated on a separate sheet of paper, was eliminated from this sketch and from the whole movement, leaving only faint traces in the *Adagio* section, reproduced below as FIGURE 4 (see also page 30, bb. 133–145 of the 2000 Edition Schott version). In all, this sketch foreshadows the final version of the movement as it was premiered on 4 April 1935.

FIGURE 4. Nino Rota, *Sonata* for viola and piano, white print copy with traces of a cadenza. Fondazione Giorgio Cini (Venezia), Fondo Nino Rota.

Adagio  $\text{♩} = 50$

*f* *mf* *legato*

*pp* *mf* *pp*

*piu sostenuto sulle tr.*

*pp espr.*

*crescendo a poco a poco*

15

## TRANSLUCENT SHEETS, WHITE PRINTS, COPYISTS' COPIES, PHOTOCOPIES, AND EARLY PERFORMANCES

The penciled sketches reviewed above show young Rota's concerns for the creation of a work that needed to be strong enough to stand out among the many presented at the Terza Rassegna Nazionale di Musiche Contemporanee, an initiative regarded abroad as 'another achievement of Benito Mussolini and the corporative organization of his regime'. The competitive spirit characteristic of the Rassegna prompted the composer to offer the best of his talent by presenting a work whose originality, and the unusual instrumental combination, would distinguish him from the others. In fact, very little of the music presented in that massive program survived the test of time. Rota's *Sonata* was indeed the exception.

After 15 March 1935, the date marked at the bottom of the sketch of the last movement's final page, Rota began to pen a fair copy of the *Sonata* on translucent sheets of music paper and to produce a copy to be sent to Rome for Matteucci and Scarpini to begin rehearsals. He confided so to Gian Francesco Malipiero in a letter dated S. Remo, 17 March 1935.<sup>12</sup>

The whereabouts of the copy used by Matteucci and Scarpini is unknown; however, it may be reasonably claimed that it was a twin of the one Rota sent to the Curtis Institute of Music in January 1937, which included added dynamic markings, and other performing instructions, feedback, perhaps, from the 4 April premiere. I will refer to this copy hereafter as Copy 1 (FIGURE 2).

Here is a summation of the autograph translucent sheets of music paper belonging to the *Sonata*:

- Movement 1 – *Allegro moderato*

Translucent master of the white print copy shown in FIGURE 2 but with the dedication 'a William Primrose' added later (FIGURE 3).<sup>13</sup>

- Movement 2 – *Adagio*

Translucent master of the white print copy (Copy 1) but with two pages numbered 7 and 8 re-written later for a shortened version.

- Movement 3 – *Allegretto mosso*

No translucent and/or whiteprint copies of this movement appear to have been preserved among Rota's papers, either by accident or design. The copy Rota sent to the Curtis Institute of Music in January 1937 remains, therefore, a unicum of sorts. The 'disappearance' of this movement from the body of the *Sonata* at the hands of the composer for whatever reason remains puzzling, notwithstanding the

existence of the penciled sketches written in a different key and dated Milan, 6 August 1934, as noted before. At any rate, see APPENDIX 1 for my graphic rendition of the original 1935 *Adagio* and *Allegretto mosso*.

- Movement 4 – *Allegro*

This is identical to Copy 1 (see *infra* audio-score version: VIDEO 1) bearing many penciled markings of performative character, such as simplifications of awkward passages in the viola part added at a much later time. An example of these ossia is offered in APPENDIX 2.

Thus far, we are aware of at least one performance of this *Sonata* closer in time to the 4 April 1935, premiere; it occurred in Florence on 20 March 1940, at a concert organized by the Società “Dante Alighieri” performed by Marcello Formentini, viola, and Eleonora Aletta, piano.<sup>14</sup> One would assume that Formentini and Aletta obtained from Rota an exemplar of Copy 1.

The next concert performance appears to have been that of Renzo Ferraguzzi, viola, and Rosita Bentivegna, piano. It took place at the Ambrosianeum in Milan on 14 November 1958, in a program listing the *Sonata* in three movements, *Allegro moderato – Adagio – Allegro*, meaning that the artists were provided with a white print of the translucent master devoid of the original third movement, *Allegretto mosso*, or with a photocopy of the ink on white music paper copy made by Mario Lattanzi, in Rome, in the late 1950s-early 1960s, hereafter referred to as Copy 2.<sup>15</sup> Rota distributed photocopies of Copy 2 at his discretion – with or without a performance in view – to individuals and/or institutions such as Rai. That said, there is no original or reproduction of Copy 2 among Rota’s papers preserved at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini (FIGURE 5).

In a letter to Rota from Perugia, dated 13 February 1964, pianist Tullio Macoggi informed Rota that he and violist Fausto Cocchia had recorded the *Sonata* for Rai for future broadcasting.<sup>16</sup> Then, Macoggi expressed the desire to discuss with Rota the content of the *Adagio* in E major,<sup>17</sup> but since the copy he played from had to be returned (to whom, Cocchia? Rai?) he felt hesitant about asking the composer for a personal copy, an imposition perhaps, since the work – he pointed out – was still in manuscript.

At any rate, the *Radiocorriere*, 25, 14–29 June 1964 listed the *Sonata*’s movements as: *Allegro moderato – Adagio, minuetto – Allegro, adagio*. The listing of the ‘minuetto’ is an error, but the three-movement structure is correct as Cocchia and Macoggi probably played from Copy 2 whose *Allegro finale* does indeed conclude with a clearly marked *Adagio* section.

FIGURE 5. Nino Rota, *Sonata for viola and piano*, Copy 2, p. 1. Author's private collection.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for Nino Rota's *Sonata for viola and piano*, Copy 2, page 1. The score is written in ink on white paper and includes staves for Viola and Piano. The tempo is marked "ALLEGRO MODERATO (♩=84)". The score includes various dynamics such as *mf*, *dolce*, *poco f*, and *non legato*, as well as performance instructions like *simile* and *PED*. The score is numbered 1 through 20. A vertical credit "LUIGI A. BIANCHI" is written on the left side. The publisher information at the bottom reads "CASA MUSICALE DE SANTIS - Roma, Via del Corso 101/102".

### Copy 2: A closer look

This fair copy was ink penned by Mario Lattanzi directly on quality stock white paper issued by Casa Musicale De Santis, the premiere music establishment in Rome. Photocopiers were then used for printing multiple exemplars. The following description of Copy 2 is based on photocopies of the viola/piano part, and the solo viola in my possession, obtained from viola virtuoso Luigi Alberto Bianchi in the

mid-1990s. Bianchi claimed that the copy he owned, i.e., the progenitor of mine, was given to him by his former teacher Renzo Sabatini who probably had gotten it from Rota. Copy 2 bears no dedication to William Primrose.

A comparison between Copy 1 and Copy 2 highlights the following differences:

	Copy 1	Copy 2
<i>Allegro moderato</i>	bb = 84 quarter note Total bars: 136	bb = 84 quarter note Total bars: 136
<i>Adagio</i>	Total bars: 52 bars 32–35 marked <i>largamente</i> (see FIGURE 6A and APPENDIX 1)	Total bars: 49 bars 32–35 marked <i>con ampiezza</i> bearing a different harmonization than Copy 1 (see FIGURE 6B)
<i>Allegretto mosso</i>	bb = 66 per each 3/8 bar Total bars: 56	Not included
<i>Allegro</i>	bb = 104 per half note Total bars: 171	bb = 104 per half note Total bars: 171

FIGURE 6A. Nino Rota, *Sonata for viola and piano, Copy 1*. The Curtis Institute of Music – Special Collections, Philadelphia.

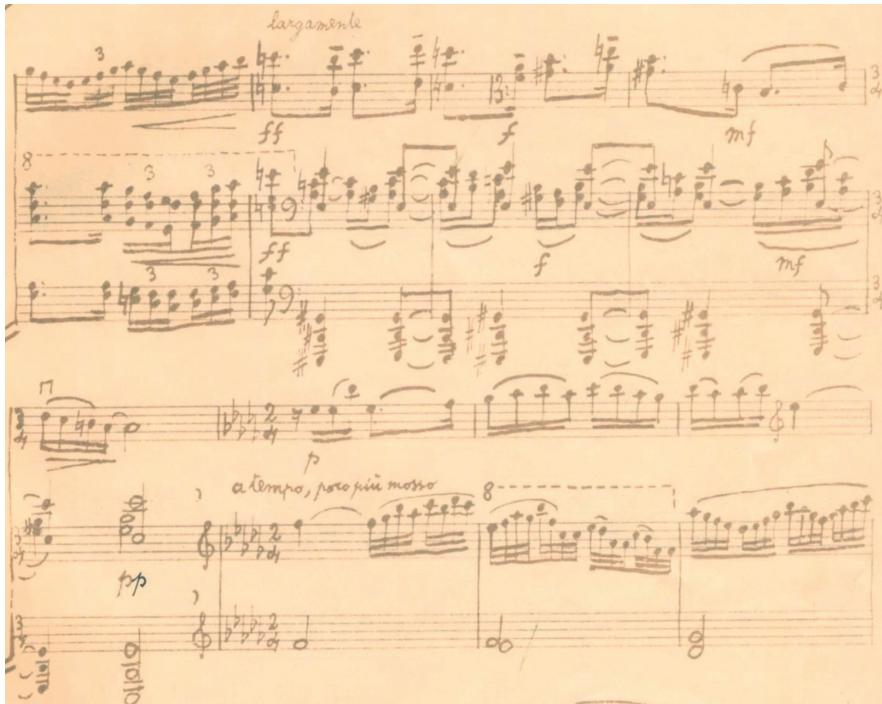
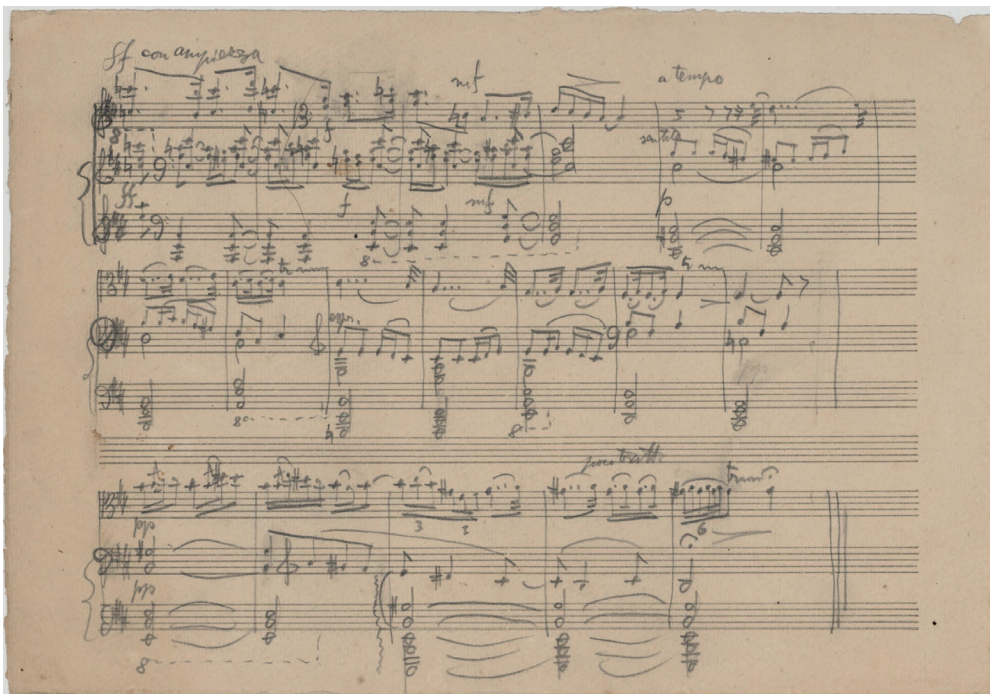


FIGURE 6B. Nino Rota's pencil sketch used by Mario Lattanzi for Copy 2. Fondazione Giorgio Cini (Venezia), Fondo Nino Rota.



## HISTORICAL PERFORMANCES

The evening of Saturday 20 March 1954, at 7:15, Rai broadcasted Rota's *Sonata* for viola and pianoforte performed by William Primrose, viola, and David Stimer, piano. Then, Rai Filodiffusione channel re-broadcasted it on Monday, 31 August 1964, at 3:35 p.m. as part of a full recital by Primrose and Stimer.<sup>18</sup> The program, originally recorded on 22 October 1953, included:<sup>19</sup>

Johann Sebastian Bach, *Fantasia cromatica* for solo viola, transcribed by Zoltan Kodaly;

Ludwig van Beethoven, *Notturmo in D major* op. 42 for viola and piano;

John Barbirolli, *Concerto on a Theme by Georg Friedrich Haendel*;

Nino Rota, *Sonata* for viola and piano (*Allegro moderato – Adagio – Allegretto maestoso – Allegro*).

Portions of this program continued to be broadcasted many times on Rai regular channels in combination with other pieces until at least 1971. In fact, Rota's *Sonata* was heard again in 1967 and 1970 in combination with Primrose's

landmark recording of Paul Hindemith's *Der Schwanendreher* viola concerto, and again in 1971, under the rubric *I maestri dell'interpretazione*, generating a curious, if unintentional, overlapping of Copy 1 and Copy 2 versions of the *Sonata* being broadcasted by Primrose–Stimer (Copy 1) and Cocchia–Macoggi (Copy 2) a short time apart from one another.

On 16 August 1967, violist Lina Lama, a former pupil of Renzo Sabatini, the last teacher of Luigi Alberto Bianchi, and a professor at the Conservatorio di Musica “Santa Cecilia” in Rome since 1959, wrote a letter to Nino Rota inquiring whether she and her current pianist-collaborator Paolo Bordoni could be invited to perform in Bari at the Conservatorio di Musica “Niccolò Piccinni” of which Rota was the director.<sup>20</sup>

Less than two years later, on 30 March 1969, Lama wrote again to Rota informing him that she and Bordoni had performed the *Sonata* more than once as shown by the programs accompanying the letter. Then, Lama insisted on wishing to play the *Sonata* in Bari.<sup>21</sup>

It appears from the above correspondence that Sabatini could have provided Lina Lama with a copy (Copy 2) of the *Sonata* prior to offering another to Bianchi. Regarding the letter, Rota must have thanked Lama for her efforts on behalf of the *Sonata*, but he held off on the invitation to Bari until 16 December 1974, when he personally played the piano in a full recital with her in a program that included a newly revised version of the *Sonata*, identified hereafter as Copy 3b.

Lama and Rota must have felt comfortable playing together; in fact, they participated in an important festival-masterclasses institution in Lanciano (Chieti) on 15 May 1975, presenting a program comprising sonatas by Hindemith, Rota, and Brahms which was recorded for institutional use.<sup>22</sup> Now, the version of the *Sonata* heard in this recording – which given the authoritative performance by the composer at the piano could be considered as an interpretative milestone – brings to the fore Copy 3a/b which includes two versions of the last movements.

Rota's papers preserved at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini in Venice hold several partial and fully copied exemplars of the *Sonata* executed, in my opinion, by Andrea Caricchia, a professional copyist active in Rome who worked with assorted material from previous copies made available to him by Rota. Unlike Lattanzi's, Caricchia's copies were done on translucent sheets whose prints were submitted to Rota for proofreading multiple times, a process evidenced by the numerous corrected sheets of music paper bearing the handwriting of this copyist. What appears to be the first set of proofs, copied from the translucent master autographed by Rota after 1935, bears the dedication ‘a William Primrose’ crossed off, a sign that the dedication had been limited, in fact, to a personal copy. The dedication no longer appeared in subsequent proof sheets, nor in the definitive copy which



was ultimately reproduced by Edition Schott, in 2000, as a posthumous edition of the *Sonata* that included both versions of the last movement copied by Caricchia in 1970.

### **Copy 3a/b: A clarification**

In the mid-1990s, Luigi Alberto Bianchi expressed to me his intention to publish and record ‘his’ edition of the Rota *Sonata* including a ‘virtuoso’ version of the last movement that the composer had written upon his request in 1970, after he (Bianchi) had perused the copy (Copy 2) received from his former teacher Renzo Sabatini.

I examined Bianchi’s material and submitted a publication plan to Peters Edition in New York. The firm replied that they were fully committed to the promotion of American composers and so declined the offer. Meanwhile, in 1998 Bianchi recorded an all-Rota violin/viola Compact Disc for Dynamic which included the premiere recording of the *Sonata* if only in the Copy 3a version.<sup>23</sup> The issuing of this CD preceded by two years the publication of Copy 3a/b as part of an exclusive publishing agreement between Edition Schott and the Rota Estate.

### **REFLECTIONS ON AESTHETICAL, TECHNICAL, AND PERFORMATIVE ASPECTS**

The metamorphosis of Rota’s *Sonata* – from an ambitious statement about the somewhat archaic, neo-classical style fashionable in 1930s Fascist Italy to a lyrical, pastoral *Sonatina* of the early 1970s, makes for interesting observations about the evolution of musical taste, and its reception in Italy.

As a composer, Nino Rota remained little influenced by radical musical trends, although he was fully aware of them and often appreciative of some experimentation. So, it should not come as a surprise that he nurtured this *Sonata* for viola e piano from 1934–1935 like a page of a personal diary. In fact, as late as 1977 – scarcely two years before his death – Rota was still taking pleasure in performing this work in the version noted as Copy 3b, whose last movement, *Allegro*, and by extension the entire *Sonata*, had finally, in 1977, reached the perfect congruity of form and content he had so tenaciously strived for. Was Rota finally ready to let this *Sonata* be published? We will never know as, sadly, he died on 10 April 1979, at the age of 67.

A small cohort of violists knew about the existence of this work. Some possessed photocopies of various manuscript versions, some lost their copies, others thought of it as a piece of juvenilia that missed the publisher’s selective process, unlike its

contemporary *Quintetto* for flute, oboe, viola, cello, and harp (1935), *Sonata* for violin and piano (1936–1937), *Sonata* for flute and harp (1937–1938) or even the *Sinfonia*, another work that experienced a long gestation period from 1935 to 1939.

The genesis of the *Sonata*, the numerous examples provided, and alternative passages discussed in this essay, may encourage violists to embrace new performance perspectives spanning from the original 1934–1935 full version to the various abbreviated redactions of this work of merit by a well-known twentieth-century Italian composer.

In the wake of the collapse of fascism, the end of World War II, and the rising of the ‘Economic Miracle’ in the 1950s, Nino Rota was involved with the opera *Il cappello di paglia di Firenze* (1945–1946). His development of a wonderful career continued with much film music, marked by the beginning of his collaboration with Federico Fellini in 1952 with *Lo sceicco bianco*. The youthful *Sonata* for viola and piano was never forgotten, though, as he kept on tinkering with it, even when he was working on a Brahms-inspired *Sonata* for clarinet and piano, composed in 1945 for Artilio Scotese, a professor at the Conservatorio di Musica “Niccolò Piccinni” in Bari. A version of that piece for viola and piano was also published by Ricordi – just like Brahms did with his two clarinet and piano sonatas op. 120. The viola version was dedicated to Piero Farulli, celebrated violist of the Quartetto Italiano, who was also the dedicatee of another – original this time – viola work, the *Intermezzo* (1945). This ‘new’ *Sonata* for viola and piano, albeit a transcription from the clarinet, was never intended to replace the 1934–1935 piece of the same name in the composer’s catalog. In fact, a recital offered in Naples by Lina Lama and Nino Rota in 1977 included both sonatas, which revealed more stylistic differences than similarities, a constant paradox in the music of Nino Rota that sailed unabated from the ‘silliness’ requested of *La pappa col pomodoro* to the ‘sublimity’ of *Mysterium*.<sup>24</sup>

As noted earlier, in 1934 when Rota was invited to contribute a new work to the Terza Rassegna Nazionale di Musica (1935), he had little experience composing for the viola. In fact, the penciled sketches of sections of this work show the viola part hastily notated in the violin clef or in a tonality too high for the register of the instrument, a good reason for the frequent erasures and/or the presence of written out afterthoughts like ‘un tono sotto’, a note to self to transpose entire passage(s) one step lower.

Was someone advising Rota about viola writing or was he learning how to do it by trial and error? Admittedly, the solo viola literature was scarce at that time and nothing of note had been composed in Italy, except a post-Romantic *Sonata in Sol minore* for viola and piano (1919) by Alessandro Bustini (1876–1970), published

by Ricordi the following year. Even if Rota had perused a copy of Bustini's *Sonata*, it would not have been helpful for his stylistic pursuit. Perhaps he should have focused on the *Sonata* op. 11 no. 4 (1919), and *Sonata* op. 25 no. 4 (1922) by Paul Hindemith (1880–1963), himself a viola virtuoso. Certainly, he may have considered Johannes Brahms' viola transcriptions (in consultation with Joseph Joachim) of the clarinet sonatas op. 120, or he just had no time for research as deadlines for delivering the promised work were pressing. Whatever the case, Rota took a chance by sending the music to Rome for Giuseppe Matteucci, the seasoned principal violist of the Teatro Augusteo Orchestra, to master it for the premiere scheduled only days away.

Giuseppe Matteucci (1893–1952), former principal viola of the orchestra of Teatro La Scala in Milan and then Rome's most prestigious orchestra under Bernardino Molinari, had acquired, like his colleagues in that orchestra, a unique level of preparedness to master any contemporary work. So, it seems that Matteucci and his young partner at the piano, Pietro Scarpini, encountered no technical difficulties in Rota's music. In fact, theirs was surely an excellent performance for a festival audience and critics whose plates were overflowing with novelties (FIGURE 1).

Now, whether the reported above statement, 'Somewhat archaic, neo-classical style fashionable in 1930s Fascist Italy', may appear too all-encompassing for the music of a complex period, it is a necessary shield against stylistic controversies generated by Rota himself through the continuous revisioning of his *Sonata* until the 1970s. In sum, to critically consider the path of this *Sonata* we must begin when Rota ended it on 15 March 1935, and follow Copy 1 in the audio-score version below.

**VIDEO 1. Copy 1: audio-score version (click here). Courtesy of Schott Edition and the Curtis Institute of Music.<sup>25</sup>**

The first movement *Allegro moderato*, for instance, is essentially structured in sonata form with two contrasting themes, development, recapitulation, but not a coda since the movement segues (*attacca subito*) into the next movement, *Adagio*.

A tiny bell-like chord heard in the piano part and a double anacrusis figure played by the viola, give way to mechanical yet *legato*, tinkling, carillon-like sequences of sixteenth notes played on the piano with the right hand, over pedaled quartal chords ringing up a third, one octave higher, played with the left hand. Thus set, the piano part stays the course deviating slightly from this mechanical pattern in the development section.

The viola part, cast in the middle-high register of the instrument, is also based

on moving sixteenth notes marked *ben tenuto* [*dolce*], ‘on the string’, that is, with a dash placed on each note. So, in string bowing terminology, the required bow stroke would be a traditional *detaché* (short spreading in the upper half of the bow) which does not flow naturally on the viola as it does on the violin or cello. The thickness of the strings and the heavier bow would lead the player to execute the passage, and indeed the whole movement, ‘off the string’ in the middle section of the bow to keep the tempo up to speed.

William Primrose, a concert violinist before becoming a great violist, immediately caught the spirit of the folkish cantabile envisioned by Rota under the influence of Gian Francesco Malipiero’s model evidenced in his first three string quartets, *Rispetti e strambotti* (1920), *Stornelli e ballate* (1923), and *Cantari alla madrigalesca* (1931) which the young composer was surely familiar with. The performance problem, therefore, lies in whether a sense of cantabile can be applied to fast-moving sixteenth notes marked *ben tenuto*, and yet staccato. Such a technical conundrum can be resolved, no matter how recalcitrant the viola and the player’s bow arm may be. It can be obtained by ‘osmosis’ through (1) singing mentally every single note according to the melodic trajectory suggested by the chord progression, (2) keeping the fingers supplely pressed on the fingerboard with a hint of vibrato, (3) keeping the bow free to follow the idealized melodic trajectory by pressing the upper half gently on the strings without letting it bounce. The ensuing sonority between the velvety and foggy bodes well when mixed, in this case, with the continuous carillon-like sound of the piano.

Following the second theme (p. 3), a very idiomatic passage that employs the viola’s open D string as the upper voice reiterates eighth notes, while the lower voice plays sixteenth notes on the lower G string, producing a sort of rustic *faux bourdon* effect which contrasts with the piano part twinkling away in the very high register. Here, the violist can almost release his/her chin hold of the instrument by letting it resonate in the air while the bow presses the double stops freely in the middle where the arching of the bow is wider. What I suggest here, is to play the passage by assuming a fiddler-like stance.

A final passage before the recapitulation (p. 4) challenges the violist as the part requires awkward double stops and string crossings played at the *fortissimo ben tenuto* level, which can be obtained by keeping the left hand in continuous vibrato motion, i.e. as supple as possible and the bow pressed hard almost at the limit of crashing the sound.

Similar passages abound in Stravinsky’s *L’Histoire du Soldat* (1918), the *Concertino* for string quartet (1920), and the *Violin Concerto* (1931); however, playing fourths in tune on the viola at a moving pace in a web of finger crossing is an ungrateful task. William Primrose overcame such difficulties magnificently

in his recorded performance as did many violists after him. Others resorted to 'simplified' versions of similar passages which were often sanctioned by the composer as it occurred in his performances with violist Lina Lama.

By contrast, the second movement, *Adagio*, has a meditative character whose purely linear melody gradually reaches the level of a dramatic 'invocation' marked *Largamente* and played *fortissimo* by both instruments. The piano part is harmonically very dense, while the viola is asked to soar high through emphatically daring octaves<sup>26</sup> (p. 7). This glorious moment dissolves quickly into a transparent, extended passage, a quasi-intermezzo followed by the *Allegretto mosso*, a scherzo of sort (see APPENDIX 1).

It has been noted already that, beginning in the 1950s, Rota eliminated these two sections from all other versions of the *Sonata*. However, they can be easily restored in performance by following the original text (pp. 7–12) or the newly noted pages provided in APPENDIX 1. Furthermore, the *Allegretto mosso* could benefit from being played at a faster tempo, say at the metronome marking of 72 to a 3/8 bar, rather than 62 as suggested by the composer. This performative solution may enhance the movement charming, wispy feeling which lands without interruption (*attacca subito*) onto the last movement, *Allegro*, whose compositional working and reworking has been described at length before. The movement's robust contrapuntal framework engages the two instruments in a three-part dialog mediated by the structural logic of the piano parts for the right and left hands and the very awkward ornamented figures played by the viola. William Primrose played through this and similar passages with extreme clarity. Others, however, must have asked the composer for simplified versions which were duly notated on various copies as alternate versions (see APPENDIX 2). Midway through the movement, Rota finally shows some truly idiomatic viola writing by deploying a more forceful *faux bourdon* effect than before using the instrument's resonant open C string (pp. 16–17).

The original version does not bring this rhythmically driving piece to a conclusion through a dynamic coda, as one might have predicted, but rather through a well-determined, very emphatic *Adagio* played *fortissimo* like a 'proclamation' that gets slower at each iteration until the piano takes over with ample arpeggios and resonating chords, while the viola displays a series of melisma that, again, show Rota's clear admiration for the music of Gian Francesco Malipiero (p. 20). As noted, this original extended coda was ultimately substituted by either a short virtuoso ending or a version considerably reduced both in length and meaning.

The material discussed in this essay may offer the violist an opportunity to perform this *Sonata* as originally conceived in 1934–1935 as an alternative to the posthumous version published in the year 2000 by Schott Edition.

## Notes

- 1 Rinaldi was Rota's maternal grandfather's surname which he added to his at the very beginning of his career but dropped it shortly after; the works' titles and nomenclature are reported here as they appear in Lualdi's book.
- 2 Nino Rota studied in Rome with Alfredo Casella since 1927 to obtain a Diploma in Composition from the Conservatorio di Musica "Santa Cecilia" in 1930. At the suggestion of Arturo Toscanini, Rota was admitted to the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia to study composition with Rosario Scalero during the 1930–1932 academic years.
- 3 Curtis invited Rota to return to the Institute for a third year, however the composer declined due to military obligation and the consequent revocation of his passport. However, as he confided to Casella in a letter dated 'Milano 23 XI 1932' (held at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venezia, Fondo Nino Rota, Correspondence; henceforth FNR), the thought of spending another year of stuffy composition studies (under Rosario Scalero) would have been unbearable. He regretted, though, missing the conducting lessons imparted by Fritz Reiner. At any rate, a diploma from Curtis, dated 20 May 1935, was eventually mailed to Rota. A reproduction of the document can be seen in Pier Mario De Santi, *Nino Rota. Le immagini e La musica*, Firenze: Giunti, 1992, p. 25.
- 4 Copies can be perused at the FNR. *Invenzioni* received its recording premiere in 2008 by the Swedish-based Weber Quartet for the Courthouse Music label.
- 5 John C. G. Waterhouse, *Gian Francesco Malipiero (1882–1973): The Life, Times and Music of a Wayward Genius*, Amsterdam, NL: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1999, p. 173.
- 6 *Balli* (1932) is a 10-minute, 7-movement composition scored for piccolo, flute, oboe, English horn, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 French horns, 1 trumpet, and strings. It can be heard on a CD Nino Rota, *L'Oeuvre pour piano, Concerto soirée, Fantasia "Don Giovanni"*, Danielle Laval (piano), Orchestra Città di Ferrara, Giuseppe Grazioli (conductor), Naïve 1003, 2002. For details on the 1932 Radio Music competition including specific instrumental and harmonic requirements, see 'Documenti', in: *Lundicesima musa: Nino Rota e i suoi media*, a cura di Veniero Rizzardi, Roma: RAI-ERI, 2001, pp. 199–238.
- 7 Matarazzo was also credited with the direction of two short documentaries: *Littoria* (February 1933) and *Mussolinia di Sardegna* (April 1933). Both documentaries are included in the DVD version of *Treno popolare* issued in 2020 by Ripley's Film Srl.
- 8 For Rota's early soundtracks, see Antonio Ferrara, 'Rota e i suoi primi film. Canzoni, pastiche e Leitmotiv', in: *L'altro Novecento di Nino Rota. Atti del Convegno nel Centenario della nascita*, a cura di Daniela Tortora, Napoli: Edizioni del Conservatorio di Musica San Pietro a Majella, 2014, pp. 271–301, and Dinko Fabris, "...come l'angelo custode: una grande invenzione". Nino Rota e Suso Cecchi, prime collaborazioni e rete familiare', *Philomusica on-line. Rivista del Dipartimento di Musicologia a Beni Culturali*, XXI/1 (monographic issue: *Prima della Dolce vita: Nino Rota nel cinema popolare italiano del secondo dopoguerra*, a cura di Giada Viviani e Marco Dalla Grassa), 2022, pp. 1–26.
- 9 Raymond Hall, 'Concert Novelties in Rome [...]', *The New York Times*, 2 June 1935, Section X, p. 5. Hall continued to chronicle the following Rassegne until the Fifth (and last) in 1939. The last Rassegna showcased another work by Nino Rota: *Sonata* for 14 instruments, a re-working of the *Sonata* for flute and harp (1937–1938), which the American critic praised as follows: 'In this work of archaizing manner, the precocious Milanese youngster confirms his personal gifts and well-defined ideas, clearer here than in some previous eclectic works. The *Sonata* is in contemplative mood, but one senses the vibration of a tense young spirit searching its way'. Quite a different assessment from 'a flash in the pan [a failed experiment]' with which

- Raymond Hall dismissed Rota's 1935 *Sonata* for viola and piano.
- 10 The Curtis Institute of Music did grant Rota a diploma on 20 May 1935, three years after he had left the institute.
  - 11 A digital version of this performance has been made available in recent times by the label Twilight Music for the series *Via Asiago, 10* (the street address of Rai's main production studios) dedicated to the restoration and digitization of historical performances that took place on the premises.
  - 12 FNR, Correspondence.
  - 13 As mentioned before, William Primrose lost his copy of the *Sonata*, so the authenticity of this instance cannot be corroborated. His 1953 Radio recorded performance broadcasted on 20 March 1954, however, is faithful to the copy currently preserved at the Curtis Institute of Music, meaning that no subsequent version of the *Sonata* was sent to him.
  - 14 FNR, Ritagli Stampa.
  - 15 Mario Lattanzi was a retired trumpet player residing in Rome. He supplemented his income by copying music. One would assume that Ferraguzzi did listen to the *Sonata* (Copy 1) performed on the radio by Primrose on 20 March 1954. Primrose was considered then to be the greatest viola player in the world.
  - 16 FNR, Correspondence. Rota's *Sonata* was broadcasted on Friday, 19 June 1964 at 4:30 p.m. in a short program including a *Sonata* by Luigi Boccherini.
  - 17 This information is puzzling as E major was the original key of the penciled sketches which Rota transposed one step lower in Copy 1.
  - 18 Established in 1958, the Rai Filodiffusione channel broadcasted programs of classical often rare music and musical performances through a wire service provided by the telephone cable network available throughout the country.
  - 19 William Primrose's name had appeared many times in the Italian radio programs since 1954, either through commercial recordings, taped performances imported from other national radio networks, or local productions such as the program broadcasted on March 1954 and August 1964.
  - 20 FNR, Correspondence.
  - 21 FNR, Correspondence. The Lama–Bordoni programs including the Rota *Sonata* have not been found.
  - 22 I was privileged to receive in the early 1990s a cassette tape of the Lanciano 1975 performance from Nina Rota, the composer daughter. Then, this recording was issued as part of a CD included in the boxed book set *L'undicesima musa: Nino Rota e i suoi media*. Now, the full Lama–Rota Lanciano 1975 recital can be heard on YouTube ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dEP0qLG\\_rng](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dEP0qLG_rng)) [18 April 2023].
  - 23 The Dynamic CDS 211 includes *Improvviso* for violin and piano; *Sonata* for violin and piano; *Intermezzo* for viola and piano; *Sonata No. 1* for viola and piano; *Sonata No. 2* for viola and piano, Luigi Alberto Bianchi, violin/viola, and Marco Vincenzi, piano, 1998.
  - 24 *La pappa col pomodoro* was the title of a song heard in *Il giornalino di Gian Burrasca*, a 1964–1965 TV series directed by Lina Wertmüller with music by Nino Rota. *La pappa col pomodoro* [*The tomato soup*] became a contagious little jingle difficult to escape. *Mysterium, cantata sacra* for 4 solo voices, chorus, and orchestra on texts selected by Nino Rota and Vinci Verginelli, was composed in 1962 and premiered on 29 August of the same year at the Anfiteatro Cittadella Cristiana in Assisi, Italy.
  - 25 Thanks are extended to Kristian Tchetchko, Lead Engineer & Coordinator of Recording

Services at the School of Music, Carnegie Mellon University, for assistance in the preparation of this document.

26 In the penciled sketch, this passage was notated a step higher requiring no octaves.

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