

A TEI Project

Interview of Clara Castelnovo-Tedesco

Contents

1. Transcript
 - 1.1. TAPE ONE, Side One (January 18, 1981)
 - 1.2. TAPE ONE, Side Two (January 18, 1981)
 - 1.3. TAPE TWO, Side One (April 25, 1981)
 - 1.4. TAPE TWO, Side Two (May 9, 1981)
 - 1.5. TAPE THREE, Side One (June 13, 1981)
 - 1.6. TAPE THREE, Side Two (June 20, 1981)

1. Transcript

1.1. TAPE ONE, Side One (January 18, 1981)

ANDRADE

Mrs. Castelnovo-Tedesco, we were talking about your early years in Italy. You were born in the town of Prato. When were you born?

CASTELNUOVO

I was born March 22, 1895. My father's name was Alfredo Forti.

ANDRADE

Your mother's name?

CASTELNUOVO

My mother's name was Giuseppina Vivanti, born in Senigaglia, Marche.

ANDRADE

You were telling me earlier about your father and your grandfather, about their factory. Could you discuss that again, the wool factory that they had in Prato?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes. My father's father was a very gifted man. He founded a woolen factory together with his brother Giulio, and they became very well and very famous with this. They constructed some plaids of all kinds, so beautiful. Then when they were made, they were put all together and sent to certain agents in England and put some—

ANDRADE

Imprint?

CASTELNUOVO

Labels, and then sent all over the world. You know, at that time, they didn't have electricity. They didn't have electricity at the time; so the factory was built near the river Bisenzio, which was going down from the Apennines to Prato. I remember very well this little factory, which became then bigger and bigger. And it was the water of the river — I don't know how—which made the machines run.

ANDRADE

I see. It generated power.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, gave the power to the machines to work. I remember this very well. We were very little children, and we were walking around sometimes, once in a while. We were frightened to walk around those machines, because they were very— The river was called Bisenzio.

ANDRADE

The factory was quite successful? You said your grandfather was quite successful.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes. Si. They were quite successful. As a matter of fact, when my father and [his] younger [brother] took on the factory, they were already wealthy and very gifted, and they went on. Then they built another factory closer to — because at that time they started to have electricity and so forth—so closer to Prato. This little factory by the river was still working—I don't know — in

different ways. But they built another factory, much bigger, in the plain of Prato, closer to Prato. And this went on until my father [died].

ANDRADE

When did your father join the business? When he was a young man?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, he must have. Yes, yes.

ANDRADE

He knew he was going to join the business?

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, he started early, no doubt. But at first, of course, he had been to school. He was very gifted and loved literature and poetry very much. I remember during vacation he was teaching us with some poetry and reading us Italian classics and so forth. This I remember very well. We were very young.

ANDRADE

And your mother?

CASTELNUOVO

My mother was also listening. So she was reading also. My mother also had some brothers. One was very gifted as a doctor. He was a good doctor and became a psychiatrist at the last — Well, at that time psychiatry didn't exist much; it was when Freud came out. But he was a kind of pupil, let's say. This was one of my mother's brothers.

ANDRADE

Did you have any brothers or sisters?

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, many, many, many.

ANDRADE

Did you? Who were they? How many were there?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, I had a sister, older sister than [me], who married also a musician, composer, very gifted. He was a removed cousin from Bologna. He married my oldest sister.

ANDRADE

What was your sister's name?

CASTELNUOVO

Paola.

ANDRADE

And what was her husband's name?

CASTELNUOVO

The name, Liuzzi. The husband's name was Fernando Liuzzi. He was very gifted; he was teaching first in Bologna and then also at the conservatory in Florence for many years. When we were sent away, he came also, about the time we came to America. He came also to New York. He was already teaching at some university in New York.

LORENZO

I think it was Columbia.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes. He was not a strong man. And then he had [a heart] attack, and he had to go back, and then he died too early. So this was my oldest sister. Then I had two brothers, Giorgio and Aldo—very nice, very gifted, especially Aldo. And this sister—you have seen the picture—Nella, she was a painter. We were six. And then the youngest one was Piera, who married also a doctor from Ferrara, Italy. They came to America, and she's still in Boston. She's still in Boston. Her husband died two years ago only. He was a doctor. She lives in Boston; we talk over the phone sometimes. She's the youngest of all of these six children.

ANDRADE

So you were the fifth of six children? You were the fifth child?

CASTELNUOVO

I was the second. My sister Paola [was] the oldest, and I was the second — Clara. Then Giorgio, Nella, Aldo. And Piera is the one who is in Boston. She's still there; we speak often.

ANDRADE

You were telling me about your education as a young girl. How old were you when you started elementary school?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, I had a lady — a teacher, a maestra — at home for two years. Then the third grade, I went to school. I had a very gifted old woman. I don't remember the name, but I still remember her. I had third and fourth grade in school in Prato. Elementary school, you know. Then after this, I went to ginnasio — classic ginnasio — at the Collegio Cicognini in Italy, in Prato. And then there I had two years of Collegio Cicognini, first and second ginnasio, where you start Latin right away — Italian, of course, literature, all kinds, and Latin. You learned the classic Latin. And then after this, we moved to Florence. And in Florence I had all the other years of ginnasio with Latin and Greek; that's what I learned. And then privately I learned French and English—not much German, because when I started to learn German the First World War started, and then I gave it away.

ANDRADE

Why?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, because I had no time. When the First World War came, we didn't like to speak German. Anyhow, we didn't have time. I had to work. I remember working in hospital when the war started in 1914. I was eighteen years old or whatever. French you also studied in school. And then I started reading right away French literature very much, of course. We were very close to all the classics and what was modern literature, French. French and English, I read it all.

ANDRADE

Did your family know English?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, not much.

ANDRADE

Why did your family move from Prato to Florence?

CASTELNUOVO

We moved because my father thought that it would be nicer for us to live in a bigger city and have more ways to approach society, people. I mean, in a big city like Florence you could see and learn more and know more people, and there were theaters and concerts. Prato was a small city, more—I don't know what to say.

ANDRADE

How old were you when you moved?

CASTELNUOVO

When we moved, I was — [to Lorenzo] Aiuta me.

ANDRADE

But you were not finished with school yet.

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, no. I was thirteen. Nel novecento —

ANDRADE

Oh, very young. So you finished your schooling in Florence?

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, yes.

LORENZO

Then it must have been about 1908.

ANDRADE

Mrs. Castelnovo-Tedesco, what about the business? Did your father give up the business in Prato when he moved to Florence?

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, no. We moved to Via Masaccio. He rented a nice apartment in a villa, second floor. There were no cars at the time; so he had a carriage, man with a carriage, taking him to the train station, center station. And with the train [he went] to Prato every morning and came back in the evening every day. Then he died early. He was working very hard. It must have been just before the world war. The war started 1914, right? La guerra mondiale. [My father died] just before that, about a few months or so. Oh, it was a terrible time, because my father passed away, and then the war started.

ANDRADE

How old was he when he died?

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, I don't know. Too young. I don't know exactly. He must have been over fifty, but not much over fifty. He was so young.

ANDRADE

We were talking earlier about the Jewish population in Italy, and you were saying it only constituted about 1 percent in Italy.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, that's what I say, about, you know. [About 100, 000 people. C. C. -T.]

ANDRADE

I think now would be a good time to talk about the different Jewish groups in Italy that you have in your notes there. You were talking about the three groups.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, that's what I have [in my notes]. The Jewish people in Italy were a small minority. (Is that what I said? About 1 percent?) And they could be divided in three groups. The first one was in Italy since the time of the Roman Empire, and they were settled down in the city of Rome, the states of Umbria and

Marche. Marche is the country that goes to the Adriatic Sea, the other from Rome. And this was the Stato Pontificio, what was called the stato of the popes. The second one had come from Spain around 1492, when there had been the great — come si dice "cacciata" ["expulsion"]?

ANDRADE

Purge?

LORENZO

Inquisition, purge.

CASTELNUOVO

No, cacciata. They were sent out from Spain, sent away from Spain. And they arrived at the cosa c'e porto di Livorno?

LORENZO

The port of Leghorn.

CASTELNUOVO

Leghorn, in Tuscany, you know, by the sea. Livorno, which was a porto franco, open port. And then they moved around Tuscany, in the state of the granduca di Toscana. And there they are still Ebrei Sefardici. The third group, probably of origin Austro-Polacco, Polish from Austria. They spread in the region of Lombardo-Veneto, Lombardia and Veneto. And they are Ebrei Ashkenazy.

ANDRADE

And your father and your husband's father were from the second group, is that right?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, yes. Both of our fathers — my father and Mario's father—were [of] the same origin. And the mothers—our two mothers—were from the first group.

ANDRADE

Was your family very religious then? Did you observe the [holidays]?

CASTELNUOVO

No, they were not very — come si dice? But they felt their origin. I mean they didn't need to make—I don't know—to go very often to the — [to Lorenzo]
Non so come dire. Non seguivano i— Lorenzo, aiuta me.

LORENZO

My mother's family did not belong to a temple as far as I know.

CASTELNUOVO

No, they didn't need to follow the — go to the temple every day. In Prato, there was no Jewish temple at all; only in Florence, there was one. Once in a while, you know. But they felt their —

LORENZO

They had a sense of their cultural heritage, but they were not particularly—

CASTELNUOVO

Come si dice? A loro fedelta to their origin, you know, they felt that they belonged to this—

LORENZO

My father's family, on the other hand, were more involved with the Jewish community. They belonged to the temple.

CASTELNUOVO

But my father was very — [to Lorenzo] no costante. Il mio padre era fidele alia sua nascita, la sua gente.

LORENZO

What my mother is trying to say is that he was very faithful to his background.

CASTELNUOVO

Fedele. Come si dice "fedele"?

LORENZO

"Faithful. "

CASTELNUOVO

Faithful to his origin. As a matter of fact, I remember, when we arrived in Florence we didn't know much, because in Prato we had no culture of the Jewish origin or the Jewish culture, and so forth. And for some time, he [my father] took us a professor, a Jewish professor, who belonged to the Jewish temple, a professor of history. And for some time this man came once a week and taught us history, of the Jewish history and faith, and so forth. And also, together our cousins used to come, the son and daughter of [my father's] other brother. They used to come to my house, and we had these lessons of Jewish culture, let's say. Just to learn, to know.

ANDRADE

Well, in the early part of the century in Florence, or in any other part of Italy, were Jews treated differently?

CASTELNUOVO

Non capisco.

LORENZO

[translates — inaudible]

CASTELNUOVO

No, oh, no. No, oh, no. No, nothing at all. Italy has been — We didn't feel any difference at all. No, no.

ANDRADE

I see. You were about nineteen years old, you said, when World War I started.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, about. The war started in 1914. [to Lorenzo] Diciannove, that's right.

ANDRADE

And how did [the war] affect your life in Florence?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, we did have the war. One of my brothers was for some time in the war on the Alps. He had some, not very bad wound but he was sick or so. Then he was in a hospital for a while. A first cousin of mine was wounded very badly,

and he was for years— The Jews went to the war just the same as the others. There were no differences at all.

ANDRADE

Were you working in a hospital?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, yes, during the war. You know, the men were at the front or working somehow as soldiers and officers, and so forth. I was a young woman, and I was working in a hospital. I was not a nurse. My father had passed away, but he had expressed a— I don't know — he wouldn't have liked that. So I worked for several years, until the end of the war, in a— come si dice? — in the office of the hospital where you take care of the laundry. So for hours I worked there — I don't know—from one o'clock until the evening. There were nuns there taking care of the laundry. I remember I was very friendly with the head nun who was taking care of it. And we young girls were working every day, all day.

ANDRADE

Were your sisters also working at the hospital?

CASTELNUOVO

No, my older sister: she had been married already. And the other one, my brother, was an officer. The little one was too young to go.

ANDRADE

What happened to your father's business after he died?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, after he died, the brother was there, see?

ANDRADE

This is Uncle Giulio?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes. And then there was a very intelligent young man who was the son of a sister of my father who took [over] — come si chiama? — Vittorio. He was the son of my father's sister. And he became a very important head of this, and he

kept the fabric [factory] for years, many years. Now he's not there anymore, of course. And then — my brother came back, and they also— And for many years the factory went on pretty well.

ANDRADE

You also talked about your music training. You took voice lessons.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes.

ANDRADE

And these were private lessons?

CASTELNUOVO

Private lessons, yes. Maestro Modena in Florence was a very gifted man, a nice person, and he taught me. He taught me music more; so I was singing [mostly] [Claude] Debussy and what was modern music at the time. And then I had also a voice teacher, but I don't remember the name, of course. I had several: a lady, and then this man was very good.

ANDRADE

Did you study the piano?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, piano also. But I was not very good. The mathematical part of the piano or the music was not too successful for me.

ANDRADE

But music was very much a part of your family?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes. I enjoyed the singing very well. As a matter of fact, I sang Mario's music much; he was playing and I was singing. But rather in a — not too technically. I don't know how to say it.

ANDRADE

What were your favorite subjects in school?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, literature, all kinds.

ANDRADE

French, Italian?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes. Literature — all the Italian, French, and English, too. Then I read much of English literature.

ANDRADE

What did you think of Greek? How did you like Greek?

CASTELNUOVO

Greek? Oh, very much. We read the old literature very, very much.

ANDRADE

Did you study the sciences and mathematics?

CASTELNUOVO

No. Mathematics I was not good in. I had all grade A in all kinds of literature. And mathematics they gave me just to go through, but I was not good.

ANDRADE

How old were you when you left the university, when you graduated?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, I was not too old, because I studied privately after. Until I married, I was more or less studying privately. We married in 1924; so the years before, I was studying privately.

ANDRADE

Do you get a diploma before you study privately, or after you study?

CASTELNUOVO

No, I didn't have any diploma. I mean, yes, [from the] liceo, but nothing from what is called the Italian university, no. I was studying privately with this Professore Vandelli. He was very gifted in literature, Italian literature.

ANDRADE

Why did you study privately? Did young girls not go to the university? Did girls study at home? Was the university only for the young men?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, I studied privately. I used to go to the professor's house. As a matter of fact, some daughters of this professor with whom I studied literature were in school with me — in ginnasio, liceo — one of the daughters; so we were friends. To have lessons with this professor, I used to go to his house.

ANDRADE

Oh, so you were still enrolled in a university?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, yes, and had private lessons. Then I left the university and studied at the home of this professor without taking examinations anymore, no. And then I was working in the hospital — all this until the war finished.

ANDRADE

When did you meet Mario? What year was that?

CASTELNUOVO

When we moved to Florence, I started — First I met his brother, and then I met Mario socially, in concerts. It must have been around 1912, '13, something like that. We were friends for about ten years.

ANDRADE

So, you were very young then.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes. We met socially. We went to concerts. I met his mother; we were friends. We had also a tennis club together, where my brothers used to come and Mario's brother used to come. Mario didn't come playing; he was too busy to

play tennis. But he used to come once in a while, just to relax, to see us, to talk. So we became friends.

ANDRADE

How did your father like Mario?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, he didn't know him much, because my father was working all day away, and then he passed away. When [Mario] became our friend, he was not there anymore.

ANDRADE

So he never knew Mario.

CASTELNUOVO

Not really, not much. Instead, in the late years, my older sister's husband, Liuzzi, became a very great friend of Mario. And Mario used to come almost every evening; they lived not far from where I lived with my mother. (I lived with my mother and my brother.) Liuzzi lived very close to our house; so in the evening, I used to go to his — during the war years and so forth — I used to go almost every evening. And Mario used to go also, and we met there almost every evening. Then he was writing much music and showing to my brother-in-law, who was a very good musician, what he was doing. And I was there, and that's how we saw [each other]. We met almost every evening there. That's how we became [closer] friends.

ANDRADE

I see. Well, what I'd like to do now is talk about your husband's background: when he was born and where. Could we do that now?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, he was born in Florence. They had an apartment in the center of Florence, very close to Piazza del Duomo, in an apartment there.

ANDRADE

So he was born a week after you?

CASTELNUOVO

He was born a week after me. He was [born] April 3, [1895].

ANDRADE

Did he have any brothers and sisters?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes. He had an older brother, Ugo. He just passed away a few years ago. He became a great lawyer in Italy. He was head of the — [to Lorenzo] Come si chiama? Capo di — Well, there were three brothers: Ugo, the older one; then Guido, the second one, who was an engineer—also very nice, intelligent, but not so active, I would say, [as] Ugo and Mario; then Mario, the third, the little one. I can show you a picture of Mario at that age. [tape recorder turned off] This is Mario in the country. You see this is a grape [arbor], and he's lying on his [back]. He must have been nine, ten, something like that; I don't know the year it was taken. Isn't it nice?

ANDRADE

Yes.

CASTELNUOVO

This is — you can imagine — myself in the country house. We were up in the hill from Prato to Bologna, in the Apennines. And this was a lady who was taking care of us, because we were many children. That's me.

ANDRADE

I see. How old were you here?

CASTELNUOVO

Six, something like that, I would say. And this is my father. You see how nice. This was taken — I don't know exactly when—but about late years. You see how nice. He was very sweet and very— [to Lorenzo] Bella fotografia, questa. E molto carina — negli tempo. You see a very intelligent person. He was gifted, tremendously gifted. [tape recorder turned off]. Mario had been over where [Gabriele] D'Annunzio was living and had been playing for him with a French singer some of his music and so about that time. I wasn't there,

because I was busy with the children, but Mario used to go there, and this [telegram from D'Annunzio] came. Now read it.

LORENZO

It's very flowery, Victorian in style. It says: My dear Mario, Just the other night the beautiful song of "Fiume" was sung to me [and this was a song that my father had written at the time of First World War]. So then I thought again of your other works, almost brought with the sound of the new music that you sent me, borne from the sea, solitary like a mystic island with its roots in the rigorous art of the old masters, with certain echoes of the Sistine and all of its suspended people. I will write you in the solitude which attracts me with the promise of regained melodious youth. I am very grateful to the muse and sybil Memmi [who was a mutual friend]. You will receive a long, musical letter. Goodbye in the salt and sea. With an embrace, Gabriele D'Annunzio.

ANDRADE

Thank you.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes. He went several times at that time with this French singer, Madeleine Grey, who used to stay there a few days.

LORENZO

Wasn't this Memmi Strozzi?

CASTELNUOVO

What?

LORENZO

This was Memmi Strozzi. There were two mutual friends: one was a woman named Memmi Corcos, who then later married Comte Strozzi, and the other was a very well-known French singer — actually she was French and English, because I think her father was English — Madeleine Grey, who also was a very close friend of Maurice Ravel.

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, she was a very well-known singer in France, and she knew all the musicians. [shows photograph] This is Memmi Corcos, a friend of Mario when they were very young. Her brother was a painter.

LORENZO

Her father.

CASTELNUOVO

Her father and — Dipinpi [?] era fratello, che morì molto presto. The father was [also] a very well-known painter. That's Florence, a villa in Florence, up to Fiesole, the village over Florence — Well, there are so many.

LORENZO

Fiesole is one of the hills just outside of Florence.

CASTELNUOVO

That's a beautiful [place]. He [Corcos] died before the war.

1.2. TAPE ONE, Side Two (January 18, 1981)

CASTELNUOVO

An uncle [Samuele Tedesco] had no heir. When he [died], he left to Mario's father, to the family Castelnovo, the money he had, what he had, and the name Tedesco. So they added to Castelnovo the name Tedesco.

ANDRADE

So this is Mario's grandfather?

CASTELNUOVO

No, it was an uncle of his father. An uncle, not the grandfather. It was an uncle of Mario's father.

LORENZO

No, he was a brother-in-law.

CASTELNUOVO

No, la famiglia —

LORENZO

Era sposato alia sorella del suo nonno.

CASTELNUOVO

No, questo Tedesco era lo zio dei Castelnuovo. Era lo zio —

LORENZO

He was an uncle of my father's who was also in business with his—

CASTELNUOVO

No —

ANDRADE

Are we talking about Mr. Tedesco now, who didn't have heirs?

LORENZO

Right.

ANDRADE

And he is the uncle of your father?

LORENZO

I'm not sure.

CASTELNUOVO

Era uno zio del nonno Castelnuovo. Uno zio!— che non aveva eredi, non aveva nessuno. Ha lasciato al nonno.

LORENZO

Mother says he was an uncle of my grandfather.

ANDRADE

And who became the beneficiary?

LORENZO

And they carried on his name as part of the family last name, which was Castelnuevo. I think my father writes about it in the autobiography, but I will have to—

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, it's written in the autobiography.

ANDRADE

OK, we can check that later.

LORENZO

Yes, we can.

CASTELNUOVO

But that's what it is. This I know because I read it.

ANDRADE

So the family name then became Castelnuevo-Tedesco.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes. The name became Castelnuevo-Tedesco. Mario was already born, you know. This uncle left the money he had, whatever he had, some silver, whatever — he had no heir—and the name. So they joined the Tedesco to Castelnuevo. Until then, their name was only Castelnuevo. And so they kept it, and we keep it.

ANDRADE

[to Lorenzo] I noticed your paintings were signed "L. Tedesco. "

LORENZO

Yes. Well, legally, my name is Castelnuevo-Tedesco, but I use Tedesco because it's much shorter.

CASTELNUOVO

And then because in America it's easier. You know, Castelnuevo nobody can pronounce. Instead, Tedesco is easier. So people here, they pronounce rather Tedesco than Castelnuevo. They don't know how.

ANDRADE

You said you met Mario's family. What were they like? What was Mario's mother—

CASTELNUOVO

Mario's mother was a very sweet person.

ANDRADE

Wasn't she the one who taught him music?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes. I met her in concerts. By the way, we met the Castelnovo-Tedesco's mother socially, mostly also in the Rosselli family. When we moved to Florence, we knew the Rosselli family — you know, the lady Rosselli who had these three sons, this tragedy. One died in the First World War, the older one, who was about my age, Aldo, the older one. The second, Carlo, and Nello, the younger one, Mussolini had them killed in France, [The Rosselli brothers were assassinated near Bagnol, France, c. 1936. C.C.-T.] you know, when Hitler — [to Lorenzo] Come si puo dire?

LORENZO

They were assassinated in Paris in the late thirties.

CASTELNUOVO

We were great friends. Let's see some pictures of Mario's mother. This is Mario's mother, pretty young when I met her. You see how nice. And this is the father and Ugo, the older brother, and father, Amedeo. And this is the mother.

ANDRADE

Her name was —

CASTELNUOVO

Noemi.

ANDRADE

Senigaglia?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes.

LORENZO

She was apparently quite a good pianist, very musical. She started to teach my father music when he was very young.

CASTELNUOVO

Now, as I show you pictures and letters — this is not family, but it's interesting; so you may be interested to see. This is the other brother, Guido. That's Guido in the middle. Ugo, the first, then Guido, and that's Mario. Oh, and those are [Igor] Stravinsky, old letters from Stravinsky. See, Stravinsky and his wife when they were here, and old letters we wrote. It's interesting isn't it?

ANDRADE

Yes!

CASTELNUOVO

See. Well, I keep what I can.

ANDRADE

Stravinsky's letters?

LORENZO

Yes, we were quite close friends. My father was one of the pianists when Les Noces was first performed in Italy in the twenties. The first performance in Italy, he was one of the pianists. Then they met subsequently. Then, of course, they met again when they came to Los Angeles.

CASTELNUOVO

Here we have the [Ernst] Toch family.

ANDRADE

Yes.

CASTELNUOVO

We were great friends.

LORENZO

Do you know them?

ANDRADE

Yes. In fact, the older boy, Lawrence, used to work in our program.

CASTELNUOVO

Well, we were great friends. We came about the same time. They were a little older than we were. This is a picture when we went — well, quite a few years ago we went back to Italy — and that's me; and this lady—you see how nice she is—she lives in a very small village between Florence and Pisa. She's the daughter of my balia — come si dice?—my nurse. Yes, she's so sweet. (By the way, I want to talk to her, because I discovered that it's her birthday this month. We must call her.) And this is Lorenzo with his first child, look. Isn't that nice?

ANDRADE

You look very much like your father.

CASTELNUOVO

And that's his first child, and now he is at the university in San Francisco.

LORENZO

At Berkeley [the University of California, Berkeley]

CASTELNUOVO

In Berkeley. His son. Well, life is quite interesting.

ANDRADE

Let's talk some more about Mario then.

CASTELNUOVO

What do you want to know?

ANDRADE

Well, to finish today's session, I wanted to know a little bit more about the family. For example, is it true that his father did not know [Mario] was studying music?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, yes, it is true in a way. He thought in a way he would be [in] other fields of knowledge. But his mother saw how gifted he was. His mother was playing the piano, and Mario was sitting under the piano as a baby, as a child, and started to be interested. And so Mario started to learn something. Then also he composed a few — He was eight, nine years old. Then when the father saw that he certainly was so—he understood that he was so gifted, how he played, he started to play the piano, and he— come si dice?

LORENZO

He acquiesced.

CASTELNUOVO

He accepted, and so he could go on learning piano and playing. Of course he also had to study his — Mario tells all these stories in his first chapter [of the autobiography]. So he had a teacher for learning school, [and a teacher for] learning the piano. He accepted things as they were. But it is true. But he didn't— come si dice? [to Lorenzo] Non ha fatto guerra alia situazione.

LORENZO

Well, originally, my grandfather really wanted my father to study medicine, and he wasn't particularly sympathetic to his becoming a musician. But then when he realized that he was exceptionally gifted, then he accepted it.

CASTELNUOVO

He accepted it; so he didn't fight. But of course he let him learn piano.

ANDRADE

Mario's father was a banker in Florence.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, he was in the business and a banker, I would say.

ANDRADE

When did he start composing? When he was eight years old?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, he started very, very early, a few little— I can write it down for you. He wrote two little— He says that these few, two, three little pieces that he wrote when he was eight and nine were with his mother. Then during the tragedy of the—when we came, they were with Mario's mother. Then when we left, something was lost. For instance, can you imagine, all the music I was singing, the package of the music I was singing, [was] completely lost? I don't know. We packed. We saved most, fortunately, of Mario's music, but some things [were] lost.

ANDRADE

But he also studied music in the schools.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes. Well, he went to the conservatory [Cherubini Institute] in Florence. He had a few teachers. Then the most rewarding teacher he had was Pizzetti, Ildebrando Pizzetti, who certainly was a great composer and a great teacher, no doubt, in Florence.

ANDRADE

When did he start studying with Pizzetti?

CASTELNUOVO

This is a date I can't —

ANDRADE

He was quite young?

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, quite young, yes.

ANDRADE

About fifteen years old?

CASTELNUOVO

Fifteen, sixteen, oh, yes, yes. Exact dates— they are there.

ANDRADE

Did he tell you any stories about Pizzetti?

CASTELNUOVO

If you give me the book, I can —

LORENZO

I think he was about sixteen when he graduated from the conservatory.

ANDRADE

So he studied with Pizzetti after?

LORENZO

Before, I think.

ANDRADE

Oh, before.

LORENZO

I don't know. We'll have to look it up. He was quite young.

ANDRADE

The conservatory is not a university then?

LORENZO

It's a separate school. It's also a state-run school. It's separate from the university.

ANDRADE

But you enter after high school?

LORENZO

Yes.

ANDRADE

I see.

CASTELNUOVO

Well, he graduated from composition in 1918.

LORENZO

Oh, he was much older; he was twenty-three.

CASTELNUOVO

He took the composition degree. I should translate all this [autobiographical writing]: Because [Mario] had been sick, "[Pizzetti] could very well understand my situation [difficult: school, no school] and was very patient. He used to see that in a week I could learn what other boys could take some months [to learn]. " Because he had been sick. I should translate all this to you.

ANDRADE

He wasn't a healthy boy? Was he sick often?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, he wasn't too, too — For instance, I remember once during the war, when the war started, he was supposed to start some — like all the young men, they used to go— I went to see him in the hospital. He had a very great pneumonia or something. He got sick; so he didn't —

ANDRADE

He wasn't in the military then?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, in a hospital in Florence. He didn't go to the front at all. He was very delicate rather —

ANDRADE

But he talks about Pizzetti in his autobiography, then?

LORENZO

Yes.

ANDRADE

Have you read this?

LORENZO

Yes. It's been quite a while, but I could translate it for you.

ANDRADE

Well, I wanted to end with your— When did you meet Mario? You said you met him in Florence after you moved to the city. Was it before the war that you met Mario?

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, yes. We met socially and then during the war— Then he came also to see us in our country house for a visit. Then he became very friendly with my brother-in-law, the husband of my sister. We used to meet together almost every evening in my sister's house, which was very close to my house, where I lived in Florence. That's the war years, and our friendship grew and grew until we were married.

ANDRADE

What were your first impressions of [Mario] when you first met him?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, I always thought that he was a great composer and a great—I don't know — sweet person. We liked each other very much. We waited to marry because he was so busy with his working and his composing. There is a whole chapter dedicated to myself and to our relation. He thought he was too busy working to get married; so that's why we waited. That's the only reason why we waited to get married. But then we saw that there was nothing else to do. So we waited to marry because he was too busy working and composing. When you make a family, you have to give time.

ANDRADE

And you were engaged, you said, April of 1923, a year before you were married?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, we married 1923.

ANDRADE

Oh, you were married in 1923.

CASTELNUOVO

No, '24. I don't know the date. Now, wait a minute. (There is a chapter titled "Heifetz. " " Apparazione di Bloch. ") I don't know. Now, I lost it.

ANDRADE

When did you start singing Mario's songs?

CASTELNUOVO

I was singing all of Mario's music and Debussy mostly.

ANDRADE

Did you ever sing at concerts, or just for friends?

CASTELNUOVO

No concerts. I took part in some concerts in Florence in a choir; once when Mario was conducting a choir, I was singing in a choir — I don't remember what. There is so much here that I could read it all the time, but I have no time, because now all my time goes into answering people who write to me who want to know this and that and that. That's what I work on all day. This is an interesting chapter, you see: "La Mia Fede . " [to Lorenzo] Traduci. [inaudible] di nostro matrimonio. " Ricordo di Fernando Liuzzi. " You see this is a chapter dedicated to my brother-in-law, who was this composer, musicologist, and musician, who taught in Florence. We met every evening in their house — the husband of my sister.

ANDRADE

The one who came to New York?

LORENZO

Boston.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, who died. Ecco. This is a chapter for me. What do you want to know?
Some dates, the date when we married?

ANDRADE

Actually, we can find out later. I wouldn't worry about it. I think now would be
a good time to stop, don't you, since it's been a long session?

1.3. TAPE TWO, Side One (April 25, 1981)

ANDRADE

First of all, did you have any non-Jewish friends in Florence?

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, yes. I mean Jewish people were not many. You know, all the artists,
European artists, American artists, all of the countries — I mean, Florence was
the artistic center in Italy, much more than any other city, not only in music
[but also] in literature. For instance, walking in Florence I saw D. H.
Lawrence—you know, Lawrence, the writer. They were all coming in Florence.
Del nord, dall' Inghilterra — (You see, for me it is hard to say the names right
away.)

ANDRADE

Did you meet D. H. Lawrence?

CASTELNUOVO

No, I didn't meet; I was a very little girl. But I remember seeing him walking
around, and I was just a young girl. [to Lorenzo] Come si chiama, Lorenzo, il
grande scrittore del nord dell' Inghilterra?

LORENZO

[James] Joyce.

CASTELNUOVO

Joyce, yes. He was there in Florence for a while. They all came to do some work in Italy, teach somehow — here, there — or have a talk. But most of all, Florence was the greatest artistic place for musicians and for literature, for painting also, great painters. We had many friends, painter friends. And we met them — all of them, more or less. I remember during those years there was a place [Antico Fattore] in Florence where all the artists had a dinner together. I was there, too. I have some pictures, if I can look for it. I can find them.

ANDRADE

Who gave the dinners?

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, nobody gave the dinner. There was a kind of meeting society in a funny restaurant, you know, in a very popular restaurant, near the Ponte Vecchio, near the Arno [river]. And once in a while, all the artists in literature, in art, and in music met there.

LORENZO

Antico Fattore.

CASTELNUOVO

Antico Fattore it's called.

LORENZO

It was an informal, social —

CASTELNUOVO

Yes. And they met over once a month. I don't remember exactly, but pretty often. And I met everybody.

ANDRADE

And you and Mario—

CASTELNUOVO

We went also before marrying. I went there with some other friends. We had friends, painters— [Giovanni] Colaicchi. I received a book his wife sent me

recently. He was eighty a few years ago, two years ago. And they made a big reception, exhibition, in Florence, and she sent me— I have it over there. And in literature, Arturo Loria we have pictures— I have pictures there. By the way, there was also a— Come si chiama? [inaudible]

LORENZO

Berenson.

CASTELNUOVO

Berenson. You know, Berenson.

LORENZO

Bernard Berenson.

CASTELNUOVO

He had a big villa [I Tati] up in the hills of Florence. He gave very often big lunches—not dinner because it was up in the hills. So, we spent the lunch-time, from twelve until three, four in the afternoon. All these artists who were coming from around Europe, they were invited there. And we were invited, too. We went there. Ugo Ojetti was the great Italian critic. He lived in Florence, and he had a big villa. He gave also these kinds of lunches for artists who were coming there. Mario was always invited, and then after, of course, I went too. So we knew all the artists, European artists, and also American artists, coming from all over the world, I would say.

LORENZO

Who were the people that started the music festival in Florence?

CASTELNUOVO

[Alberto] Passigli. Passigli was of a Jewish family. He was a businessman, but he started to create the great musical meeting. And then he created the— come si chiama gli Amici della Musica?

LORENZO

Friends of Music.

CASTELNUOVO

A society called the Friends of Music. He then started concerts in Florence, which were the most important concerts in Italy, much more than Rome or Milan; everything was there. That's why Florence was the greatest musical center and artistic center because of Ojetti, Berenson, and then this Passigli, who was a businessman; so he knew how to organize things. He was a great music lover, and so he organized all the greatest concerts in Florence. And that's why Florence became the great center of music.

ANDRADE

How did Mario meet these people?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, when those things started Mario was in the — He and the pianist — come si chiama il gran pianista che vive a Firenze? They were directors on top of these people who organized these concerts. There were two or three: Passigli was, in the business way, and Mario — Ernesto Consolo was the pianist who had been in America for years teaching and playing, and then he came back. He was getting older. And they were the artistic heads of those organizations. Mario was very young, of course,

ANDRADE

How did he meet D'Annunzio?

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, I don't know. Mario met him. I didn't meet him, no. But I saw him once or twice. But Mario used to — that's why — he used to go to play at the villa. He had a great villa on —

LORENZO

I think what happened was my father wrote a song during World War I which was kind of a war song which became very popular.

ANDRADE

A war song?

LORENZO

Yes. It was sort of an anti-German song. I think D'Annunzio picked that up and used that. "Fuori i Barbari": wasn't that how they met?

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, yes, yes, when the war started. You know, now I don't have everything in my mind. If you would help — You know what you should do to make it real easy [is] help to publish Mario's autobiography, and then all these marvelous stories would be known, because everything is written there. My mind is old, and I forget. I keep forgetting them. I'm so busy with you and with — I can't have everything [in mind] because it's two, three volumes; I show you.

ANDRADE

Well, right now maybe you could just tell us what you do remember.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, well, what I do remember I tell you. So Mario several times went to the villa of D'Annunzio, playing; he gave concerts, playing his music. And also, besides his music, one thing I remember is the French singer from Paris, Madeleine Grey, she sang many works by Mario. And Mario went several times to play for her, and she was singing at D'Annunzio's house in the north, Il Vittoriale—I think the name was Vittoriale— before and after the war.

LORENZO

I think my father wrote something about this in his autobiography.

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, in the autobiography he tells everything.

LORENZO

But my recollection is that he had written a song which became very popular during World War I called "Fuori i Barbari. " And then D'Annunzio picked that up when he was involved with Fiume —

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, in the beginning and during the First World War. This started the friendship, of course. "Fuori i Barbari was the name of the [song]. Fuori i Barbari means "[kick] out the barbarians. "

LORENZO

It was sort of a freedom song.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes. It was very — I have the music; I'm sure I have the music.

ANDRADE

How did Mario meet other composers, such as [Igor] Stravinsky?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, I tell you I —

ANDRADE

Do you remember meeting Stravinsky? Did you meet Stravinsky?

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, Stravinsky. Well, Stravinsky, of course. Well, he was for dinner here in this— He was here in this house when he came to Los Angeles. He lived here, and we were here already. He was a great friend. He came for dinner here.

ANDRADE

Did you meet him in Italy or here in the United States?

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, also in Italy but more —

LORENZO

I think where they first met — The first time that *Les Noces* was performed in Italy, my father was one of the pianists. *Les Noces* was scored for three pianos, and when it was first performed in Paris, it was played by [Francis] Poulenc and several well-known composers, younger composers. Then when it was performed a few years later in Italy, my dad, who was basically trained as a pianist before he started composing, was one of the pianists. When he went to Paris — I think it was around 1927 — I think that was when they first met and established a personal relationship. Then later, of course, they met again here.

CASTELNUOVO

Look what I have here, Lorenzo. These are some sketches you made.

LORENZO

No, no, I didn't. That was a Christmas card from Stravinsky.

CASTELNUOVO

"A Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco." These are all letters Stravinsky wrote when he was here. Look, I have everything here.

LORENZO

We had mutual friends in Los Angeles—

CASTELNUOVO

This is a picture made here with a —

LORENZO

—so we saw a good deal of them in the forties, in the early forties.

ANDRADE

You mentioned that they met in Paris. So your father did travel?

LORENZO

Yes, un-huh.

ANDRADE

Quite a bit?

LORENZO

Not a great deal, but his music was performed in Paris and San Francisco and in Vienna. His opera was performed in Vienna. So he did a certain amount of traveling in connection with the performance of his own music.

CASTELNUOVO

This is very interesting: there are all kinds of Stravinsky's writing; I kept everything here.

LORENZO

But when my dad first came here [to Los Angeles] in 1941 — actually in 1940, before we came out—he had a number of friends who were Russian emigres. There was quite a professional colony here in Los Angeles: actors and musicians, all kinds of people who were basically White Russian immigrants. Among them was a painter, Eugene Berman, who was a friend of ours — I studied with him informally. He was very close to Stravinsky; he did a lot of the sets for Stravinsky ballets. So through Berman and a few other people who were part of that group, we saw a good deal of him.

ANDRADE

I know that [Jascha] Heifetz and [Arturo] Toscanini helped the family move to the United States. When did they meet? When did Mario and Heifetz and Toscanini meet?

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, in Italy Toscanini started to conduct Mario's overture very, very early. (You know, all this is in the autobiography. It's written: the year, the date.) And Heifetz came to Florence like everybody else, and he played Mario's Second Concerto for Violin and Orchestra with Toscanini everywhere.

LORENZO

My dad wrote music for Heifetz and for [Gregor] Piatigorsky and for [Andres] Segovia, and they would come every year on tour. It was an established, personal relationship.

CASTELNUOVO

Piatigorsky was also a great friend—I have pictures of Piatigorsky—like in the family.

LORENZO

But when the political situation in Italy began to deteriorate, of course, they encouraged my father to emigrate. [tape recorder turned off]

CASTELNUOVO

So, at that time the artistic world of Europe was completely together, and everybody knew each other. But you see, all the details are written in this [autobiography]. What I would ask is the help to publish the biography, which until now couldn't make it.

LORENZO

Well, unfortunately, there isn't a good translation, There's only a partial and very inadequate translation, but there is a lot of material there.

ANDRADE

Could you describe for me your husband's schedule, his work schedule? How did he work?

CASTELNUOVO

Here?

ANDRADE

First, in Italy.

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, well, in Italy he was — well, it's hard to say, but he was working all the time, most of the time, during the day because he didn't have any work, organized work. He didn't need to work. We had money. When we came to America, here, with no money at all, because we had permission to leave Italy openly, but not to take money with us; so he had to work here. That's why from New York, after a few months of living in New York, we came down here, because the friends he had and so forth helped him to work in the movies. It was the only way to have some work and make some money, you see. So during the day he was more or less out of the house working over there or going to the movie places: MGM and the others.

ANDRADE

In Florence, before he came to the United States?

CASTELNUOVO

In Florence, he was working most of the time or going out for his pleasure or seeing friends. I mean, he was completely free. He didn't have any schedule.

But then he was working for himself; so he was most of the time working for his own work, his own compositions, without a schedule.

LORENZO

Well, he was basically a night person. He liked working at night because there were fewer distractions. His pattern was to get up late in the morning and do whatever things had to be done during the day. But most of his composing was done in the afternoon and the evening. He would usually stay up till twelve or one o'clock almost every night.

CASTELNUOVO

During the morning, when he was ready, he could go out, see people, friends, maybe a museum or anything, meeting people from outside who are coming — just free. And then later, in the afternoon and night, [he would] work until he felt like.

LORENZO

And he worked all the time, seven days a week.

ANDRADE

But he still managed to socialize with the artists who came to Florence?

LORENZO

Well, in the daytime he would see people and teach and do the things that everybody has to do. Most of his composing was done in the evening or at night. That was a pattern he worked out.

ANDRADE

Did you say he taught also?

LORENZO

Well, he taught here in the States. I don't think he did very much formal teaching, although—

CASTELNUOVO

No, not in Italy. But here, yes. His work was the movies and teaching. He taught everybody in America. His pupils were so many.

LORENZO

His principal way of making a livelihood was writing for films and teaching.

CASTELNUOVO

That's how we lived.

ANDRADE

In Florence—what did you mean when you said Mario didn't have to work? He had money?

CASTELNUOVO

We had money, yes. Mario's family and my family: we had plenty of money. We didn't need to work for money.

ANDRADE

Even though your father had died?

CASTELNUOVO

Even after my father died, because they had plenty of money. I mean, we didn't do anything special.

LORENZO

Well, they lived very comfortably.

CASTELNUOVO

We had money to live comfortably.

ANDRADE

After you were married, where did you live?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, in Florence we had a nice apartment. When we married we lived for a couple of years with Mario's parents. And Pietro was born there in the house. We lived with Mario's parents for a couple of years or two and a half or two or three or something. Of course, we had a nice bedroom, Mario had a beautiful studio, room for his own work, and so forth. And the baby was born— It was a

big apartment, beautiful, in Florence, in the city. Then after two, three years we moved in an apartment for us. We rented an apartment; we didn't have a house for us. We rented a nice apartment and also Lorenzo was born there. And we lived there until we left.

LORENZO

In the thirties they had a flat on Via della Robbia in Florence. But then they had this house in Usigliano, which was basically my mother's family's house.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, in the country. So we lived there many months, several months, in this country house. I can show you the house there; it was beautiful. Mario wrote so much of his works in this place. I can show you.

LORENZO

And then my father loved the ocean; so every spring they would rent a house below Leghorn on the coast, and for years they would spend a month or a month and a half— come si chiama?

CASTELNUOVO

Castielioncello.

LORENZO

Castielioncello, which was an art colony, south of Leghorn. And then later in the summer they would go up to Usigliano, which was a little town south of Pisa.

CASTELNUOVO

His work was only his work alone, composing.

LORENZO

He could take his work anywhere, and those were the places where he loved to work.

CASTELNUOVO

We didn't have to stay in the city. He didn't teach; so his work was only composing.

ANDRADE

When did you start your family? Did you have children soon after you were married?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes.

ANDRADE

And you were still staying with his family when you had your children?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, I told you. After we were married, we stayed about two years with the family, Mario's family.

ANDRADE

And you already had a son?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes.

ANDRADE

Which son was this?

CASTELNUOVO

Pietro was born in Piazza d'Azeglio, where we lived with the parents. And Lorenzo was born in the other house after we moved.

LORENZO

My brother's five years older.

CASTELNUOVO

Lorenzo was born six years [after we married] something like that. And Pietro was born after one year we married.

ANDRADE

How much time did Mario spend with the sons?

CASTELNUOVO

Not much. Of course, he followed them. He liked them, but he was working all the time.

ANDRADE

Because he was working all the time, who then managed the house? Did you?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes. Well, I took care of the house, and I had some help. You know at this time, it was natural. Everybody had help. People had a cook. I had help for the children, to take care of the children, a young woman. She wrote to me yesterday; I received a letter from her, the girl who took care of the children when they were born.

LORENZO

We had a nurse who was very much a part of the family, and her mother had been my mother's nurse; so she was a sort of surrogate mother.

CASTELNUOVO

I have a letter on my table; I can show it to you. Yesterday it arrived. And I have a picture of her here, which arrived yesterday.

ANDRADE

Well, talking some more about the family, did your social life change after you had the children?

CASTELNUOVO

No, I didn't have to work too much. I had help in the house. Of course, I had to take care and the relation with children is different than [when you don't have them]. But it was natural for me. I don't know what to say.

ANDRADE

Did Mario have any ideas about how to bring up children, or did he leave the bringing up of the children to you?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, we agreed on everything. We felt that children should be very close, just kept friendly and openly. They were very — They didn't need an education. We should love each other and grow up naturally. Of course, I was more, because he was busy— But the way I used to talk to them [was] in a very friendly way, in a very open way, like real friends—not teach them. No, I never did that, and that they can tell you. [to Lorenzo] Is it true?

LORENZO

I think so, largely. There was not very much in the way of indoctrination. I think we were very free to do what we wanted to do. It was a very permissive household. In some ways my father was uninvolved because he was so preoccupied with what he was doing professionally. But he was also a very warm and very affectionate person. So there was sort of a dualism: a great, close friendship but also a certain detachment. He was basically so compulsive about his work.

ANDRADE

What about religious upbringing? [tape recorder turned off]

LORENZO

Not a great deal. My father's family were Orthodox Jews and they were observing— Religion was a very important part of their life. My father did have religious training, and we would occasionally go to temple with him and with my paternal grandfather. My mother's family, on the other hand, were not particularly [religious]. In fact, they were very uninvolved in orthodoxy and were not observing. So within our house, the issue of religion was not important.

CASTELNUOVO

No.

LORENZO

My father did observe the holidays, but that was about the extent of it.

CASTELNUOVO

Well, we knew our ancestors were [Jewish] but didn't take any involvement, special involvement, no.

LORENZO

I think it was more a cultural interest in tradition rather than an involvement with organized religion. I think that was pretty much the way my father felt.

ANDRADE

Were you aware at all of your father's stature when you were growing up in Florence?

LORENZO

Yes, but I don't think I really appreciated the quality of his work until I was a teenager. I was only vaguely aware of—

CASTELNUOVO

He was very young when we left.

LORENZO

It just seemed like a natural part of the household.

ANDRADE

With all the artists and musicians coming and going.

LORENZO

Right.

CASTELNUOVO

When we left he was eight, nine, something like that.

ANDRADE

Did Mario want you to study music?

LORENZO

Not particularly. I did study for a while as a child, but I think my father felt that it was such a difficult way to survive that unless there was a tremendous personal commitment and exceptional talent, it was not something that should be pushed. And I was much more interested in graphic arts. I had basically other orientations. It was for me just a hobby.

ANDRADE

Did Pietro study music?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, he studied piano in Italy. When we were in Florence, he liked music, and he started to play piano with a young lady. Pietro studied piano, yes. Then when we came to America he was so involved with his school: high school, then college, and so forth. But he didn't study any instrument here. But he liked music very much, and he's very—I don't know how to say it— to follow music, no doubt. Then he chose psychiatry, which is an art. That's why he started medicine. He graduated as a doctor. And then he took psychiatry, and that's what he's doing now. He's head psychiatrist at Vanderbilt University — which is an art, psychiatry. Of course, he's very much interested in music; he understands much. He goes to concerts, and the children also like music. The youngest is very clever, and she had some school reports which are wonderful, unbelievable, beautiful. And she plays the piano. We gave her a little piano: it was the little piano where Mario started to play. She has it with her in their house. And she plays the piano, and she studies with a lady, with a piano teacher. She's sixteen, seventeen.

ANDRADE

Did you continue your singing after you married Mario?

CASTELNUOVO

Pardon? Did I continue what?

LORENZO

Cantare.

CASTELNUOVO

Later, no, because I didn't have time. When we came to America, I was so busy taking care of the [children], and Mario was busy with the piano all day. There was no time for me. You know, singing needs a continuous exercise, keep the voice on. I was too busy, and then getting old.

1.4. TAPE TWO, Side Two (May 9, 1981)

ANDRADE

Let's start talking about Mussolini and fascism and your experiences. Could you describe some of your experiences?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, I tell you, of course Mussolini—I don't know how to say—was not a very interesting person, was not a great person. When he started to do what he did — come si puo dire? La gente importante, the Italians whom we trusted were not for Mussolini. Nobody — artist or not artist — any serious people were not Fascisti.

ANDRADE

What about D'Annunzio? You were friends with D' Annunzio.

CASTELNUOVO

Well, he was not a Fascista.

LORENZO

Well, yes, he was. I think he was.

CASTELNUOVO

You think he was? No, I don't think so.

LORENZO

I think what my mother is trying to say is that very few people took Mussolini very seriously. Very few artists and educated people generally were Fascists.

CASTELNUOVO

No, absolutely, very few. Artist or not artist, serious people were not for Mussolini, were not Fascists. I remember I was in a train — I had gone with my mother far away to the north of Italy because a brother of my mother, who was a doctor in the military had been sick. And coming back in the train, it was the first time we saw some camice nere, "the Blackshirts. " [It was] the first time I saw them. I remember because this was the first time I saw them; we only heard about them, that they had started to use these camice nere, the Fascisti. But we had never seen them in Florence. So in this train we saw them.

LORENZO

What year is this? Che anno e?

CASTELNUOVO

E difficile dirti.

LORENZO

Was it in the late twenties?

CASTELNUOVO

No, no, much before. Mussolini, quando comincia?

ANDRADE

The march on Rome was 1922.

CASTELNUOVO

Late twenties? No, prima di twenty-four.

LORENZO

Early twenties.

CASTELNUOVO

But I still remember this kind of impression. We looked at those camice nere in a kind of frightened way. Then they were not yet organized; they were just starting to wear those [black shirts], the soldiers. So we were kind of surprised and frightened. I mean, nobody was Fascisti, the good people, the serious people. But Mussolini was not so—I don't know how to say — we were not so frightened by him as we became when he became involved— when he was united with Hitler. Hitler was an awful German genius in a way, you know, frightening. So that was what brought to Europe the great fright.

ANDRADE

How did that change your lives, after [Mussolini] made the pact with Hitler?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, because we saw what Hitler was doing. And Mussolini got more and more legato — come si dice?

LORENZO

Tied.

CASTELNUOVO

Tied with him. So, he was doing what Hitler wanted, and that's what happened.

LORENZO

The so-called racial laws in Italy were passed after the Rome-Berlin Axis pact, which was—I'm not sure exactly when—1937.

ANDRADE

But I want to know how it affected your lives since you were Jewish.

CASTELNUOVO

Well, because Hitler started to get more and more involved in anti-Jewish doings. We heard about that. Many people whom we knew— The people who were in my family—my brothers, Mario's brother, and cousins— Because we could—I will tell you later—organize our flight, come away to America, but the others couldn't. They didn't know anybody in America. But these cousins and brothers and sisters, during the night, they escaped one at a time the way they could to Switzerland. It was the country that was free, was accepting, reliable, and the closest.

LORENZO

That was much later. That was actually during the war.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes. We heard the Jewish people were more and more taken and then killed, taken away and never heard about. When Mussolini became so tied with Hitler, [Jewish people] were taken from their homes by night like that and never heard from again.

LORENZO

Well, Italian Jews, after the Rome-Berlin Axis pact, were so disenfranchised in the sense that their civil liberties were removed. My father's music was no longer played. My brother and I couldn't go to public schools, for example. It was fairly like being a noncitizen. My father was in the enviable position of having many friends in the United States who encouraged him to come, and of having skills that were relatively easy to export. Whereas it was very difficult for many other people to leave.

CASTELNUOVO

But many other people who had work in Italy couldn't come out like that. In my family, we were the only ones who came to America. We came to America because Mario's friends were Toscanini, Heifetz, Piatigorsky; they all helped him to come out. In a week, they gave us the right papers, the American papers, to come away, in a few days, because they were such great friends. The greatest and the ones who helped most were Toscanini, Heifetz, and Piatigorsky.

ANDRADE

Who made the decision to move to America, your friends or you?

CASTELNUOVO

We, together. It was the only thing we could do; so we came to America—I, with Mario, I mean, with my family, and one of my sisters (she's still in Boston) because she was married to a doctor, a great, very good pathologist. The others had lavori ("occupations") [that] couldn't be [exported], but medicine is something the same around the world. I don't know exactly who helped them to come. Anyhow, they came to Boston about the same time as we came.

LORENZO

Actually, I think my father decided to try to leave Italy in 1938. But he didn't want to just leave the country without a visa, because he didn't want to create problems for his family; so he applied for an exit visa, and that took a considerable amount of time. Actually, it took about a year, I think.

ANDRADE

So, there were difficulties.

LORENZO

Yes. But he was able to get it. So then we left in the summer of '39, which was really just before the war broke out. But he had made the decision earlier.

CASTELNUOVO

We came here from Italy with the Saturnia, a big Italian boat, I mean, openly. We didn't escape like the ones who went out without the right papers, through the lakes, to Switzerland, like so many of my friends, so many friends, and other members of my family.

LORENZO

Or some people got tourist visas and left and just never returned. That was relatively easy to do. But if you wanted to emigrate, it was not that easy.

CASTELNUOVO

No, it was very difficult. But Mario really said he wanted to have it, and he succeeded in having the right papers openly, and we left openly, I mean, not escape. You understand?

ANDRADE

Yes. You said last time we talked that you had difficulties. You could not take money out of Italy.

CASTELNUOVO

No, no money at all. They let us go with the right papers from Italy, but no money. So we arrived in New York really with nothing. So that's why Mario had necessity to start — But he had already concerts organized in New York, many concerts. He was playing, and his music was performed. Then the reason why we came to California was because to work in the movies, the money was easiest. And we were a family. The boys were in school. We needed money, as you know.

ANDRADE

But going back to Italy, before you left, you said Mario's music could not be performed anymore.

CASTELNUOVO

No, the music was not performed, no. As long as Mussolini and Hitler were there, no, the music was not performed, of course not.

ANDRADE

How did this affect Mario? What did he say to you, to his friends about this?

CASTELNUOVO

About that? Well, my dear, what can you do? Nothing. The course of the events were so great; that the music was not performed was natural. So many terrible things, tragedies happened that this was not the biggest tragedy, of course. People were killed and disappeared; so you can imagine it was a natural thing that his music was not performed.

ANDRADE

Did he continue to compose?

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, yes, until the last day in Italy.

LORENZO

The first guitar concerto [Concerto no. 1 in D Major] was written just before [we left].

CASTELNUOVO

Until the last moment. Besides he couldn't perform and go and play as he used to do all the time; so the only thing he was doing was writing music until the end, until the last moment.

ANDRADE

Did any of your friends or family members have any problems with the Fascists?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, I tell you, they escaped. When the tragedies became great, they escaped by night. Mario's brother, the eldest, escaped to Switzerland, his family, you know, in a different way. The other brother was hidden by some — Oh, that's what they did sometimes: in some conventi —

LORENZO

Catholic convent.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes. Some priests, they helped the situation. One of Mario's brothers, the second one— he's dead now (I will show you [photos]) —the family was hidden in a convent for some time. There were many in Italy, many convents of priests and nuns, and they helped very much.

ANDRADE

They helped the Jewish people.

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, they helped the Jewish people as much as they could.

LORENZO

I think even much earlier, in the early thirties, my father was quite aware of what was happening because many of his friends— While he was really not politically involved, many of the people that he knew were politically active, people he had grown up with, like the Rosselli family. These were people who were very actively anti-Fascist and who had very serious — You know, they were killed by the Fascists. So he had a very good sense of what was happening and what was coming. I think that's what led him to decide to leave.

CASTELNUOVO

Also, Mario's father was helped in some convent by some priests for some time. He was an old man. The mother died after a while, after we left. She was very sick and so forth. So the father was alone more or less with the other brother who was there. And he was also for some time—I don't know; I can't say exactly how long — in a convent, helped by priests that knew the other brother. I can show you the pictures of Mario's father.

ANDRADE

OK, we can see that later, maybe afterwards, after we finish talking.

CASTELNUOVO

So this was the situation.

ANDRADE

What about your non-Jewish friends? Did you have to stop seeing them, or did you continue to see them?

CASTELNUOVO

No, because if they were friends of ours, they were not Fascist. So we loved each other. It didn't matter to be Jewish or not Jewish. If we were friends, we stayed friends also after the events. Nothing changed.

ANDRADE

Their lives were not endangered? There were no restrictions? They could still see Jewish—

CASTELNUOVO

No, no, no. No, because they —

LORENZO

At that point I don't think there were any restrictions. In their circle of friends, there were no close friends who were Fascist. It was not a problem.

CASTELNUOVO

Not at all. Then when we left and the tragedy became so hard, we were not there anymore. When Hitler became the master of Europe, we were not there anymore, fortunately. So we don't know what — Then, at that time, the Jewish people who were still there had already disappeared.

ANDRADE

But it had gotten serious already: your sons could not attend the public schools. So, it was getting quite serious.

LORENZO

It changed very rapidly.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, in the last few months—weeks, I would say—when Hitler took the position, it became in a few weeks, I would say — It didn't last—

LORENZO

I don't recall exactly when it was when Hitler came to Italy. It must have been in '37 because I recall the preparations and the streets of Florence decorated with banners with swastikas and so on. It was shortly after the Rome-Berlin Axis pact and Hitler made a trip to Italy; that was sort of a binding gesture. That was about the time that things really began to change.

ANDRADE

I think it might have been '36, but that's something that can be checked.

LORENZO

I only have the picture in my mind.

ANDRADE

What did Mario think of having to leave Italy? He loved Italy, he loved Florence—

CASTELNUOVO

Of course, it was a tragedy, greatest tragedy, but it was a greater [tragedy] to be taken where all the Jews were killed. There was no choice. It was the greatest tragedy you can think of. Of course it was. When we left, I remember sitting in the boat: Lorenzo was very young, he started to [do] gymnastics with somebody on the boat, and so forth. But if we had stayed in Italy, it would have been the end of everything. So we were lucky to leave. Though we knew that we were coming to America, we didn't know what we could do. We were grateful to the people who helped us to come out.

ANDRADE

What about your family, your mother and your other sisters? Did they stay?

CASTELNUOVO

No, they left also. My brothers went to Switzerland by night.

LORENZO

That was after the war was in progress, in the middle of the war.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, they left as soon as they could.

ANDRADE

And your mother?

CASTELNUOVO

No, my mother died, passed away before. She was not young, an old woman. She was sick. She passed away at home, in her beautiful home. Besides my brother, the second brother, Aldo, his wife was not Jewish; so probably she had also more acquaintance, more people she knew; so probably this helped to hide. But for the last months or weeks or so they all left. They went to Switzerland.

LORENZO

Well, in the late thirties, there were no physical threats against people, unless they were politically anti-Fascist. And so Jews were relatively safe, except that it was difficult for them to make a living, to live a normal kind of life. So, many of them chose to stay and did stay through the beginning of the war. It really wasn't until the early forties, after the Germans really took control of the country, that it was very, very dangerous. At that point, the Germans really began to search out and deport the Jews, and that's when most of them tried, if they could, their escape to Switzerland. So that occurred in '42, '43, really the latter part of the war.

CASTELNUOVO

Cosa dici?

LORENZO

Quando loro [chiu] sono scapati dall' Italia [alle] Alpi — chi sono scapati piu tardi, dopo che i tedeschi hanno preso control.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, my family and friends also escaped at the last moment, when there was nothing else to do. Of course just to escape Hitler. That's the only reason.

ANDRADE

Tell me again, who were the friends who helped you move to America? Did you write to your friends in America, or did they offer to help you?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, both.

ANDRADE

Who were they? Could you tell me again who are these friends?

CASTELNUOVO

Who helped with the American papers?

ANDRADE

Yes.

CASTELNUOVO

I told you, it was Toscanini and Heifetz, very much.

ANDRADE

The two of them?

LORENZO

They were our sponsors, and they were among the first to encourage my father to leave.

ANDRADE

But they did the paperwork?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes. They helped us. I remember in the biography there is one note of Mario's. He says that he received the letter from Heifetz asking what was my age. That's why, to have the right [inaudible], because that's what they needed, you know. They needed to know exactly the age of Mario, myself, and the children.

ANDRADE

Did you and Mario consider going to another country?

CASTELNUOVO

No.

ANDRADE

Always America?

CASTELNUOVO

I tell you, first of all, because Europe was all one mess. We knew that Hitler was going through all of Europe. So the tragedy would take the whole of Europe, what happened. Then America was, first of all, a great country and far away. So, it was much more helpful. And our greatest friends were in America.

ANDRADE

Did Toscanini and Heifetz help you financially?

CASTELNUOVO

No, no.

ANDRADE

But you could not bring money out of the country?

CASTELNUOVO

No, they helped Mario maybe to have a concert or this or that, but not really financially, no.

ANDRADE

How did you survive in America when you first arrived, since you could not take money out of Italy?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, that's why Mario started to work right away with concerts, many concerts at that time. He played with orchestras, many performances. Then soon, the second year, we came to California, and he had a job at the [movie studios], so he had the money, cash.

ANDRADE

Where in New York did you live for that first year.

CASTELNUOVO

Well, a few days in a hotel. Then, we had some friends living in Larchmont, New York, not far from New York, maybe an hour, half hour by train, and Mario used to go every morning to New York, because New York [it] was just summer, August or something, when we arrived, and the heat was terrible. The children were sick by the heat, the climate in New York. We were not used to it. So these friends of ours, the Rossellis — I don't know, maybe you know the lady, I have the books here, I will show you —Amelia Rosselli, she was a great woman and a writer in Italian, in Venetian, rather. She was young; she was a widow. She had three sons who were fighting Fascisti and Mussolini, and so forth. The first one, Aldo, who was just my age, had been killed in the First World War. He was a soldier, and as soon as he arrived, he was killed in the First World War. The second two, by the way, who were anti-Fascist fighting, they had been killed by Mussolini. So it was a great tragedy. They were greatest friends of ours. They were really anti-Fascist. They did whatever against Mussolini. So, they had escaped, the mother with—no, no, the sons were dead, all dead. Now, she had escaped from Switzerland, because they were already [out of Italy], with one daughter-in-law and the children, the grandchildren. So they lived in Larchmont. When we arrived in New York, we met them, of course. She helped us to find a little house in the country, near Larchmont, and we rented a house there. We stayed there until we came to [California], one year and a half [later], something like that. So we lived there until Mario found the first job at MGM, at a movie [studio]. So we had a little money to start. This was very — I'll show you the book of—

ANDRADE

I'm curious: what did you and Mario think when you first arrived in America? What did you think of America? You stepped off the boat —

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, we liked it. We liked the people, we liked the way we were met, and we liked everything. Only the climate: I tell you, it was August, and it was very hot; so that's why we went to live in Larchmont. The children started school.

Lorenzo didn't speak English at all, but he went to school and he didn't have much difficulty. Pietro knew already — Pietro was about fourteen years old. He had finished the ginnasio in Italy, classic ginnasio; so he already knew a little English, and so he started high school in Larchmont.

ANDRADE

How did Americans treat you as Italian refugees?

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, very kindly, absolutely. Everybody was very helpful. Oh, absolutely. Mussolini and Hitler were just terrible people; so we were only—I don't know how to say— so everybody was ready to help us. We are very grateful. We have always been and we are.

ANDRADE

I'm curious: what was your boat ride to America like? When you were on the boat from Italy to America, what kind of trip was that?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, pretty good. Of course, we knew that we were observed by the Italian authorities. There were some people whom we knew were —

ANDRADE

On the ship?

CASTELNUOVO

But as we left openly, with permission, with our papers in order, they didn't do anything against us, no.

ANDRADE

But there were other Italians on the ship who were also—

CASTELNUOVO

Well, there were some friends also, yes, a great friend; by the way, now he's retired more or less. His wife died. She was Polish, but he's from Florence, and he was a great friend of ours. And now he's still a publisher. Recently he published still some of Mario's work he received recently. [Aldo] Bruzzichelli.

His picture I will show you. I have the picture on the piano. So, he was a greatest friend of Mario, and of us. They were on the same boat with us. They were not Jewish. They were just Italian, from Florence.

LORENZO

She was.

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, she was Jewish, that's true. She was Polish Jewish, but he was an Italian Catholic. They were just on a trip for pleasure, I would say, they came to America for a while, not to stay. Then they stayed a little longer because — I don't know—when we left something happened: the war came out. So I know they stayed longer than was planned. Aldo Bruzzichelli, I will show you. He still lives in Florence.

LORENZO

He was a very close friend of my father's. I don't know whether they really intended to emigrate, but they left as tourists. Then, of course, they realized what was happening, so they stayed in the United States all through the war. And many people did that.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes. They left as tourists. Then the war came.

ANDRADE

When you left Italy, did you and Mario think you were never going to return?

CASTELNUOVO

We knew that we wouldn't come back until things had settled, finished, and that's what happened. As a matter of fact, then also we couldn't go back so soon, because Mario was here working. As a matter of fact, his mother died; we didn't see her again. It was tragic. We never saw again the mother and father. So, it was all a tragedy, but we were thankful that we could escape, because otherwise we would have completely disappeared, as many did.

ANDRADE

Well, you're now in America, and I think this would be a good stopping point for this session.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, yes.

1.5. TAPE THREE, Side One (June 13, 1981)

ANDRADE

The last time we were talking, we were talking about when you arrived in America. I'd like to know what you and Mario thought when you finally arrived. What were your reactions?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, we were very happy to have been able to leave Italy and that nightmare which was going on at the time. We arrived in America, and we were glad to be here. We knew so many people. Mario knew so many of the great artists and also some Italian people or from other countries of Europe who were able to come out at the same time; so we were not lonely at all, no. This is true.

ANDRADE

What was different about America from Italy? You were in New York. What did you find different, and what did you find similar?

CASTELNUOVO

Of course, it was different, the kind of life. Besides, the climate — it was the end of July, the beginning of August—so the heat was so terrible. This was a very heavy thing. I mean, the children were so sick about the heat in New York. They were saying, "Let's go back! Let's go back!" because we couldn't breathe. We had never experienced this heat; so it was very heavy. But otherwise, as entourage of people, we didn't feel at all strange, no, because we knew many people. Then as New York was so, so hot we couldn't live there. You know, the big city was not easy. Also we had some Italian friends, the Rossellis, who lived in Larchmont.

LORENZO

It's a suburb of New York near New Rochelle. I haven't been there since the early 1940s.

CASTELNUOVO

Well, about an hour with the train. Mario, of course, didn't drive; so he had a little train going up and down. He had to be in New York very often for work. He right away had many concerts and [had to] meet people for his work and so forth. Larchmont was very pleasant. It wasn't so— The climate: it was kind of country. That's why we took a little house there, and we lived there until we came to California. One year and a half later we moved to California when we could.

ANDRADE

Were there any things you did not like about New York, aside from the weather?

CASTELNUOVO

No, no. The people were very helpful, very friendly. Mario at that time knew all the great artists. As I told you, Toscanini and Heifetz and so many other people helped us to come. They helped us to come, to have the right papers in a week, to move from Italy, to have the right papers to get into the United States. So everybody was very friendly in New York and in America.

ANDRADE

What was the difference between New York and Florence? You said Florence was the cultural center of the world.

CASTELNUOVO

Well, of course, Florence was unique, and we were born there and lived there. But at that moment it was a hell because of Mussolini and Hitler and what was going on. So it was only frightening to be there. Everybody, all the Jews possible, tried to leave, to go out. As a matter of fact, many of my friends and Mario's brothers and my sisters and brothers left Italy. They couldn't come to America because they didn't have any means to come to America, but they left for Switzerland as soon as they could, by night, through the lakes. In a few weeks or months, when things became really frightening between Mussolini and Hitler, they [fled] to Switzerland, everyone. And they stayed in

Switzerland until Mussolini and Hitler were dead. All the people, all the Jews I knew. It was so terrible that if some old people, Jews, who were sick or too old to leave, if they didn't have enough help to leave Italy, they were taken even [from] their beds, and they disappeared and [were] never seen again and brought to the Jewish camps. They disappeared and were never heard [from] again. It was frightening. This happened to old people who were too old or sick to go away.

ANDRADE

What did you think, going back to New York, what did you think of the cultural life there?

CASTELNUOVO

It was good; it was a great life. Performances of all — especially in the musical field. Toscanini was there, and he performed also Mario's things. He was doing the best he could, and he was a great man. He was a great personality, living there for years until he was too old, and he had to retire at that time. All the great artists were there; so we had only admiration for them, no doubt.

ANDRADE

Was it like Florence again, meeting different artists and musicians?

CASTELNUOVO

No, it was not. It was, of course, a big— I mean, New York at the time — As Europe had become; Germany was what it was, France, the same, in another way, were all destroyed; so New York was the only place where there was a great life in all fields and safe, no doubt.

ANDRADE

Did Mario say anything to you about what he had in common with American artists?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, he had much in common because he had been meeting the great artists of all the world for many years when we came here, for about ten, fifteen years. He was already friends with all of them, internationally. At that time, most of them were in New York and trying to live there. New York was the

only center, more or less, [that was] safe as possible [considering] what the world was at that time. And Mario knew all of them. (Wait a minute. I have a paper where I put some notes last night.) [tape recorder turned off] Just a very short time after we arrived, Mario performed in Carnegie Hall his Concerto for Piano [and Orchestra], [John] Barbirolli conducting, the Second Piano Concerto, and then in Carnegie Hall, in the month of November —

ANDRADE

That was a world premiere apparently of the Second Piano Concerto.

CASTELNUOVO

Also Heifetz performed something in Carnegie Hall in the month of November.

ANDRADE

My notes say that in November 1939 was the world premiere of the Second Piano Concerto.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, yes. But then in Carnegie Hall, I have here Heifetz, [Albert] Spalding, and Edward Jones performed something by Mario.

ANDRADE

That was when you were already in America?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, yes.

ANDRADE

No, I don't have that. So you were only in New York for a year and a half?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, because then Mario realized — When we left Italy we couldn't take any money. We were happy to have our permission to leave with the right papers, but not to take any money. So it was very hard. We couldn't live with what Mario could make with concerts. What con? He was a composer, not a concert performer. So we needed money to live, with a family. That's why we came to

California. We came to California because the only way to live was to have a job in some—how can I say?

ANDRADE

In the movies, you mean?

CASTELNUOVO

In some movies.

ANDRADE

How did he start —

CASTELNUOVO

That's what happened. You know, Mr. Rudy Polk had been a secretary and traveling with Jascha Heifetz for years. We knew him when Heifetz was performing in Italy for many years. Rudy Polk was his agent. In 1940, when we were in New York, Rudy Polk lived in California; he was from California. Rudy Polk, the secretary of Heifetz, was a very nice, dear friend of Mario, called Mario from California, from Columbia [Pictures], and told Mario, by phone, that he had already made a contract for Mario to work at Metro-Goldwyn [-Mayer]. Then Mario, in a few weeks or so, left New York and came to California to start this work, to —come si dice?— to see what work would be and decide if he would accept and so forth. That's why Mario left alone. He stayed at the Roosevelt Hotel in Hollywood for some months, because the children were in school in Larchmont, and we couldn't leave right away. So he came alone to see if the contract was good, was working, and that's how he started with Metro-Goldwyn. Then Lorenzo and I came about six months later.

ANDRADE

How did he like writing music for the movies?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, he didn't like it much, of course. They were very organized; so they gave him some scenes to write. He never wrote — only exceptionally later — a whole picture. But they gave him one scene here, another scene there. Of course, he learned the technique of the movie, because he was a very good writer, but it wasn't easy and it was quite different. He did only in different

movies, one scene here, two, three scenes, never a whole movie. I don't know how it was, working— That's the way— Mario, of course, didn't like that, but he did it because he needed the money. He had a certain amount of money each year, or month, I don't know, [from this work].

ANDRADE

For how long did he do this? Did he write music for the movies until he died, or did he only do it for a few years?

LORENZO

I think he was only under contract with MGM for a few years, two or three years. And after that he continued doing work on a freelance basis, and he did a good deal of writing for Columbia and Universal, and a number of other studios, but it was sporadic. He really didn't want to be tied down to [writing for films], because he found that he really didn't need to do it, and he preferred teaching and composing; so it was always a kind of secondary thing. Later he did do a number of full films on his own, but it was never a primary interest or commitment; it was always secondary activity. He did a couple of films that are fairly well known, I guess. One was Ten Little Indians, a film by Rene Clair. I think it was called Ten Little Indians or And Then There Were None —I can't remember because they changed the title.

ANDRADE

The Agatha Christie?

LORENZO

The Agatha Christie film. Then he also did a film at Columbia, Loves of Carmen, with Rita Hayworth, that he did by himself.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, this is a complete work. I have the record of this.

LORENZO

He also did music for some cartoons for UPA and a number of other project.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, many. He was asked to work for many. By the way, the contract with MGM was termine — come si dice "termine"?

LORENZO

Ended.

CASTELNUOVO

Ended in October 1943. Then he worked freelance wherever he was asked to this or that. Then in the meantime he had started to teach, and the teaching became bigger and bigger. He was teaching all day — that's the two works — after he was here a while. [Teaching was] something he had done very, very little in Italy because he was only busy writing for himself; he didn't need that. People started to come and asked him to teach them. This became bigger and bigger. As a matter of fact, he was going to some movies or going to have some work from some movies once in a while, and all day from morning until late after- noon, he was teaching. In the night, he was working for himself — in the evening until late — composing his own work. Then there are all the works down in the little book you saw. He had been working for himself all the time. But all day he was teaching.

ANDRADE

Who were some of the pupils?

LORENZO

Andre Previn and John Williams and Jerry Goldsmith, Henry Mancini—a lot of people who have become very successful in film. Leon Levitch.

ANDRADE

How did the students know about Mario?

CASTELNUOVO

There were so many students, I can't tell you all of them. They still write to me. Yesterday, somebody sent some music. There are so many who are not so well known, but who have become good musicians. [One of them] wrote me a few weeks ago: Robin Escovado. He started with Mario many years [ago] and very successful he was. When Mario left and couldn't take care of him anymore, he changed. He was working on computers, machines, different

things. He left music. Now, last letter he wrote me — a few months ago — to say he was very moved because he had started to work with music again and compose. Then during these beginning years [Mario] became so known [for] teaching that he was asked to have a special — I've written down—we were about two months Mario was teaching at Michigan State University. So he had many well-known pupils over there also. He made a special course about writing opera. He was called the Distinguished Visiting Professor. We were there October, November, December [of 1959]. We came back before the ending of the year.

ANDRADE

Did he like teaching?

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, yes. He liked teaching very much. And he was very loved as a teacher, absolutely, very. Besides this Robin Escovado, this one who called was~

ANDRADE

Leon Levitch?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes. Andre Previn, of course: he came, he was a young boy. I opened the door, and he was already—I don't know — proud of himself, quite a young boy. Herman Stein also was a pupil. He almost left music, but he was a very loved pupil, very intelligent. And the one you mentioned here, of course, Henry Mancini.

LORENZO

[Mario] was affiliated with the Los Angeles Conservatory of Music. And because he was a very good technician and was very good in teaching theory, a lot of young composers who were interested in the film field came to study with him, orchestration, harmony, counterpoint, composition, and so on.

ANDRADE

So there was that special angle, music for cinema?

LORENZO

Well, I think many of them were interested in cinema, and that was one of their objectives in terms of a career, and since he was both a composer and a composer who had written for film, I think he developed a reputation.

CASTELNUOVO

[to Lorenzo] Dimmi i nomi di quelli — Il m'a telefonato molti giorni fa. Lui era un gran violinista che e ancora in giro, e la sorella — E sonavano tutti insieme.

LORENZO

Yalta Menuhin.

CASTENUOVO

Menuhin — not the Menuhin — Yalta Menuhin studied with Mario for a long time. She called me the other day. She lives in England now. She was here in Los Angeles for some family [occasion], and she called me. She studied with Mario. He was very well known and loved as a teacher, no doubt.

ANDRADE

Did Mario ever say who had the most promise? Did he have any hopes for special students, or did he think they were all going to be capable of being good musicians? Were there any special students that he had great hopes for?

LORENZO

Chi considerava avere piu talento (presso i averi)?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, they all had different talents in music, but he liked them all very much. He tried to help them in different ways, all of them. That's why the ones I mentioned to you were very loved pupils, no doubt. He helped them. Each one is different.

LORENZO

I don't remember him talking too much about the talents of particular pupils. But I do recall he felt that Andre Previn had the potential of being a very strong composer if he had continued, except that he became much more involved with performing, conducting. I think he felt Herman Stein was very talented.

CASTELNUOVO

Herman Stein was very intelligent and a very close friend. But when Mario left, their love for music was— They missed something. They missed much. That's what happened to some of these pupils.

ANDRADE

Leon Levitch is one of your close friends.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, because he lives close. He calls me whenever he can. He's very busy. He's still composing whenever he has time, but to make a living he takes [apart] the old pianos of other centuries and puts them back again. That's his own work. He takes the very old pianos and puts them back in— Aiuta me.

LORENZO

Restoration, piano restoration, but he's still active as a composer.

CASTELNUOVO

But he's still composing. A few weeks ago, he came and [played] me a composition he made in the memory of Mario, which is very beautiful. He's still a good composer, besides all this kind of work that he does .

ANDRADE

What were the contrasts between Los Angeles and New York? What did you think of the cultural activity going on here? Was it different?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, yes, it was different. Los Angeles, especially at that time, was the center of movie work. There were some concerts once in a while. New York was the center of great concerts, great musical events, bigger, no doubt. Los Angeles was the movies, more or less. Now the concerts have become more [frequent] — you know, the orchestra—than there used to be at that time, no doubt. There wasn't much classical music going on. Now there is a great orchestra and [Carl Maria] Giulini conducting. That's much greater.

ANDRADE

Did that bother Mario, that there wasn't much classical music?

CASTELNUOVO

No, no, because he was so busy, as I told you, teaching and writing for himself. From the little book, you see how much he wrote for himself and how much he was teaching. He was so busy, there was never an empty moment, no doubt. And the climate at that time was beautiful. California was much nicer than what it is now: no smog, beautiful sky, beautiful everything. Now it's much warmer and too smoggy. At that time it was beautiful. The climate was so perfect, I would say. No heavy winter and no heavy summer.

ANDRADE

How did Mario think the Americans accepted his music?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, Europe was closer; so when the great music was — There was more activity all the time. As a matter of fact, the great American artists used to come to Europe to perform. There was more going on than in— But this didn't exist anymore during the war and after the war; everything had changed.

ANDRADE

I wasn't thinking so much of the American artists, but the American audience.

CASTELNUOVO

Well, the American audience was quite nice and accepting, understanding, no doubt.

LORENZO

My impression is he felt more connected and more appreciated in Europe.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes.

LORENZO

I think it only came really in the last decade of his life, when the guitar music became more popular and reached a broader audience, that he had the kind

of recognition that he had had when he was younger in Europe. I think the forties and fifties were really very difficult times for him.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, they were. As a matter of fact, the audience became again more interested —

LORENZO

But there was very little audience for chamber music and [inaudible] music, and these were the areas where he had really been most active.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, this is true; this is true. Performance of Mario's work started again after those years when Segovia created again the new guitar music. But all the music which had been performed so much before in the old years wasn't performed anymore, and they're still not. I mean the way of concerts and of chamber music changed completely since the years before the war.

LORENZO

I don't know about that. His orchestral music has never been widely performed in this country. The realities of opera performance are very, very difficult, and it was only in the last years of his life that there began to be some activity in that area.

CASTELNUOVO

Well, one more thing I want to say: in the old years in Europe, Mario had written so much for voice and piano, songs. And the concerts for voice and piano and sometimes other instruments had many performances in Europe at the time, before the war. Then this died completely. Mario had written so much for voice, and this music was not performed anymore. Don't you see? Now there are no concerts for voice, in America or in Europe. Singers you hear only in opera. But they don't give concerts, chamber concerts. Chamber singers: they don't exist anymore. Singers don't sing at all in concerts now— not here, not in Europe. It never came up again after the war.

ANDRADE

Well, there are some recitals, but—

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, very few.

ANDRADE

—but the audience doesn't show up.

CASTELNUOVO

There are not great performances. Singers only sing in opera.

LORENZO

There's a very limited audience, and [singers] tend to sing operatic arias.

CASTELNUOVO

If they sing a concert, they give only operatic arias. They don't sing chamber— They don't sing [Robert] Schumann and [Franz] Schubert and Debussy, nothing, in concerts now. Not only Mario's music is dead, all the music. They sing only operas, which is awful. I don't like opera pieces in concerts. It has no meaning. That's what happens now. If you have a woman, a singer give a concert, she sings only one scene, one piece of an opera. She doesn't sing the classical music anymore. Don't you see? That's true. In my time, we used to sing Debussy like it was— Now who hears [Debussy]? It doesn't exist anymore. Nobody sings Debussy or Schumann or Schubert or Mozart, the classics, which is very, very sad, because the best music for the voice — that's what it was — chamber. Women used to give concerts with this music. Now nobody hears it.

ANDRADE

When you came here to Los Angeles, this was the early forties when you arrived, the war was going on in Italy. How did this affect Mario and his music?

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, very much. We were absolutely— Terrible, you know. First, it was so difficult to have news of what was happening. Then his mother died, and his father was hidden in un monastero — by some friends — un convento . The father was alone, old; so he [was] kept the last year of the war. Fortunately, he was safe, being hidden in this monastery. The others — the other brother,

Mario's brother, older brother and his family, my brothers, my sisters — flew to Switzerland, as I told you, by night, and came back only as soon as the war was finished. Of course, it was a difficult life, but it was not so dangerous anymore. Mussolini and Hitler had been killed. Then it was hard to start again, but they made it. That's what happened.

ANDRADE

Were you and Mario involved in the anti-Fascist movement in America?

CASTELNUOVO

No, we didn't do politically. Then anti-Fascism in America — what could you do? There was nothing special you could do. The war was going on. But, of course, we were anti-Fascist.

ANDRADE

Did you have any friends who were active in the anti-Fascist movement?

CASTELNUOVO

We knew some people in Italy who did, some friends of ours, the old friends who were not Jewish and who had not left and who were there; they did what they could, but it was not easy.

LORENZO

Didn't you know Salvemini and some of the people who were—

CASTELNUOVO

Yes.

LORENZO

There was really not all that much that could be done. In fact, everyone was for the war. There was no question about support for the war. Everyone was involved in that sense. So I don't think there was any major anti-Fascist activity in the Italian community.

CASTELNUOVO

But, of course, we knew the people who were. There were a few anti-Fascists in South America that left Italy, and we knew them, of course, and we agreed with them. But we didn't work especially— The war was going on.

LORENZO

But in Italy there were a great many people involved in the resistance.

CASTELNUOVO

Of course, we knew all of them who worked in Italy and did what they could as anti-Fascists. Of course, everybody was.

ANDRADE

How did your husband feel at the end of the war? American soldiers had been fighting Italian soldiers.

CASTELNUOVO

Well, of course, we were sorry the war was going on. But there was nothing else left to do. They fight very well, and I think they fight and went through the war the best they could, no doubt.

ANDRADE

Did the war in Italy affect his music, his mood?

CASTELNUOVO

Of course, for some time music didn't exist anymore, like everything else. But then it took back again when life began to be there. When life in Italy started to — Mario was not forgotten, no, no doubt.

1.6. TAPE THREE, Side Two (June 20, 1981)

ANDRADE

Let's talk about what traditions and what artists influenced your husband.

CASTELNUOVO

Well, I tell you, he liked very much all the classic music of all countries. Of course, Beethoven, Mozart, the great Schumann, and Schubert — I mean, the classic; he followed the classic music all the time. He never changed his feeling

for modern writing. It was his own way of writing and the classic. He never changed. This is what it is.

ANDRADE

You were saying he studied with Pizzetti?

CASTELNUOVO

He studied with Pizzetti for many years in Florence. Pizzetti lived in Florence, and then he moved to Milan. Then also when he was not studying anymore, he listened to him; he liked his music very much. Pizzetti wrote much chamber music and operas. This you can see; you know where to find it. It was very interesting and very beautiful. I liked it, too. Pizzetti was one of the great composers when we were young, no doubt, in Italy. Of course, there were the greatest opera composers, but had been already, many. There were not many great composers at the time but some, of course, and Pizzetti was one of the very good.

ANDRADE

What influence did Pizzetti have on your husband?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, he certainly had. He was one of the few who influenced him, also in the mood and in the orchestration, no doubt. Mario admired his teaching.

ANDRADE

Who were other people who influenced Mario?

CASTELNUOVO

I can't think of them now. But what were the great composers at that time in Italy? Mario was friendly with all of them, and there were some young—

ANDRADE

What did Mario think of Stravinsky's music.

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, certainly he admired him. It was one of the greatest of the beginning of the century no doubt.

ANDRADE

But the music was so different.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, it was so different, but he admired his way, his personality. He wouldn't do the music like him, but he admired him, and he thought [Stravinsky] was a great, great composer. And he is. Of course, the greatest who changed the music of the century was Debussy. No doubt he changed the music of the century, and Mario admired him absolutely, and he played some of his music. I remember I sang—because I was singing at the time— and I sang what I could. But [Mario] didn't try to write like him, because Mario thought that each one was different. Each artist has his own personality, and that's what it is, what it should be. I mean, he didn't try to copy them, no, to follow them, no, never, not Stravinsky, not Debussy. His own way was from classic and the way he felt the music. He couldn't do like somebody else. That was his feeling, and my feeling, too. When you have a personality, you can't change, no doubt.

ANDRADE

What form did he like writing the most?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, he liked very much music for singing, for voice—voice and piano usually. Many great singers had wonderful concerts and so forth. Then also for orchestra he started to write. And then he wrote operas. Now that's too long to talk about. He started to write overtures to Shakespeare's plays. Toscanini conducted most of them. He wrote several of the overtures, without writing the whole opera — overture to this play, the other play — as he felt Shakespeare very, very much. [In] the overture he put all the music he felt about the play. And Toscanini performed many of them. I have records of them. They are not on sale, but I have them.

ANDRADE

Were the overtures played often in concerts?

CASTELNUOVO

Some have been published, also by recording. It was possible to find them then. Now, I don't know what happened. After a few years publishers go away, and they die, and they change, and you can't find the music anymore. But if you keep it, it still exists.

ANDRADE

Mario also wrote music to many English poems.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes, many. Many, many.

ANDRADE

Were these songs performed often in Florence?

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, they were performed, yes. All the best singers at that time, English or French singers, performed them at the time. He was performed all over. Now nobody, as I told you the other day, nobody sings chamber music. They sing only operas, which has no sense, to perform a scene of opera, a piece of opera. It should be in the opera, not in a concert. It doesn't mean anything.

ANDRADE

What did your husband like about the English poetry and the Shakespeare plays?

CASTELNUOVO

He knew the English poetry very much. You know, in the little book you received, that you read, there is written everything he has.

ANDRADE

Yes. I didn't mean which poems. I was curious what did he like about the poetry? What did he find appealing?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, great poets are great poets — I don't know how to say. I have a great fascination with the great poets. I still read. This is the last one I'm reading now, in the evening when I am through. Look what I am reading.

ANDRADE

A biography of Walt Whitman.

CASTELNUOVO

Yes. We knew the classic ones, and this is the last one, which I have not read, and I try to read it now. I have the poems, and this is the biography. My son gave it to me, and it's quite interesting. I'm about at the end of it. Well, all the great poets are all here. Mario read everything, and he put to music— Look all these here are all the classic poets. He wrote all the sonnets of Shakespeare, for two voices. In the little books you find everything — by Keats, by all the great poets. He admired it. That's why his music was in the classic style. He never changed completely. He started classic and developed in a classic way. It was always the same personality. It stayed that way. He never changed his nature or his style, never. Nobody could have him change his personality, no.

ANDRADE

Another influence in his music was the Bible. Could you tell me more about that?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, there is much I can say. Let's see. There is a chapter in his biography where he speaks only of the Bible. [The following is an excerpt from Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco's autobiography, *Una Vita de Musica*, written in 1955. This chapter, translated from the Italian by Burton H. Scalin, appeared in the *Journal of Synagogue Music* 5 (1974). It is reprinted here with the permission of the journal's editor.] I laid the first flowers grown in my new garden on an altar and offered them to God and "to all my dear, departed ones. " These are my compositions for the synagogue. Truly, my contacts with the synagogue have always been slight. Yes, I was a member of the Jewish community in Florence; and, since childhood, I went to the temple on the solemn Holy Days — not so much because of inner conviction, but rather to do something nice for my parents. "Temple" was the official name, but it is really not the appropriate word. For the Jews temple refers only to the one destroyed centuries ago in Jerusalem. Today, the places of prayer are just synagogues, "schools of the law. " Despite a certain external grandeur of lines, the temple in Florence is not really beautiful. The interior has a chocolate

color and is decorated with arabesques, making it resemble a mosque. However, it seemed beautiful to me when I was a child. And about midday, when the sun filtered through the red, yellow, and blue stained-glass windows, and when the gilded doors of the Sanctum Sanctorum were opened so that the ancient Bible — written on scrolls of parchment, covered with old and precious brocades, and crowned by tinkling silver turrets — could be taken out, my imagination flew in a dream of oriental splendor and I could almost see the ancient temple, destroyed long ago in Jerusalem. As for the religious services — they seemed long and I didn't pay too much attention to the rabbi's scholarly sermons. Anyhow, for me, the temple in Florence remained tied to "traditions" — to memories of my family, to father and to mother. When I arrived in America, I found a completely different situation — no longer the small, contained community; no longer the single temple. Here in Los Angeles, for example, where the Jewish population is equal in numbers to the entire population of Florence, there is an abundance of congregations scattered over the vast area of the city. These are congregations, often rivals amongst themselves and of different rites, whose synagogues serve not only as places of prayer, but also as centers of various activities (both functions useful and necessary), and, above all, places for meetings — recreational circles where lectures, concerts, dances, and weddings take place. I am not debating the usefulness of these latter functions; but they seem completely extraneous to me. While I always felt a deep sense of fellowship with the Jewish people in general, frankly I wasn't interested in the secondary activities of these neighborhood groups. The synagogues themselves, as places of prayer, seemed so little inspiring to me. They were either as cold and austere as classrooms, or they were as pretentious and ostentatious as the movie theaters in Hollywood. In order to pray, I preferred to go alone to the shore of the Pacific or to the top of a hill. For this reason, although invited many times, I never wanted to join any of these congregations (and one was just a few steps from my home, at the end of the street). Above all, the local synagogues did not have the inner meaning, familiar and traditional, of the temple in my native Florence. In spite of this, my rapport with synagogues has always been excellent. I often had friendly relations with rabbis, cantors, and organists. And being invited by them as representative — among the more notable — of Jewish musicians (and in America, really, there are legions of Jewish musicians — composers and interpreters), I often wrote some pieces of music for one

congregation or another. Before discussing these works, however, I want to turn for a moment to the first of my synagogue compositions, the Amsterdam Lecha Dodi, written several years earlier, in 1936. I call it the "Amsterdam Lecha Dodi" in order to distinguish it from another Lecha Dodi in my Sacred Service, and because it was written at the request of the synagogue in Amsterdam. Since the synagogue was orthodox, I had to observe rigid instructions, which caused various problems at the time. Because an organ was not permitted, the choir had to be unaccompanied; since women were not allowed to sing, only male voices could be used; and, finally, without repeating any of the words, each part of the choir had to sing all of the text. The text, from a distant age, is very beautiful. It describes, allegorically, the Sabbath (the day of rest dedicated to God) in nuptial terms — somewhat like the "mystical bride" of the Song of Songs. This was the first time that I had set a Hebrew text to music, and because I was a little uncertain about the accentuation of the words, my mother transcribed them for me with their proper accentuation. She also made a literal translation of the text for me. (I still preserve these pages written in her clear and harmonious calligraphy. The piece, naturally, is dedicated to her.) But then the composition had a strange adventure, which is worth relating. At that time, I made very few manuscript copies of my works, which generally were soon published. In the case of Lecha Dodi, I made only two manuscript copies. I sent one to Amsterdam, where it was performed; the other I sent to Vienna, where it was to be published by Yibneh. Yibneh was an affiliate, for Jewish music, of Universal Edition. In the following years, which were extremely difficult and turbulent, I no longer thought about the piece. When I arrived in America (where I brought all of my manuscripts and copies of all my published works), I realized that I didn't have a single copy of Lecha Dodi! In the meantime the Nazis had enslaved Austria, invaded Holland burning and destroying everything that bespoke "Jewishness." I thought, then, that the piece was irretrievably lost; and frankly, I was sorry. I felt, as I still do, that it was the best of my synagogue compositions. Then, at the beginning of 1942, I received an unexpected letter from New York. It was from a certain Mr. Dimitrovsky who had been an employee of Universal Edition and who, after many adventures, had himself arrived in America. This good and charitable soul had carried my manuscript with him from Vienna in order to return it to me. Thus, against all hope, the "Lecha Dodi" was recovered. Soon after, through the initiative of Cantor David Putterman, it was

performed at the Park Avenue Synagogue in New York. This time, however, it was in a new version. Park Avenue Synagogue being of the reform rite wanted the work for a mixed chorus with organ accompaniment. It is this version, which is not the best of the two, that was later published by Schirmer. Finally let me bring the story to an end. Several years afterwards, the University of Jerusalem requested one of my manuscripts for its collection of autographs. I sent them the original manuscript of Lecha Dodi (the one which was lost and found again) hoping that in the Holy Land it might at last find peace. Let us now turn to more recent works. Without doubt, the most important of these is the Sacred Service for the Sabbath Eve, written in 1943 at the request of Rabbi Emanuel of the nearby Westwood Synagogue. Rabbi Emanuel was tall, elegant, and eloquent; and, as American rabbis often have, he had a rather worldly appearance. (Unfortunately, the poor man died a few years afterwards in a highway accident.) I don't know if the rabbi's eloquence could have convinced me to write such a work if I had not already had the desire to dedicate a composition to the memory of my mother (almost as a requiem for her). The Service is therefore dedicated "to the memory of my mother and all my dear, departed ones. " I thought of grandfather Senigaglia, of uncles. It must be remembered that this occurred in 1943, and, not having received any news from Italy at the time, I didn't know how many members of my family would be missing. Thus, I felt filled with inspiration. But, once again I encountered some difficulty. Because the work was intended for a reform synagogue, it had to be written for organ, mixed chorus, and cantorial soloist — a baritone, in this case; for other synagogues, afterwards, a tenor. (I never liked the organ very much; in my mind, I associate it more with Catholic and Protestant rites than I do with Jewish rites.) In addition, in the reform rite, the text is partly in Hebrew and partly in English (probably for practical reasons of intelligibility, but, nevertheless, creating a hybrid element that I don't like). For example, in the two most important portions, the Shema Yisrael and the Barechu, the cantor and choir sing only the first verses in Hebrew; the remainder of this most beautiful text is recited in English by the rabbi, generally without musical accompaniment. I attempted to avoid this imbalance through the technique of "melologue. " The recitative is accompanied with a soft, organ exposition in which themes from the preceding choral portions are developed. (From past experience, I realized the difficulty of "synchronizing" the recitation to the music.) Another piece, "May

the Words, " is totally in English; and two others, the Silent Devotion and the Kaddish (the former, a kind of intermezzo; the latter, the prayer for the dead), are for organ alone. At any rate, I tried to remedy these dissimilarities through a unity of style. But it was precisely the question of style that presented another problem. It is difficult now to know, and even to imagine, what the early Jewish liturgy might have been (except, perhaps, for the few remaining traces of it in Gregorian chant, and through the source of so-called "cantillation"—which is more authentic but of whose interpretation we are uncertain). The liturgy had constantly adapted itself to the times and customs of the countries where the Jews had successively taken residence. Certainly, there was no organ, and the chorus was not polyphonic. If the liturgy were sung, it was probably done so monodically — or, perhaps, almost in a spoken manner. Since I was born in Italy, I decided to follow the Italian polyphonic tradition. Because I remembered a humorous thing that Pizzetti once said to me with reference to some choruses I wrote in school, "you pretend to be a Jewish Monteverdi, " and because the choral education that I received from Pizzetti was more "Monteverdian" than "Palestrinian, " I decided precisely to be the "Jewish Monteverdi" — but, this time, intentionally. If one considers that the earliest examples of an Italian-Jewish liturgy date back exactly to the Mantuan Salomone Rossi, 1587-1628 (who was not only a contemporary of Monteverdi, but also a friend and disciple), one understands that, historically speaking, this was not an absurd plan. (The few pieces by Rossi that I know are very lovely). Having solved the problem of style (almost instinctively), I completed the work rapidly — between December 1 and December 30, 1943. In its original version, there are thirteen sections. Yet, in a way, the composition was never finished. While some of the pieces are mandatory, others are optional (according to the diversity of rites, the various times of the year, and the tastes of the officiants). Therefore, I felt inclined to set different texts for subsequent performances. Finally, in 1950, I decided to write an Addenda to the Sacred Service. This work contains four new pieces — among them, a new Lecha Dodi which, unlike my Amsterdam Lecha Dodi, follows the reform rite and has but three verses. The first performance of the Sacred Service did not take place at the Westwood Synagogue. This was so for two reasons. First, they couldn't financially afford to use the large choir needed for the work; and, second, as I stated earlier, Rabbi Emanuel had died. Instead, it was performed (as was the Lecha Dodi) at the hospitable Park

Avenue Synagogue. Since then, the Service has been performed in several American cities. Unfortunately, it has never been performed in its entirety in Los Angeles. I believe that despite some unevenness, the Service is one of the most pure and inspired of my compositions. Together with the Birthday of the Infanta (even though in a different direction) it is also one of the works in which I began to find myself again. When the Service was performed in New York, some critics reproached me for having been too sweet and idyllic. I think that may have been due to the feelings that had inspired the work. Those feelings were neither dramatic nor mystical, but were, instead, quiet and serene—like my mother's smile. I wish that I were able to hear it once in the temple of Florence where my dear ones attended services. For that, I would be willing to modify it further. The other works written for the synagogue are of lesser importance. One is a setting of Kol Nidre, the prayer that opens the expiatory service on the day of Kippur. This piece is little more than a broad paraphrase of a traditional theme of Ashkenazic origin. Several composers have written settings of this theme—from Max Bruch in the nineteenth century to Arnold Schoenberg in the twentieth century. My adaptation (which I never published) is for cantor, choir, organ, and violoncello. It was written in 1944 for Rabbi Emanuel and the Westwood Synagogue, where there was an excellent 'cellist in the person of William Vandenburg. A group of Songs and Processionals for a Jewish Wedding was commissioned by the Cantors Assembly of America. These excellent cantors were disturbed by the fact that the wedding marches of Mendelssohn and Wagner were used in Jewish wedding ceremonies. In reality, Mendelssohn was a baptized Jew and Wagner was certainly an anti-Semite. At any rate, because those two pieces are so well known and so lovely, I didn't delude myself into thinking I could replace them. However, in order to please these good men, I agreed to write four pieces on texts assigned to me from Hosea and the Song of Songs. The work is comprised of two processionals (one each for the entrance and the recession of the nuptial court) and two songs (one each for the bride and the bridegroom). In actuality, I wrote six pieces. I had been asked to set the songs to double texts, Hebrew and English. However, after having initially set them in Hebrew, I realized that the English translations weren't readily adaptable to the vocal lines. So, I then wrote another, totally different, version of each song. The last of my synagogue compositions was a Naaritz'cha, a Kedusha, requested by Gershon Ephros in 1952 for the fourth volume of his Cantorial Anthology. That

the volume also included a setting of the same text by Salomone Rossi intrigued me, and I thought: "The first —and, perhaps, the last — of the Jewish-Italian composers. " Since then, I haven't written any other music for the synagogue. I don't consider my two cantatas, Naomi and Ruth and the Queen of Sheba, to be "liturgical music. " These compositions were performed for the first time in Hollywood's most elegant synagogues: Naomi and Ruth at Temple Israel, the Queen of Sheba at Beth-El Temple. The latter performance took place at the initiative of the University of Jerusalem, which also gave me an honorary degree on that occasion. These two cantatas are the first of my Biblical choral works (a genre to which I intensely dedicated myself) and are remote from the liturgy, which creates many difficulties for me. I don't believe, now, that I will write any more synagogue music. (I wish, first of all, that my dear coreligionists would finally reach an agreement and unify their "rites, " so as not to present so many problems to composers!) If I would write synagogue music again (and I have thought of writing a second Sacred Service — this time, for myself), I would write it in a completely "nontraditional" style, or perhaps — more authentically traditional. It would have a choir that spoke and sang monodically and would be accompanied, not by an organ, but by all the instruments (or their modern equivalents) named in the Bible. Look at Psalm 150: "Praise God with trumpet, flute, harp, drums, and ringing cymbals! This group would be a kind of "jazz-band, " as the Levites' orchestra probably was. Certainly no synagogue in America, or, perhaps, even in the entire world, would consent to perform it.

CASTELNUOVO

At that time it was even more inspiring, more beautiful. Modern life spoils things, even in Italy. But the beauty of Italy is still unbelievable, no doubt, because the history of the great arts, of the great music, everything comes from there, no doubt. And the beauty of the country — You should go and see. Mario felt like — Only he had the possibility to express it in music. I was reading things that helped me to realize, but he was expressing in his own music, creating the beauty which he felt coming. His technique was also very good. He had the means to express. Each place — When he was very young they used to be during the springtime, summertime, by the sea in a certain place. Then we moved to another [place]. By the way, this country house belonged to my father. Then after we married, Mario used to stay there

during the summertime until we left. And I'll show you [a photograph]. [tape recorder turned off] This piece of the Cipressi, piano piece which is very well known—he played and everybody played it. Look, the cipressi are here. You see, this is the villa, between Florence in Tuscany and the sea by Livorno, very close—now a half hour, an hour driving. You see the cipressi, cypres- ses. It's a long alley, you know. And when we met, we met here, because Mario was just coming visiting us. This is the villa, the big villa and a back garden. Can you see how beautiful it is? And here was a hill with some old pine trees—Fraschella it's called. Frascella means young trees.

ANDRADE

That's what he was writing about?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes. Modern life spoils, of course, you know. For instance, there were no cars. The cars have been terrible, because everything is full of cars, and the noise. At that time there were little trains and horses and chariots, little — how do you call?— carrozze.

ANDRADE

Carriages?

CASTELNUOVO

With a horse or two horses, and that's the only way. And bicycle, little bicycle. I was a very young girl — ten, twelve — and I had an uncle, a brother of my father, who used to take us, several children — his children and us — and go from one city to the other by bicycle, maybe stay there two, three days. You could go, but no cars. Cars have been spoiling everything. I mean, it makes so much dirt and noise and traffic. I mean, they have spoiled the ways, the cars — that's completely,

ANDRADE

You were saying Mario's music was so interconnected with places in Italy. What happened when he came to the States? Did his music change?

CASTELNUOVO

The music didn't change. The music kept the country, I would say, the meaning and the memory of the places. Nothing was even nicer. The memory is there.

ANDRADE

You were in the States for how many years before you visited Italy?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, I remember — everything is written in the biography — we couldn't go too soon. By the way, after a few years, when the war finished, we couldn't go right away. After a few years, when the war was over, we had some work here to become citizens. We had some difficulties, which was strange, because Mario, when the war was over, had many invitations from Italy to go back. They offered him to teach at this conservatory and that conservatory; so there was much correspondence. And that correspondence at that time was seen, followed by the—how can I say? — by the police—no, not police — by the Americans. You know, the letters were still checked. Our correspondence was quite nice, but things were offered. But Mario had started here so much work and teaching; and so we didn't feel like going back like that immediately, because our life in Italy had changed completely. So we felt like staying a little longer and seeing. Mario had much to do here. So at that time, we had some discussion about our citizenship. I remember once we had—how can I say?—here in Los Angeles a section where we were supposed to discuss our papers for citizenship. Mario was asked what he intended to do, you know, very kindly. Then I was asked, "What will you do if your husband will go back to Italy? What will you do?" And I said, "I wouldn't do anything different. We will discuss what is the best thing for the family — not for one or the other — for the family to stay or to go back, and I would do what he will do. We will decide together and do together. " And then the judge said, "OK, let her stay here. " [laughter] Then we had the papers of citizenship, and we're still here. And we became American citizens. There was no difficulty at all. I answered what was true. My children were in school. They were young then. Then Pietro—Lorenzo was young, of course—Pietro was called into the Army- -I don't know exactly what—and he was for some time in Alaska. There is a picture of him dressed like — I will show it to you.

ANDRADE

Show me later.

CASTELNUOVO

He had been in the army for one year or two. Lorenzo, no never did it.

ANDRADE

What did you and Mario think about becoming American citizens?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, it was natural. I mean, America had accepted us, very friendly, and we were friendly with everybody. We admired the country, no doubt, without any exceptions. Each country has its own— We loved in all respects the country, and we were happy to stay. And we were free to go to Italy. As a matter of fact, we used to go every other year and during the summer very often. We had some trips through Spain. But then we came here. This was during the summer, during the vacation, I would say. But then we came here when school started, when work started.

ANDRADE

What was Italy like after the war, when you first visited?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, much had been spoiled and changed and needed money and needed to be — But this is politics. We couldn't do anything. They had great difficulties. This is history.

ANDRADE

How did the changes affect Mario?

CASTELNUOVO

Well, he was very sorry, of course, when sad things happened, when difficulties of the politics happened, but there was nothing we could do. But he was very fond of Italy all the time. Nothing changed. We were sorry when sad things happened, this is no doubt. We felt it very much. I still do. When I see news from Italy, it's the first thing I read. I don't care so much for France as much I feel for Italy, no doubt. It's still our country. We still have many of the family — sisters, I mean, descendants from the sisters and brothers,

nephews and things like that—we still have in Florence and in Rome, because my older sister lived in Rome. So some children of hers are still in Rome.

ANDRADE

Is Mario's music still being played in Italy today?

CASTELNUOVO

Some, yes. There isn't much going on now, but still, no doubt, played. Not less than in other countries. Now it is not performed as much as it used to be at that time, because things change. Then the tragic thing is that editors, publishers — you know what they do— they let the music sleep there, or they give it to somebody else. So it's not cared [for] the way it should be, music, after some years of some publishing, because publishers change. That's what happened all over.

ANDRADE

What is the International Castelnuovo-Tedesco Society?

CASTELNUOVO

This Dr. Nick Rossi, who knew Mario, was here in some music department teaching in some public school in Los Angeles. He met Mario — I don't know how — he studied also with him. He met him here, and they became friends. Then he [organized] this Castelnuovo-Tedesco Society. But, now, he wrote me some months ago. He did this big work of the catalog, which has been and is still very useful, no doubt, because people go there and look and they find almost everything. There are very few mistakes. Everything is cataloged: what has been written, what has been published, not published, what you can find. As a matter of fact, people write to me that they looked in the catalog — they found this and that — if I can send music. That's what I'm doing all the time. I'm sending music from my files to the people who look for that and can't find it from publishers. Now this [Rossi is at the] university in New York, La Guardia [Community College] in New York. He used to make concerts, perform Mario's music, and publish also, separately.

ANDRADE

So the society tried to give performances of the music?

CASTELNUCVO

Yes, the society had all the members. Members of the society received letters about what was going on, what had happened during that year.

ANDRADE

Do you know how many members there are in the society?

CASTELNUOVO

No, I don't know.

ANDRADE

But it's all over the country or all over the world?

CASTELNUOVO

All over the country and other countries, international. You can write to him if you want. He will answer that.

ANDRADE

I think [the address] is in the catalog.

CASTELNUOVO

No, it has changed. I'll give you his last address.

ANDRADE

I think I'd like to write him.

CASTELNUOVO

It has changed. He has moved. He's still in New York, not far. I'll give you the address. Or you can write at the university.

ANDRADE

Last November, you went to Nashville, Tennessee, and one of your husband's works was being played.

CASTELNUOVO

It was the Concerto for Guitar.

ANDRADE

How often is that played here in the United States?

CASTELNUOVO

Pretty often. It was performed here also recently.

ANDRADE

At the Ambassador Auditorium.

CASTELNUOVO

Were you there?

ANDRADE

In February?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes.

ANDRADE

Yes.

CASTELNUOVO

Not long ago, somebody wrote me they would like to have a concert somewhere here in California.

ANDRADE

Do they ask you for permission each time?

CASTELNUOVO

No, no, because it's published.

ANDRADE

They invite you.

CASTELNUOVO

Just to let me know if I can go.

ANDRADE

How do you like the performances of your husband's works?

CASTELNUOVO

Some are better; sometimes not everything is perfect. I try to encourage, to keep alive [the music]. I always try to do that.

ANDRADE

Is Leon Levitch helping you with your correspondence?

CASTELNUOVO

He wanted to. He was a very affectionate pupil and admiring. He means good. He's very gifted, very. He knows much. But he is very busy.

ANDRADE

What other kinds of correspondence do you get? You say people write to you often about your husband's works. Is it to get copies of works that were not published?

CASTELNUOVO

Yes. I just sent to San Francisco yesterday a big envelope. [tape recorder turned off]

ANDRADE

So most of the requests are from music students?

CASTELNUOVO

Young people who want to perform and like it, who have heard something and like it and want to perform. Then they write to me to have this and that; so I had all copies made. If I have original manuscripts of some old copies, I keep them. I always make new copies to send away. I don't give away any [manuscripts].

ANDRADE

Do you refuse to give copies to anybody, or do you give copies to anyone who asks? Do you say yes to everybody?

CASTELNUOVO

I try to, but when I think somebody is really interested, if they take the trouble to write to me about this and that, it means that they are interested in performing and like the music, and then I say yes. When you like music and you take the trouble to write, it means that they feel it. That's what I do.

ANDRADE

One last question: Before we started taping this morning, you were telling me about "Fuori i Barbari, " the political song. Did Mario write other political songs?

CASTELNUOVO

No. It was the people who were fighting in the streets. His brother wrote [the lyrics to] this little music, and it was sung in the streets, around the city. All our friends felt politically in a certain direction; nobody was Mussolini's follower, nobody.

ANDRADE

So that was the only political song he wrote?

CASTELNUOVO

Oh, yes. This was very popular in the city.

ANDRADE

And his brother wrote the words?

CASTELNUOVO

His brother wrote the words, yes. He was the older son, very fine. He was a great lawyer in Italy. His last years he was head of the — I don't know exactly where — in Italy, like supreme court, something like that in Italy.

ANDRADE

This is Guido or Ugo?

CASTELNUOVO

Ugo. Ugo was the oldest. He was a very intelligent and very wonderful person, and very cultured His last years in Italy he was something like a supreme court [justice].

ANDRADE

Mrs. Castelnuevo-Tedesco, thank you very much.

CASTELNUOVO

OK, I try to do my best.

ANDRADE

Thank you very much.

Parent Institution | TEI | Search | Feedback

Date:

This page is copyrighted