

a cura di  
**Annalisa Bini**  
**Tiziana Grande**  
**Federica Riva**



**scripta sonant** contributi sul patrimonio musicale italiano



**IAML Italia**

Associazione Italiana delle  
Biblioteche, Archivi e Centri di  
documentazione musicali

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*A Fiorella Pomponi Boedaa*

Maria Fiore Pomponi Boceda

*Il 29 luglio 2018 Fiorella Pomponi ci ha lasciati, improvvisamente, in silenzio per non disturbare amici e colleghi in vacanza.*

*Con lei abbiamo perso una preziosa collega di lavoro e un'amica discreta e sincera.*

*Per oltre cinquant'anni ha contribuito all'evoluzione delle norme di catalogazione delle risorse musicali, specializzandosi nella gestione dei documenti sonori e nella classificazione di tutte le tipologie di risorse.*

*Nella sezione musica della Biblioteca Comunale Centrale, la Sormani di Milano, ha trovato il luogo adatto per esprimere al meglio non solo le sue competenze, ma soprattutto la sua idea di biblioteca come servizio pubblico, in grado di rispondere nel modo più semplice e veloce alle esigenze di fruitori diversi.*

*Straordinaria lettrice di romanzi, con il marito organizzavano in casa delle "serate letterarie", dove presentavano e commentavano le novità appena lette. La sua passione e l'attitudine per la musica, le ha espresse cantando per molti anni nel Canti-Corùm, diretto dal maestro Vincenzo Simmarano.*

*Il volontariato era per Fiorella una delle ragioni di vita e poteva praticarlo per diffondere la cultura come per aiutare gli anziani ammalati, spesso indigenti, ad essere trasportati in ospedale.*

*Un esempio di vita da non dimenticare.*

Agostina Zecca Laterza

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Marina Schieke-Gordienko

## **Ferruccio Busoni (1866-1924). His Estate in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz (SBB-PK)**

The piano virtuoso, composer and music writer Ferruccio Busoni had a formative influence on the history of composition and, in particular, on music aesthetics in the 20th century. Alongside composers like Arnold Schönberg, Béla Bartók, Igor Strawinsky, he is one of the pioneers of New Music and ranks as a central figure of the Modern Era. Approaches to atonality become apparent in his compositions. After Franz Liszt, Busoni was probably the most famous and most sought-after pianist in the late 19th century. As an artist and teacher he travelled extensively throughout Europe and was in America several times on concert tours. He was a passionate letter writer and corresponded with numerous composers, writers, fine artists and theatre people of the early 20th century and is thus one of the outstanding artistic personalities of the avant-garde. Throughout his life Busoni was constantly searching for new ways of musical expression. In his numerous writings on music aesthetics, especially in the *Entwurf einer neuen Aesthetik der Tonkunst*, he discussed the relationship of tradition and renewal in music history and set down his own music-theoretical reflections and dramaturgical ideas. He was also active as a librettist and he wrote the libretti for his four operas himself [Image 1].

Busoni left behind an impressive estate, consisting of music manuscripts, letters, portraits, writings, programmes and reviews. The estate found its way into the Preußische Staatsbibliothek<sup>1</sup> in several batches and shows, more than any other, a broad panorama of his epoch. His compositional œuvre comprises more than 300 works, whereby the piano compositions and arrangements are of particularly great significance.

The Busoni estate is kept in the Musikabteilung of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, which is one of the most important music collections worldwide.<sup>2</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup> The present name of the institution is: Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz (since 1992). Five institutions belong to the Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz: the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (SMB), the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (SBB), the Geheimes Staatsarchiv (GStA), the Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut (IAI) and the Staatliches Institut für Musikforschung (SIM). All the images accompanying this text are published with the permission of the library.

<sup>2</sup> Martina Rebmann, *Die Musikabteilung der Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin*, in *Archive zur Musikkultur nach 1945. Verzeichnis und Texte*, hrsg. von Antje Kalcher und Dietmar Schenck, München, edition text + kritik, 2016, pp. 85-91.

holdings include not only autograph collections of outstanding composers (Johann Sebastian Bach, Ludwig van Beethoven, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, Carl Maria von Weber, Robert and Clara Schumann, among others), but also around 450 estates, collections of letters, deposits from persons and institutions of music history in the period from the early 18th century up to the present day. The Busoni estate, which is an especially extensive and diverse estate, is included in these. Berlin became Busoni's chosen place of residence in 1894 and he lived here with his family until his death.<sup>3</sup>

Ferruccio Dante Michelangelo Benvenuto Busoni was born in Empoli (near Florence) on 1st April 1866 as the son of the clarinettist Ferdinando Busoni and his wife, the pianist Anna Weiß-Busoni. His talent was fostered by the early musical education in his parental home and he was introduced to Johann Sebastian Bach's counterpoint studies, most notably by his father, already as a young boy.<sup>4</sup> His career as a pianist began as early as 1873, at the age of seven. His way led him first to Vienna, where he was celebrated as a child prodigy and met up with influential persons such as, among others, Anton Rubinstein, Eduard Hanslick, Baroness Sophie Todesco, who supported the extraordinarily gifted boy in various ways [Image 2].

Later his composition studies led him to Graz, where he received comprehensive instruction in figured bass, theory, counterpoint, harmony and composition from Wilhelm Mayer.<sup>5</sup> Musical interpretation was not enough for Busoni and he expanded the radius of his musical interests early on by transcriptions and arrangements of the works he performed, either by cadences in the piano concerts or in the editions which Busoni compiled. Busoni's first works for the piano were written in Graz. These early compositions from 1880/81 exist in a set of works with the title "Compositions-Aufgaben" and were marked by Wilhelm Mayer with the grades "very good" to "excellent" [Image 3].

After several triumphant concert tours, Ferruccio Busoni became a member of the Reale Accademia Filarmonica Bologna, which awarded him a diploma for composition and piano playing, which no other composer had received in such young years since Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Teaching positions followed in Helsinki, Moscow and Boston. In 1894 Busoni moved to Berlin where he provided young composers with a platform for the performance of their works in his capacity as conductor and initiator in organising the Berlin "Orchestral Evenings (new and rarely performed works with the Philharmonic Orchestra" (1902 – 1909). Busoni

<sup>3</sup> After extensive concert journeys and tours throughout Europe and America, Busoni took up residence with his family in Berlin in 1894. During World War I he moved to Switzerland at the end of 1915 and lived in Zurich for some years. However, he retained the Berlin apartment and returned to the city in 1920. Thereby he accepted a chair as Professor for Composition at the Akademie der Künste (Academy of Arts) in Berlin.

<sup>4</sup> Busoni left behind two autobiographical fragments (*Selbstbiographie*), in which he especially emphasised his instruction in Bach's counterpoint studies by his father. Busoni wrote the *Selbstbiographie* in Frankfurt/Main around 1900, on writing paper from the hotel "Frankfurter Hof". There are multiple print versions available of this see «Die Musik», xxII/1, 1929, p. 1 ff.

<sup>5</sup> Wilhelm Mayer (Pseudonym: W. A. Rémy, 1831–1898): composer, lawyer, teacher.

performed as a pianist and conductor here; he was an intermediary and promoter of New Music and also acted as a concert organiser and agent. Such a concert often ended with a large deficit, so that Busoni was left to bear the high costs resulting from the artists' remuneration and the expenses of organising the concert.

Whereas Busoni the piano virtuoso received international recognition, he was denied this as a composer to a large extent. It is especially in his numerous arrangements<sup>6</sup> that Busoni's way is shown, from the appropriation to the creative confrontation with traditional heritage.<sup>7</sup> In searching for new ways of musical expression his *Entwurf einer neuen Aesthetik der Tonkunst*<sup>8</sup> was published in 1907 as the result of "long-held beliefs, gradually brought to fruition",<sup>9</sup> in which he developed the idea whereupon music freed from conventions was to be seen as the starting point of a continuous development to "abstract sound". This is expressed most clearly in his orchestral piece *Nocturne symphonique* (1913). His eagerness to experiment culminated finally in a blueprint to construct a harmonium tuned in microtones as well as in reflections on using third and sixth tones in music composition. This failed, however, due to the complicated playing technique of the instruments.

Busoni was an artist in whose thoughts the fine arts, literature and architecture were also present alongside music. He continually indulged in critical reflection on developments in the art of his time and dealt with the past in a creative manner.<sup>10</sup> Busoni was a passionate collector<sup>11</sup> and he was in possession of an extensive private library and an exquisite art collection.<sup>12</sup>

Ferruccio Busoni died in Berlin on 27th July 1924. To clarify the question of where his extensive estate should be preserved, the "Busoni-Comité"<sup>13</sup> was estab-

6 Busoni subjected almost all of the works he played to musical arrangements. The arrangements of the works of J. S. Bach alone are published in seven editions with a total of 26 volumes (1890–1921). For further individual arrangements and sheet music in several volumes, see Jürgen Kindermann, *Thematisch-chronologisches Verzeichnis der musikalischen Werke von Ferruccio Busoni*, Regensburg, Bosse, 1980, pp. 405–468.

7 Albrecht Riethmüller, *Der Bearbeiter*, in *BUSONI. Freiheit für die Tonkunst!*, Kassel, Bärenreiter, 2016, pp. 167–169.

8 Ferruccio Busoni, *Entwurf einer neuen Aesthetik der Tonkunst*, Trieste, C. Schmidl, 1907.

9 Ibid., 2nd expanded edition, Leipzig, Insel-Verlag, 1916.

10 Thomas Ertelt, *Zur Ausstellung*, in *BUSONI. Freiheit für die Tonkunst!*, Kassel, Bärenreiter, 2016, p. II.

11 Michael Lailach, "Als alles tote Wissen unwichtig ist" – Der Sammler Ferruccio Busoni, in *BUSONI. Freiheit für die Tonkunst!*, Kassel, Bärenreiter, 2016, pp. 133–135.

12 In 1912 Busoni visited the exhibition *The Italian Futurist Painters* in London and bought the painting *The City Rises* (1910) by his friend, the painter Umberto Boccioni (1882–1916). The Museum of Modern Art, New York acquired the painting in 1951 from Raffaello Busoni. (Concerning the purchase of the painting see *Ferruccio Busoni, letters to his wife 1889–1923* in *Collected Works* ed. by Martina Weindel, vol. I: *Letters*, Wilhelmshaven, Noetzel, 2015, No. 615).

13 Members of the "Busoni-Comité" included Gerda Busoni, the two sons Benvenuto and Raffaello Busoni, Friedrich Schnapp, Leo Kestenberg, Edward E. Dent, Philipp Jarnach, Egon Petri, Kurt Weill and Agnes Krziwik.

lished. It was quickly agreed that the estate should go to the Preußische Staatsbibliothek. The first part of it was delivered as early as November 1925 and further parts followed in several batches up to 1943. In this year Gerda Busoni finally left the Berlin residence and returned to her home city of Stockholm, where she lived until her death in 1956.

In the following decades the Busoni estate was supplemented by further partial estates, for example from his teacher Wilhelm Mayer, from Gerda Busoni and the two sons Raffaello and Benvenuto, the musicologist Friedrich Schnapp, who had settled the estate on behalf of the widow, the pupil and friend Philipp Jarnach and through various sets of correspondence with friends as Luigi Cimoso, Franz Ludwig Hörrth, among others. (Please see the holdings overview at the end of the article).

The Busoni estate comprises 366 music manuscripts (autographs, transcripts), approx. 150 text manuscripts, 30 libretti, 600 concert programmes, 300 reviews and 600 photographs. Busoni's lasting influence on the art and music of the 20th century becomes apparent in more than 9,000 letters which he exchanged with representatives and promoters of the European Modern Era, including Arnold Schönberg, Béla Bartók, Artur Schnabel, Stefan Zweig, Umberto Boccioni, Max Oppenheimer, Bruno Cassirer, James Simon and George Bernard Shaw [Images 4-5].

The correspondence is a rich source of Berlin contemporary history and provides – like no other – contributions to European cultural and musical history. In addition to the manuscripts, letters and biographical documents, the Busoni estate contains the Liszt Collection and the collection of photographic portraits.

Busoni's library, estimated at about 5,000 volumes, did not find its way into the Staatsbibliothek – as was intended – but was auctioned off in 1925 by the antiquarian bookstore of Max Perl, Berlin, at the instigation of the widow Gerda Busoni, who was in straitened financial circumstances.<sup>14</sup> The library, could, however, be reconstructed with the aid of the auction catalogue.

Busoni composed four operas, two of which – *Die Brautwahl* [Image 6] (premiered in Hamburg in 1912) and *Doktor Faust* (completed by Philipp Jarnach, premiered in Dresden in 1925) – have attracted particular interest through performances in opera houses in Zurich, Paris, Salzburg, Munich, Berlin and Dresden, among others, in recent years. Although the reception of Busoni's works has continually increased, his influence on the more recent history of music and composition is still mostly unknown.

On the occasion of the 150th anniversary of Busoni's birth, the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (SBB), in cooperation with the Staatliches Institut für Musikforschung (SIM) and the Kunstsbibliothek of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (SMB) – (all three institutions belong to the Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz - SPK),

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<sup>14</sup> Jutta Theurich, *Der Nachlass Ferruccio Busonis in der Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin*, in *Busoni in Berlin, Facetten eines kosmopolitischen Komponisten*, hrsg. von Albrecht Riethmüller, Wiesbaden, Franz Steiner Verlag, 2004, pp. 67-76.

presented numerous music autographs, writings, letters and photographs from the composer's estate within the framework of a comprehensive exhibition from 4th September 2016 to 8th January 2017 [Image 7]. The exhibition was impressively supplemented by collection items from the Kunstsbibliothek on the communication and media history of the Modern Era, by printed editions of literary works as well as by further materials from the Staatliches Institut für Musikforschung. A book on the exhibition has been published in the Bärenreiter Verlag.



Image 1 – Ferruccio Busoni 1914 in his Berlin apartment at Viktoria-Luise-Platz 11 [D-B, Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni P I, 46]



Image 2 – Ferruccio Busoni at the age of 12, Vienna, 1878 [D-B, Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni P I, 8]

#### BUSONI ESTATE – SYSTEMATIC OVERVIEW

The following overview lists the individual groups of holdings of the Busoni estate, which found its way into the Preußische Bibliothek Berlin in several batches from 1925–1943.

The letters are indexed in the KALLIOPE database, all other materials are indexed by lists, respectively card catalogues, which can be viewed in the Musiklesesaal on request. Friedrich Schnapp's overview of the music autographs is available in the digitised collections of the Staatsbibliothek (accession number: D-B, Mus.Nachl. F. Busoni R, 16).

#### Mus.Nachl. F. Busoni A, 1-366 Music manuscripts and prints

366 volumes with autographs, transcripts, proof sheets, prints with handwritten annotations (a few book numbers are in the Jagiellonian Library in Kraków)

**Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni B** Correspondence

Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni B I: approx. 2,500 letters from Busoni

Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni B II: approx. 6,000 letters to Busoni

Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni B III - B VII: approx. 200 letters from/to family members as well as miscellanea

**Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni C** Writings

Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni C I: 165 writings (manuscripts) with essays, poems, notes

Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni C I Libretto: 29 handwritten libretti and drafts

Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni C II: 130 publications by Busoni (in magazines and books)

**Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni D** Essays and writings about Busoni

137 publications (mainly published in magazines)

**Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni E** Concert programmes

Approx. 600 concert programmes of Busoni's concerts (in chronological order)

**Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni F** Recensions

Reviews and articles about Busoni's concerts from 1884 onwards, later augmented by Gerda Busoni with reviews about his works up to 1934 (in chronological order)

**Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni G** Albums

8 albums with reviews, programmes and letters (started by Busoni's parents in 1873)

**Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni H** Biographical material

Documents from his parents, testimonials, certificates, awards

**Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni I** Printed music pieces

Printed works of other composers with dedications to Ferruccio Busoni

**Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni L** Liszt Collection

69 Liszt volumes from Busoni's holdings and materials relating to Busoni's Liszt edition

**Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni M** Documents from his parents

Compositions by his father and documents from his parents' estate

**Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni N und O** Miscellanea

Posters, exhibition materials, competitions, programmes, certificates

**Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni P** Photographs

Approx. 650 photographs and images

**Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni R** Indices

15 inventory sheets and catalogues (by Friedrich Schnapp, among others)

Parts of estate acquired later: 1964 – 1983 (selection)

**Mus. Nachl. 4** (Estate of Friedrich Schnapp, acquired 1964)

Approx. 1200 documents from the estate of Friedrich Schnapp: letters, programmes, books, magazines, poems and notes

**Mus. Nachl. 11** (Estate of Wilhelm Mayer, acquired 1968 from Melanie Prelinger)

Music autographs of W. Mayer, written texts, photographs, music prints

**Mus. Nachl. 30** (Part of Busoni-Jarnach estate, acquired 1975)

Correspondence P. Jarnach – F. Busoni, drafts for Busoni's opera *Doktor Faust*

**Mus. Nachl. 16** (Estate of Benvenuto Busoni, acquired 1976)

Correspondence Benvenuto Busoni – Friedrich Schnapp, sketches and drawings, books

**Mus. Nachl. 76** (Estate of Friedrich Schnapp, acquired 1983) Correspondence



Image 3 – Ferruccio Busoni, *Invention | 43rd exercise from Composition Exercises*, approx. 1880/81 [D-B, Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni A, 149].



Image 4 – The painter Umberto Boccioni (left) with Ferruccio Busoni, 1916 in Pallanza, Villa San Remigio [D-B, Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni P I, 164].

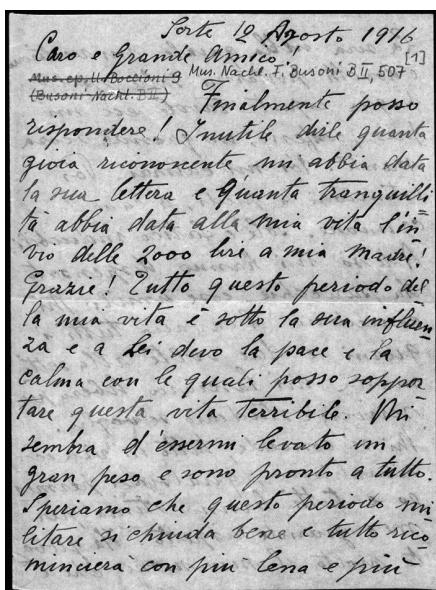


Image 5 – Letter from Umberto Boccioni to Ferruccio Busoni, Sorte (Verona), 12th August 1916 [D-B, Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni B II, 507].

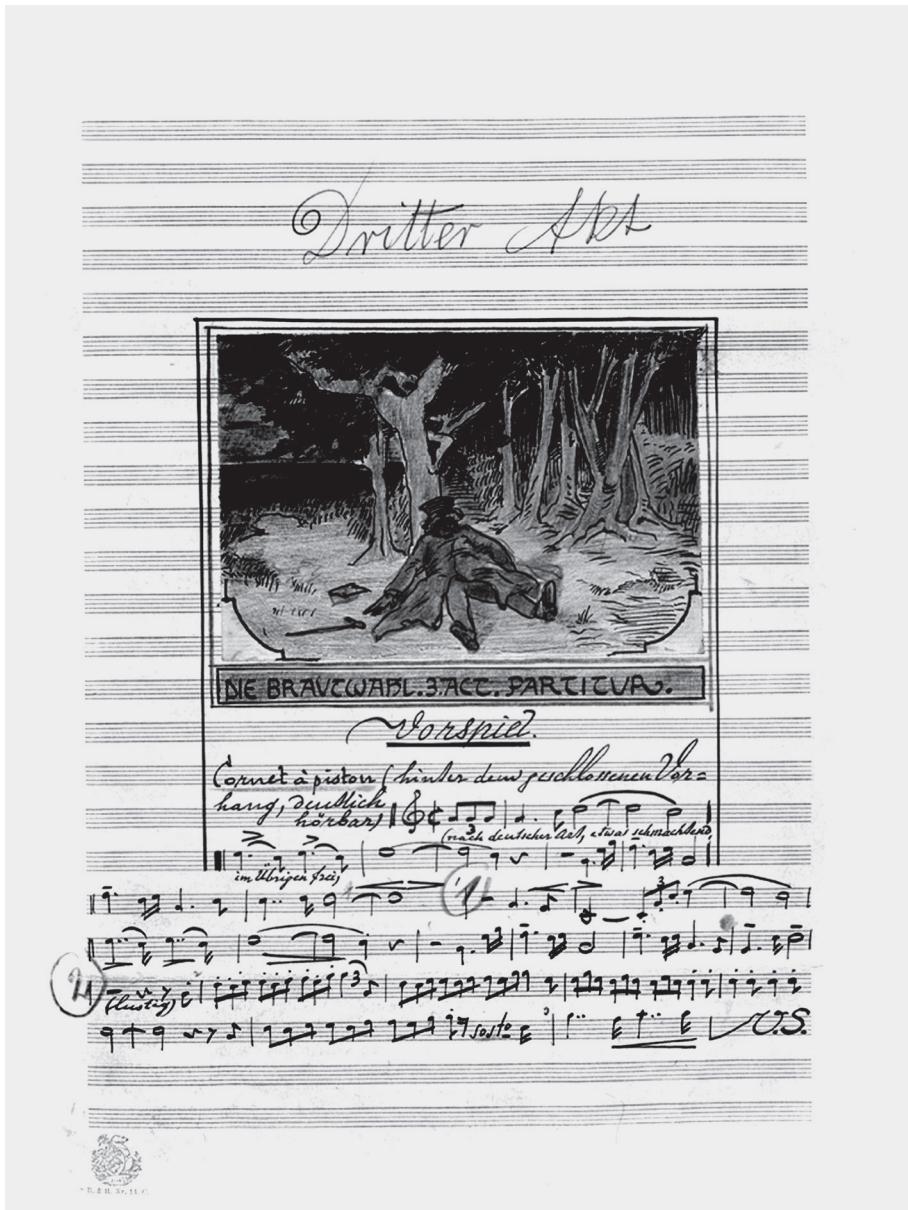


Image 6 – Ferruccio Busoni, *Die Brautwahl*, Autograph: title page of act III [D-B, Mus. Nachl. F. Busoni A, 266].



Image 7 – Exhibition *Busoni. Freiheit für die Tonkunst!* (4.9.2016–8.1.2017), a cooperation work of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (sbb), the Staatliches Institut für Musikforschung (sim) and the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (smb) – Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz (spk), in the Kulturforum Berlin (private photograph).

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L'Italia e la *International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres* (IAML) condividono una lunga e proficua tradizione di collaborazione: la fondazione della IAML venne deliberata a Firenze nel 1949 e diverse conferenze annuali dell'associazione internazionale si sono svolte in Italia: a Milano nel 1963, a Bologna nel 1972, a Como nel 1984, a Perugia nel 1996 e a Napoli nel 2008.

Nel 2016 questo importante appuntamento internazionale si è svolto per la prima volta a Roma, grazie alla stretta cooperazione fra la IAML Italia e l'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, presso l'Auditorium Parco della Musica, dal 3 all'8 luglio 2016.

La presenza di trenta bibliotecari musicali (il doppio rispetto al convegno IAML di Perugia del 1996), tra gli oltre 120 relatori provenienti da tutto il mondo, è apparsa come una conferma della costante, effettiva crescita della professione in Italia.

Questo volume nasce dal desiderio di far conoscere a un pubblico più ampio l'impegno con cui la comunità italiana di bibliotecari, enti e studiosi ha presentato i propri risultati di lavoro e di ricerca sul patrimonio musicale italiano in ambito professionale internazionale.

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