Georg Wildhagen's *Figaros Hochzeit*
How an Italian Opera Based on a French Play Became a German Socialist Film

Thesis

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Abstract

On November 25, 1949, only seven weeks after the official establishment of the new German Democratic Republic (GDR), the German Film Studio DEFA (Deutsche Film Aktiengesellschaft) released *Figaros Hochzeit*, a new film adaptation of Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, written and directed by novice filmmaker Georg Wildhagen. This is but one of many transpositions of the *Figaro* text, however, as Mozart and Da Ponte's *Le nozze di Figaro* was itself a transposition of Beaumarchais's play. Wildhagen’s setting must be viewed as a reinterpretation of the opera, transposed both for the medium of film and for the context of the new, and frighteningly unstable, Soviet Zone of occupation. Within this context, the aristocracy must be eliminated as a positive force; thus Count Almaviva is made more villainous and his wife Rosina is recast as a duplicitous schemer. Meanwhile, Figaro’s characterization is significantly altered, and only Susanna remains as a wholly virtuous individual. In Wildhagen’s hands, *Figaros Hochzeit* creates a new text, one that reflects the ideals and anxieties of the postwar Soviet Zone.
Dedication

For Calvin, to whom I owe a great many trips to the zoo
Acknowledgements

I wish to thank my advisor, Lois Rosow, for her incredible patience and encouragement as this thesis gradually developed from a feminist analysis of the eighteenth-century Rosina into a socio-political analysis of Wildhagen's mid twentieth-century film adaptation. Thank you also to my thesis committee: Danielle Fosler-Lussier, for her words of advice and encouragement, and especially for her invaluable survival tips for managing research and parenthood simultaneously, and Andy Spencer, for sharing his wealth of knowledge on German film. I am also indebted to the staff at the DEFA Film Archive in Amherst, MA, especially Evan Torner, for helping me locate the shooting script, and Jason Doerre, for confirming that the missing scenes in Wildhagen's film are actually missing. I would have been unable to complete this work without their help. Finally, thanks to Carolyn Dehdari for helping me draft emails in German.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

On November 25, 1949, only seven weeks after the official establishment of the new German Democratic Republic (GDR), the German Film Studio DEFA (Deutsche Film Aktiengesellschaft) released *Figaros Hochzeit*, a new film adaptation of Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*. It was directed by Georg Wildhagen, a theatrical producer and dramaturg with no film experience whatsoever. The film was a popular success in Germany, but bore only a passing resemblance to either its immediate source or the original Beaumarchais play. Many arias (and even entire scenes) were cut, and the whole product stripped down to a brief 96-minute running time. While some of Wildhagen's changes, such as replacing recitative with spoken dialogue, were matters of convention, others had a powerful impact on both the dramatic arc of the opera and its portrayal of character. Wildhagen used his role as director and author to create a new text for *Figaro*; that text is the subject of this study.

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Any opera carries with it a complex of meanings, acquired through the compositional process, years of performance practice, and the social and cultural context of each performance. When that opera derives from an earlier source, the transition from one medium to another sometimes carries with it a transposition of meaning. Of the “poetics of transposition,” Caryl Emerson writes:

Transposition might in fact be the most vigorous commentary possible on another’s work of art. It is that one category of “translation” where coauthorship is not hidden but rather celebrated, where the independence of the second voice is guaranteed by the new genre or medium, and where dialogue among versions is inevitably explicit. A good part of the audience’s interest lies precisely in watching a multiple coauthorship at work.2

In the case of Mozart and Da Ponte’s *Le nozze di Figaro*, there have been multiple transpositions: first from Beaumarchais’s play to the opera, and later from staged opera to film. I am speaking here not of staged operas recorded on film, but of operas remade and retold specifically for the cinema. It is easy to look at opera films as mere translations to a new medium, but this view is too facile. The creation of a filmic version of an opera is in fact the creation of a new text – one that derives from an operatic source, but creates a new work and a new set of meanings. This new type of work cannot be read using only the tools of musical analysis, nor is the language of film adequate to discuss it. It is its own form, and we must borrow elements of both disciplines in order to properly understand it.

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Mid twentieth-century film theorist Siegfried Kracauer articulated two fundamental principles for understanding the sociological context for cinema: “First, films are never the product of an individual...Second, films address themselves, and appeal, to the anonymous multitude. Popular films – or, to be more precise, popular screen motifs – can therefore be supposed to satisfy existing mass desires.”

We can view the 1949 Figaro in the context of both Emerson's and Kracauer's work. The film is not simply a retelling of the Figaro story, but a re-creation of it, in which the multiple texts serve as a conversation between the cultures of late eighteenth-century France and Austria and mid twentieth-century East Germany. As such, the alterations Wildhagen makes to the libretto and score actually make a stronger statement than that of mere absence. The expunged scenes leave a greater hole, and the altered ones call attention to themselves, by virtue of their dialogue with a well-known text. Wildhagen's transposition of Beaumarchais, Mozart, and Da Ponte, released at the dawn of the new German Democratic Republic, thus becomes a point of negotiation between Beaumarchais's satire, Mozart and Da Ponte's opera buffa, and an imagined model for a new socialist Germany.

I will begin in Chapter 2 by discussing the context for Wildhagen's opera film, the Soviet Zone of Occupation and the early days of the GDR. Chapter 3 examines Wildhagen's theory of opera film construction, and the tools he used to transform a staged genre into a filmic one. Chapters 4 and 5 analyze the specific changes made to each of the four main characters in the opera: Figaro, Susanna, Count Almaviva, and Countess

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Rosina, and address the impact of those changes on the overall tone and dramatic arc of the film. I do not seek to ascribe specific motivations to the changes made to Figaro under Wildhagen's direction; rather, I view Figaro as a text that takes on different guises and forms to reflect the time and place of its existence. Figaros Hochzeit becomes a reflection of the postwar Soviet Zone and its understanding of Mozart and Beaumarchais's works.

Although interest in DEFA films has grown significantly since German reunification, the role of the opera films has largely escaped notice. Wolfgang Thiel's “Opernverfilmungen der DEFA” looks briefly at each of the operas and operettas produced by DEFA with a focus on how each one functions as that peculiar hybrid, the opera film. Sanda Chiriacescu-Lüling's Herrschaft und Revolte in 'Figaros Hochzeit,' the other scholarly work to deal with Wildhagen's film in any detail, offers excellent semiotic analysis of scenery, costuming, and acting; however, this work deals almost exclusively with translation and visual elements of the production. Moreover, it is a comparative analysis of multiple settings of Figaro, including both stage and film versions, and as such does not delve into analysis of such specifically filmic issues as framing. Neither of these works discusses the cultural context of Wildhagen's film, nor the impact made by his radical changes to Da Ponte's libretto. My primary sources for this study have been

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4 For the sake of clarity, I shall refer to arias and characters throughout by their Italian names, except when quoting directly from either Beaumarchais or Wildhagen.


the film itself, Wildhagen's unpublished shooting script, and an interview Wildhagen gave
to Ralf Schenk for the 1991 re-release of the film.7

While there has been a dearth of work specifically addressing the issues of the
DEFA opera film, some of the research related to this topic has proven invaluable. I am
especially indebted to Joy Calico's research on the role of opera within the GDR.8
Norman Naimark's The Russians in Germany: A History of the Soviet Zone of
Occupation, 1945-49 provided me with a view of the social, cultural, and economic
issues facing residents of the Soviet Zone, and the work of Siegfried Kracauer and Béla
Balázs forms the basis for my application of film theory to Wildhagen's adaptation.9
Finally, I employ Emerson's concept of transposition to illustrate how each Figaro text
comments on and negotiates with the others.10

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7 Figaros Hochzeit, dir. Georg Wildhagen, 96 min., Ice Storm/DEFA, 1949, videocassette; Georg
Wildhagen, “Montageliste: Figaros Hochzeit,” unpublished shooting script (Potsdam-Babelsberg,
1949), DEFA Film Archive, University of Massachusetts, Amherst; Ralf Schenk, “Interview with
director Georg Wildhagen,” in Opernstars von einst in Figaros Hochzeit, Musik Wolfgang Amadeus
Mozart (PROGRESS Film-Verleih GmbH, 1991), 4-5.
8 Joy Haslam Calico, “The Politics of Opera in the German Democratic Republic, 1945-1961” (PhD diss.,
Duke University, 1999).
(Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1995); Kracauer, From Caligari to
Hitler; Béla Balázs, Theory of the Film (Character and Growth of a New Art), trans. Edith Bone
10 Emerson, Boris Godunov.
Chapter 2: DEFA and the Soviet Zone

In order to understand the complex of meanings surrounding Wildhagen's film in the early days of the GDR, we must first examine the social, economic, artistic, and political contexts that surrounded its production. DEFA, housed in the former UFA (Universum Film AG) studios in Potsdam-Babelsberg, actually antedated the GDR by three years. When Russia, Britain, and the United States divided postwar Germany during the Tehran conference of 1943 and the Yalta and Potsdam conferences of 1945, Berlin was partitioned between the Allied powers, but the entire surrounding region, including the suburbs of Babelsberg and Potsdam, came under Russian control. The Babelsberg studios, which stood less than a mile from the new U.S. Zone of Berlin and adjacent to the exclave of Steinstücken, had produced the lion's share of German film under UFA during both the Weimar period and throughout the Nazi era. Now they would be turned to new use as a vehicle for socialist re-education:

While in the Western occupied zones print media were assigned a leading role in the process of political enlightenment, the Soviets put their faith in the medium of film...“Too many people would not read newspapers, never mind books, but would certainly go to the cinema”...speculated Hans Rodenberg, later to become the director of the DEFA feature film studio, in 1944 while he was still in Moscow exile. He was right, for cinema offered a welcome diversion from the miserable struggle for survival in Germany's bombed-out cities. Moreover, tickets were cheap – just one
Reichsmark, compared with 250 Reichsmark for a pound of butter on the black market.\textsuperscript{11}

The Babelsberg studios became a critical tool of the new regime, both for disseminating socialist ideology, and for creating a sense of normalcy for residents of the Soviet Zone of occupation.

The “miserable struggle for survival” was a pervasive issue throughout the Soviet Zone. Land reform plans that Wilhelm Pieck instituted in 1945 purported to redistribute property holdings from Junkers (large landholders) – roughly 770,000 hectares in all – to refugees, small farmers, and the disenfranchised.\textsuperscript{12} The plan was controversial, however, and once the land had been seized, the redistribution process was far from smooth. In areas such as Thüringen, many parcels of land remained unassigned; in other areas, the old landowners quietly returned to their unoccupied property; and in places where new farmers had taken over plots, many were left without adequate equipment, seed, and livestock.\textsuperscript{13}

Some 10,000 new farmers, according to Soviet reports, abandoned the land altogether and sought work in the towns and cities or congregated in a variety of makeshift settlements. In the worst case, Mecklenburg, nearly 20 percent of the new farmers left their settlements between 1945 and 1949. Even those who could make some progress on the land suffered severe hardships. As late as February 1948, Mecklenburg agricultural minister Karl Moltmann wrote that 35,000 new farmers in his province still did not have a proper roof over their heads. They often slept piled next to one another in lice-ridden barracks and barns. This meant, he added, that they could not address their farming tasks correctly.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{12} Naimark, \textit{The Russians in Germany}, 152.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., 154.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., 155.
This situation was compounded by a system of requisitions and quotas that penalized farmers for not meeting established levels of production, and by natural disasters such as the 1946 flooding of the Oder River, drought conditions in 1947 and 1948, and a 1947 potato bug plague.\textsuperscript{15}

Meanwhile, during the period of occupation the Soviet Union was also extracting $2.68 billion in “reparations” from Germany, much of it from the east in the form of factories, goods, and raw materials.\textsuperscript{16} This blow to industry, combined with rampant problems in the agricultural sector, the sequestering of property from individuals, poor housing conditions, and instances of looting and profiteering, amounted to economic disaster for the German citizens of the Soviet Zone. In the worst instances, it led to what Bertolt Brecht, writing in February 1949 from Berlin, referred to as “hunger everywhere on a chinese [sic] scale.”\textsuperscript{17}

Entertainment, and particularly films, provided a welcome respite from the daily realities of poor housing, hunger, and poverty. Initially, Soviet film companies used the Babelsberg facility to re-work and re-release their own films for the German market.\textsuperscript{18} In 1946, \textit{Die Mörder sind unter uns} (\textit{The Murderers Are among Us}), directed by Wolfgang Staudt at the nearby Althoff-Atelier, became the first new film to be released by DEFA, and by 1947 the former UFA studio area was being cleaned up and prepared for new productions.\textsuperscript{19} There was a distinct contrast between the way Germans received the

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., 159-61.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., 168-9.
\textsuperscript{17} Bertolt Brecht, \textit{Bertolt Brecht: Journals} (New York: Routledge, 1993), 418.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid.
reworked Soviet films as opposed to the new German-made productions, and officials of
the Soviet Military Administration in Germany (SMAD) were forced to acknowledge that
German audiences were not prepared to embrace Soviet entertainment:

At the beginning of the occupation, movie theaters typically showed 60 to
70 percent Soviet films and 30 to 40 percent German films, with a couple
of English, American, or French films thrown in for the sake of variety.
This proportion changed in 1947-48 [by which time DEFA was operating
as a German-Soviet joint-stock company], as the increasing number of
films made in the Soviet zone brought the showings of German films to
slightly more than 50 percent and the percentage of Soviet films to slightly
under. However, for the taste of the German public, there were still far too
many Soviet films in their theaters. 20

The objection to Soviet films led to boycotts in Mecklenburg, and the SED (the German
Socialist Unity Party) preferred to work with DEFA on new ideological films in lieu of
reusing Soviet material. 21 Similarly, German concert audiences, while not opposed to
hearing Russian orchestral music, nonetheless remained devoted to Schumann,
Beethoven, Bach, and Mozart. 22 Opera had a particular hold on the public consciousness,
especially as a signifier of national pride, as the SED attempted to reclaim the notion of
Nationaloper. Although that term was dropped from common use during the Nazi era,
opera itself, and particularly Wagner's work, had been a powerful element of the Nazi
cultural agenda. A return to Nationaloper meant a return to a more palatable nineteenth-
century flavor of nationalism.

20 Naimark, The Russians in Germany, 423.
21 Ibid.
22 Ibid., 430.
As Joy Calico writes, “Opera reflects the priorities of a sociopolitical system and can be employed in cultural politics to further reproduce them.” These priorities reflected a tension in the ideals of German socialist art: between a desire to create new works embodying a socialist agenda, and the wish to position the new socialist state as “the bona fide successor to all 'progressive' and 'humanistic' traditions in the German past.” Calico puts it this way:

There is considerable evidence that some East Germans sought to retain a German national identity while recasting it in an antifascist democratic socialist mold apart from any agenda of Sovietization.

Within this context of an occupied Germany, there was a particular desire to establish a new socialist brand of “German-ness,” both in nationalistic opposition to the Russian culture being imposed by the occupying forces and in opposition to Nazi-era fascism. This new form of German nationalism would, of necessity, be founded on a distant past that was less problematic than the recent one.

This tension between the new and the traditional presented itself in matters of creation as well as reception. Creators of new works – whether in Russia or the new Soviet Zone of Occupation – were expected to follow the precepts of socialist realism set out by Party representative Andrei Zhdanov in 1934:

Socialist realism, which represents the main method of enhancing Soviet literature and literary criticism, demands of artists faithful, historical concrete representations of reality in its revolutionary development. Faithful and historical concretization of artistic representation must be

combined with the tasks of ideological transformation and the education of the working class in the spirit of socialism.26

This definition came to include the concepts of ideological commitment (particularly to the unity of form and content), optimistic Party-mindedness, and national and popular spirit, grounded in universalism and humanism (ideinost, partiinost, and narodnost, respectively).27 Those who did not stick to these vague aesthetic tenets were accused of formalism, an equally vague term. This vagueness was an essential feature, as it allowed any artist to be criticized at any time. Indeed, political charges of “formalism,” ostensibly indicating an emphasis on form at the expense of content, might mean that a work was considered too complex, too Western, or otherwise too bourgeois, or that political authorities wished to punish the author of the work for reasons quite apart from aesthetics.

The official definition of socialist realism had initially been directed at Soviet literature, but its use was soon extended to all the arts, throughout the Soviet Union and the Soviet Zone. This application across media presented further problems with socialist realism as an aesthetic principle. During the 1947 Erster Film-Autoren Kongreß (First Conference of Film-Makers) held at Potsdam-Babelsberg, Alfred Lindemann, one of the members of DEFA’s original Board of Directors, issued a call for a revival of German cinema and, in particular, a new approach to script-writing, “not just in matters of form,

26 Quoted ibid., 18.
but also in [writers'] choice of subject matter.” 28 This was far from a simple change, however, given the restrictions of the Soviet realist aesthetic, and the need for scripts to be ideologically suitable. Bertolt Brecht made note of the dearth of subject matter in his diary:

> DEFA the film company in the eastern zone has all sorts of problems finding subjects, especially contemporary ones. those at its head list significant themes: underground movement, distribution of land, two-year plan, the new man etc etc; then writers are supposed to devise stories that interpret the theme and its associated problems. this naturally often goes wrong. 29

In fact, many of the early DEFA productions, such as Die Mörder sind unter uns (1946), Gerhard Lamprecht's Irgendwo in Berlin (Somewhere in Berlin, 1946), and Kurt Maetzig's Ehe im Schatten (Marriage in the Shadows, 1947), dealt more with the recent Nazi past and the immediate post-war present than with any sort of socialist future.

Composers found the mandate of socialist realism even more daunting, since its application to non-verbal elements such as rhythm and harmony was virtually impossible.

In 1933, the Composer's Union in the Soviet Union attempted to define it thus:

> The main attention of the Soviet composer must be directed toward the victorious progressive principles of reality, toward all that is heroic, bright, and beautiful. This distinguishes the spiritual world of Soviet man and must be embodied in musical images full of beauty and strength. Socialist Realism demands an implacable struggle against folk-negating modernist directions that are typical of the decay of contemporary bourgeois art, against subservience and servility towards modern bourgeois culture. 30

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28 Seán Allan and John Sand, eds., DEF A: East German Cinema, 1946-1992 (New York: Berghahn Books, 1999), 6. Other members of the original board were Karl Hans Bergmann, Herbert Volkmann, Ilja Trauberg, and Alexander Wolkenstein. By 1949, all five men had been replaced by prominent SED members or by Soviet officials.
29 Brecht, Journals, 421.
As it pertained to opera in particular, socialist realism demanded “a libretto with a Socialist topic, a realistic musical language with stress on a national idiom, and a positive hero typifying the new Socialist era.”

In 1948, a meeting between Zhdanov and the Composer's Union resulted in intense factionalism, as Zhdanov accused many of the established “old guard” composers, such as Prokofiev, Shostakovich, and Kabalevsky, of “...a formalism alien to Soviet art...marked by rejection of the classical heritage under the cover of apparent novelty, by rejection of popular music, by rejection of service to the people, all for the sake of catering to the highly individualistic emotions of a small group of select aesthetes.”

Moreover, emulation of classical Russian composers such as Glinka and Tchaikovsky was preferable to bourgeois modernism:

We do not affirm that the classical heritage is the absolute acme of musical culture. To say so would mean admitting that progress ended with the classics. But the classical models do remain unexcelled to this day. This means we must learn and learn, that we must take from the classical musical heritage all that is best in it, all that is essential to the further development of Soviet music...It would not be so bad if we had more works now that resembled the classics in content and form, in grace, in beauty and musicality.

"Zhdanovism," as it came to be called, made its way into the Soviet Zone, and became a factor in the new GDR “at the critical moment of its founding.” During this period in the Soviet Zone, the SED was busily recruiting artists to return from wartime exile. Such notables as the composer and musicologist Ernst Hermann Meyer, composers

33 Ibid., 89.
Hans Eisler and Paul Dessau, and playwright Bertolt Brecht returned to Germany between 1948 and 1950. Even these returning luminaries were not exempt from charges of formalism, however; Brecht and Dessau soon came under attack as formalists for their opera *The Trial of Lucullus*, as did Eisler for his opera *Doktor Faustus*. Instead, “proponents of socialist realism promoted the classics of the German and Russian operatic repertoire, [while] returning exiles...maintained that a new kind of art was required.”35 Not only was German classicism considered to be the predecessor to socialist realism (in contrast to what Georg Lukács dubbed the “irrationalism” of romanticism), but a return to the glorious classical period of Goethe and Schiller, Beethoven and Mozart, allowed officials to promote national art while bypassing the unsavory recent past.

A film adaptation of *Le nozze di Figaro*, albeit far from offering any new approach to script-writing, would give DEFA producers a known quantity, a direct line from Germany's classical past, and virtually guaranteed popular success. That the film was successful can scarcely be doubted, given that Wildhagen almost immediately went on to direct Otto Nicolai and Hermann Salomon Mosenthal's *Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor (The Merry Wives of Windsor)* for DEFA, using virtually the same adaptive formula and with many of the same production staff as its predecessor. In the latter film, as in *Figaro*, opera singers dubbed the arias for known actors, and the libretto (already filled with comedy at the expense of the aristocracy) became even less forgiving of the

upper class. The combination in both cases created a light, optimistic piece of escapism, infused with a proper socialist message.

In the final moments of Mosenthal's libretto, Sir John is forgiven by the women and thanks them profusely. Wildhagen's film adaptation ends with Falstaff fleeing Windsor in fear.
Chapter 3: The Wildhagen Theory

Opera film was not an entirely new phenomenon in 1949; as early as 1904, Georges Méliès adapted Gounod's *Faust* into a short silent film, and many films of the era before synchronized sound used operatic source material accompanied by an operatic score (whether performed live by an in-house orchestra or played from a recording). The 1930s saw the first film settings of entire operas, including a 1930 version of *I Pagliacci*, *Le barbier de Séville* in 1933, and 1939's *Louise*. Nevertheless, as Alexander Simpson discusses in his dissertation, the standard opera film procedures were either too filmic, with musical aspects sacrificed at the behest of the drama, or too operatic, as with filmed renditions of staged operas that failed to take advantage of film technique.

Interest in opera films continued during the 1940s, but World War II largely precluded any real development in the genre, and only a handful of attempts ever made it to screen.

From the outset, Georg Wildhagen had the ambition to fuse the best elements of opera and film into a single hybrid genre. Wildhagen's resume prior to his work on

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37 I am using “opera film” in the sense Alexander Simpson uses “operafilm,” to refer to an opera or operatic adaptation directed expressly for film, as distinguished from a filmed stage setting of an opera. Other authors use these terms differently. Of particular note is Béla Balázs, who refers to adapted operatic works (such as would include *Figaros Hochzeit*) as opera films, but new works composed for a film or television medium as “Filmoper.” Balázs, writing in the first half of the twentieth century, did not discuss filmed stage opera.

Figaros Hochzeit is ambiguous. Born in 1920, he attended the Salzburg Mozarteum in 1943-44. Following the war, Wildhagen states that he returned to Hamburg to work as an opera director. However, there is no indication that he actually worked at any theater in Germany during this time. The Deutsches Bühnen-Jahrbuch of 1945-48 includes his name in its directory as a producer and dramaturg, but lists no theatrical affiliation. Instead, his first known work as an opera director is Figaros Hochzeit, which he initially planned only to write. Following Figaro and Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor, Wildhagen broke with DEFA and returned to the west, where he directed three more feature films before shifting his focus to television.

According to his interview with Ralf Schenk, the germ of Wildhagen's theory of opera film sprang from his frustration with staged opera, which frequently featured performers who possessed stunning voices, but whose acting Wildhagen described as “stiff and lifeless.” Moreover, these performers often did not look as he had envisioned their roles. Instead, Wildhagen wished to use the technique of playback to combine “perfect voices with excellent actors.” Thus, while Willi Domgraf-Faßbaender and Mathieu Ahlersmeyer both act and sing the roles of Figaro and Count Almaviva respectively, the role of Susanna is sung by Erna Berger, but acted by Angelika Hauff. In her memoir, Berger indicates that her voice-only role in the film was primarily due to

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41 Opernstars von einst in Figaros Hochzeit, 5.
44 Both actors and singers are listed in the opening credits of the film.
her commitment to the concert season in London; however, it is perhaps more likely that
the true reason was her age. The conventions of the operatic stage would have made a
49-year-old Susanna completely acceptable, but in a true film version of the opera,
complete with close-ups, audiences would have different expectations of realism.
Similarly, Tiana Lemnitz provided the voice for Sabine Peters as Countess Rosine, and a
far younger Margarete Klose served as the singing voice for character actress Elsa
Wagner's Marcellina.

Although Wildhagen was not the first to use playback in this way, the tactic was
not without controversy and some scholars dislike the practice. Certainly, one of his
casting choices met with skepticism, even from the generally favorable popular press. In
the role of Cherubino, rather than maintaining the operatic convention of the trouser role,
he cast young Willi Puhlmann. Although this was certainly in keeping with Wildhagen's
larger conception of casting, the juxtaposition of Puhlmann's face with the singing voice
of Annaliese Mueller proved jarring. Some reviews, such as the one in Der
Sozialdemokrat, chose to ignore Puhlmann's presence completely, although they spoke
favorably of Mueller's singing. Others, such as Peter Edel in Die Weltbühne, specifically
mentioned this casting as an area of weakness, describing Mueller's voice as “unsuitable”

45 Erna Berger, Auf Flügeln des Gesanges: Erinnerungen einer Sängerin, 2nd ed. (Zürich: Atlantis
Musikbuch-Verlag, 1989), 63.
46 In a footnote to her excellent 1994 article on Zeffirelli’s Otello, Marcia Citron recommends “a
BBC/Arts & Entertainment documentary, Zeffirelli’s Otello: From Stage to Screen (1986), [which]
shows the challenges faced by nonmusicians in learning how to look, feel, and move like an opera
singer, not to mention the difficulties of matching mimed words to prerecorded music.” This, I imagine,
would have been intensely problematic to Wildhagen, for whom looking and moving “like an opera
singer” was precisely one of the reasons to cast actors in these roles. Marcia J. Citron, “A Night at the
Cinema: Zeffirelli’s Otello and the Genre of Film-Opera,” The Musical Quarterly 78, no. 4 (winter
to the body and bearing of a teenage boy; even in this instance, however, the overall impact on the effectiveness of Wildhagen's adaptation was deemed “insignificant.”

Although Wildhagen initially conceived of this sort of film adaptation, and specifically its possible application to Le nozze di Figaro, in 1945-46, he was as yet without any platform for his theories. It was not until 1947, when he met with director Kurt Maetzig following the Hamburg premiere of Ehe im Schatten (Marriage in the Shadows), that Wildhagen was invited to pitch his idea to Wolff von Gordon, then the chief dramaturg at DEFA. The plan was that Wildhagen would deliver the screenplay, which would then be directed by either Arthur Maria Rabenalt (Das Mädchen Christine) or Paul Verhoeven (Das kalte Herz). However, after Wildhagen made a brief proof-of-concept film of the Letter Duet, he himself was given the job.

It is possible that Wildhagen received encouragement in his efforts from the film theorist Béla Balázs. In the Schenk interview, Wildhagen talked about Balázs holding court at Der Möwe, a Russian club in East Berlin, and Balázs's theories offer an obvious precedent for some of Wildhagen's nascent theories about what could work on film. Balázs advocated the use of playback as a means to avoid the problem of singers who “consider in the first place the ears of the public, not their eyes” and thus exhibited facial

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expressions that “the nearness of the close-up can make...very unpleasant.” Further, he encouraged directors of opera film to adopt specifically filmic approaches to their work and not, for instance, use the camera as a static witness to the action:

The camera can...wander around and show, for instance, the things to which the aria refers: the object of love, or a landscape, or a dwelling or a threatening danger. The stage must remain stage and the public must be always conscious of this, but it need not be incessantly before our eyes in the close-ups. If this is done properly, rigidly immobile scenery and groups of extras will not bother us. For they may be immobile but the camera is not; it moves and the rhythm of the shot-sequence also moves, and this rhythm, adapting itself to the rhythm of the music, can emphasize and interpret it.

Finally, Balázs supported editing operatic works as needed to suit film audiences, provided that the cutting be “governed by musical considerations” and contribute to the mission of popularizing classical opera. Wildhagen's own theories of film, which also advocate the use of playback, adoption of film technique, and a certain editorial freedom with the source material, appear to have been drawn directly from Balázs's work.

Wildhagen's adaptation plan included specific casting choices, use of playback, and significant cuts to the script, substituting spoken dialogue for recitative and cutting twenty-nine arias and ensemble numbers down to sixteen. He embraced Balázs's emphasis on the close-up as a central feature of the film, and took advantage of the camera's mobility to direct the attention of his audience – often with curious results, as we shall see in a discussion of the Letter Duet (chapter 5 below). In some scenes, we hear an aria from offscreen, and rather than seeing the singer, we see another character's

49 Balázs, Theory of the Film, 277.
50 Ibid., 278.
51 Ibid.
response to the aria. On the other hand, the scenic design is decidedly theatrical, and not filmic in the least. Behind the immediate scenic elements of the palace – ornate with rococo embellishments – we see a painted backdrop of the palace gardens and the Sevillian countryside:

Yes, and in the design of the black and white images, I always had in mind the contemporary French painting of the Rococo: Antoine Watteau, for example, or Lancret, Nattier, Boucher... An art world. To transplant Mozart into realistic decor would not have been possible for me... 

Although this design concept may indeed have been integral to Wildhagen's vision of the film, financial concerns may also have played a part. Early DEFA films were made on shoestring budgets, and work on a soundstage with a painted backdrop would have been significantly less expensive than attempting to find an appropriate and undamaged location.

There is, however, one point in Figaros Hochzeit that is presented in a completely filmic mode. At the end of “Non più andrai,” an aria that has already featured a close-up of Figaro and Cherubino's goose-stepping feet, a distraught Cherubino embraces Susanna and we see a close-up of his anguished face. As the orchestra concludes the final bars of the aria, we see, superimposed over the image of Cherubino, scenes of battle, burning buildings, and cavalry brigades. These scenes were not filmed specifically for Figaros Hochzeit; rather, they were lifted from the opening of the 1942 UFA film Der große König, a militaristic piece of propaganda directed by Veit Harlan at the behest of Joseph

Goebbels. The mere fact that the enormous UFA catalog was, by 1949, seen as a source of stock footage is interesting in itself, but the impact of the quotation here is especially remarkable. Der große König was an epic biography of Frederick the Great (performed by Otto Gebühr, who seems to have made an entire career of this role), which painted a picture of war as a path to glorious victory. These quoted segments, however, are from the very beginning of the film, and show no glory in battle. Instead, they depict war as chaotic, futile, and terrifying, a characterization supported by the look of fear on Cherubino's face throughout. This much is immediately apparent, whether or not an audience is familiar with the original source of the clips. If, however, an audience recognizes the clips, the statement becomes more specific. No longer is it simply any war that is chaotic, futile, and terrifying; it is one specific war – World War II, and Nazi militarism – that Wildhagen evokes.

53 The shooting script for Figaros Hochzeit refers to this interpolation only with the direction “Einblendung verschiedener Kriegsbilder” (insertion of various war images). It is unclear when the decision was made to use these particular shots. Georg Wildhagen, “Montageliste,” 27.
Chapter 4: The Shifting Balance of Power

Count Almaviva is a problematic character in Beaumarchais's play, because he is more a type than a fully individuated character. In his preface Beaumarchais describes the plot of his play thus:

The most frivolous of plots: a great Spanish grandee in pursuit of a young girl he wishes to seduce – and the combined efforts of that bride-to-be, the man she intends to marry, and the nobleman's wife, to thwart the designs of this absolute tyrant, whose rank, fortune and prodigality combine to make him all-powerful.\(^5^4\)

Moreover, Beaumarchais presents the following as the critical moral thread of his work:

A nobleman, corrupt enough to bend his inferiors to his will in order to take advantage of every chaste young serving maid in his domain, ends by becoming the laughing-stock of his valets.\(^5^5\)

Figaro's dramatic roots are in the *commedia dell'arte* tradition, where he is one of a long line of “clever servant” types created for the stage. However, Beaumarchais offers this key distinction between Figaro and (for instance) a Brighella type or other valet role:

Unlike all other valets, he is not, as well you know, the villain of the piece. In seeing him forced by his position skillfully to repulse insults, we pardon him everything, for we know he is deceiving his master only to protect the woman he loves, and to secure his rights.\(^5^6\)

\(^5^5\) Ibid., 11.
\(^5^6\) Ibid., 13.
In fact, Figaro combines the ruthlessness of a Brighella, the romantic role of an Arlecchino, and the conviction that, at all times, he is not only in the right, but also the smartest man in the room. This is why, during Figaro's opening scene with Susanna, it is such a shock for him to learn that his master the Count has perhaps outwitted him, at least for the moment. Instead, it is Susanna (our Columbina) who must alert Figaro to the threat Almaviva presents.

Susanna, according to Beaumarchais, is “clever, witty, and cheerful,” nearly as quick-witted as her betrothed, and even more righteous:

Why does Suzanne, the witty, clever and modestly gay lady-in waiting, also demand our interest? Because, pursued as she is by a powerful libertine, having much more at his command than is usually needed to seduce a young girl in her position, she does not hesitate to confide the Count's intentions to the two people most concerned with his conduct – her mistress, and her fiancé; and because, in her whole role, almost the longest one in the play, she utters not a word nor a phrase which does not breathe wisdom and devotion to duty. The only guile she permits herself is for the purpose of aiding her mistress, to whom she is affectionately and loyally devoted. Like Figaro, she indulges in trickery only out of necessity, and, moreover, her motives are from a dedication to duty as much as from self-interest.

As we shall see in the next chapter, it is Rosina that Beaumarchais writes with the greatest nuance and most complexity; however, he raises Figaro and Susanna from simple commedia types, investing them with greater humanity than might be expected of Brighella, Arlecchino, or Columbina. The only nod to Almaviva's humanity is that he is

57 “...adroite, spirituelle et rieuse...” Beaumarchais, Théâtre, 135.
only to be “humiliated, but never debased.”59 In this construction he is first and foremost an obstacle for Figaro and Susanna to overcome. Specifically, he is the personification of the droit du seigneur he once rejected and now wishes to reinstate, or, as Richard Andrews points out, to buy back.60 Indeed, the first references to Almaviva come from Figaro and Susanna, as they discuss his desire to reinstate the droit:

**SUZANNE.** Il y a, mon ami, que las de courtiser les beautés des environs, Monsieur le Comte Almaviva veut rentrer au château, mais non pas chez sa femme; c'est sur la tienne, entends-tu, qu'il a jeté ses vues, auxquelles il espère que ce logement ne nuira pas. Et c'est ce que le loyal Bazile, honnête agent de ses plaisirs, et mon noble maître à chanter, me répète chaque jour en me donnant leçon.

**SUZANNE.** He has, my friend, tired of courting the beauties in the surrounding area, Count Almaviva wants to return to the castle, but not with his wife; it is on yours, you hear, he has set his sights, with which he hopes that these lodgings will not interfere. And that is what the loyal Bazile, honest agent of his pleasures, and my noble singing-master, repeats every day while giving me lessons. (Act 1, scene 1)

The Count appears in the flesh shortly thereafter:

**LE COMTE s'avance.** Tu es émue, Suzon! tu parlais seule, et ton petit coeur paraît dans une agitation... bien pardonnable, au reste, un jour comme celui-ci.

**SUZANNE, troublée.** Monseigneur, que me voulez-vous? Si l'on vous trouvait avec moi....

**LE COMTE.** Je serais désolé qu'on m'y surprît; mais tu sais tout l'intérêt que je prends à toi. Bazile ne t'a pas laissé ignorer mon amour. Je n'ai qu'un instant pour t'expliquer mes vues: écoute. ([il s'assied dans le fauteuil.]

**SUZANNE, vivement.** Je n'écoute rien.

**LE COMTE lui prend la main.** Un seul mot. Tu sais que le roi m'a nommé son ambassadeur à Londres. J'emmène avec moi Figaro; je lui donne un

59 Ibid., 11.
60 Richard Andrews, “From Beaumarchais to Da Ponte: A New View of the Sexual Politics of Figaro,” *Music & Letters* 82, no. 2 (May 2001): 217. Andrews goes on to discuss possible motives for Almaviva's renunciation of the droit, theorizing that Beaumarchais presents this change of law as being motivated by masculine arrogance more than by altruism.
excellent poste; et comme le devoir d'une femme est de suivre son mari....

Suzanne. Ah, si j'osais parler!

Le Comte la rapproche de lui. Parle, parle, ma chère: use aujourd'hui d'un droit que tu prends sur moi pour la vie.

Suzanne, effrayée. Je n'en veux point, Monseigneur, je n'en veux point. Quittez-moi, je vous prie.

Le Comte. Mais dis auparavant.

Suzanne, en colère. Je ne sais plus ce que je disais.

Le Comte. Sur le devoir des femmes.

Suzanne. Hé bien! lorsque Monseigneur enleva la sienne de chez le Docteur, et qu'il l'épousa par amour; lorsqu'il abolit pour elle un certain affreux droit du seigneur....

Le Comte, gaiement. Qui fesait bien de la peine aux filles! ah Suzette! Ce droit charmant!

The Count advances. You're excited, Suzie! You're talking to yourself, and your little heart appears agitated... pardonable, moreover, on a day like this.

Suzanne, troubled. My lord, what do you want? If you are found with me ....

The Count. I'd be sorry if I were; but you know all the interest I take in you. Bazile has not left you ignorant of my love. I have only a moment to explain my views: listen. (he sits in the chair.)

Suzanne, strongly. I am listening to nothing.

The Count takes her hand. One word. You know that the king has appointed me his ambassador to London. I'm taking Figaro with me; I gave him an excellent position, and, as it is the duty of a woman to follow her husband ....

Suzanne. Ah, if I dared to speak!

The Count moves closer to her. Speak, speak, my dear: use now that right that you hold over me for life.

Suzanne, frightened. I do not want it, my lord, I do not want it. Leave me, please.

The Count. But tell me first.

Suzanne, angry. I do not remember what I said.

The Count. On the duty of women.

Suzanne. Well! When the Count took his own wife from the doctor, and he married her for love, when he abolished for her a certain terrible droit du seigneur ....

The Count, gaily. And this caused much trouble for girls! Suzette ah! That charming right! (Act 1, scene 8)
Although Mozart and Da Ponte introduce the idea of the *droit* in much the same fashion, as Susanna alerts Figaro to the threat against their marriage, the treatment of this threat takes a different turn almost immediately:

*I. Conte* _entrando_

Susanna, mi sembri agitata e confusa.

*Susanna_

Signor ... io chiedo scusa ...
ma ... se mai ... qui sorpresa ...
per carità! Partite.

*I. Conte* _si mette a sedere sulla sedia, prende Susanna per la mano_

Un momento, e ti lascio,
Odi

*Susanna_

Non odo nulla.

*I. Conte_

Due parole. Tu sai che ambasciatore a Londra il re mi dichiarò; di condur meco Figaro destinai...

*Susanna_

Signor, se osassi ...

*I. Conte* _teneramente; sorge_

Parla, parla, mia cara,
e con quell dritto ch'oggi prendi su me finché tu vivi chiedi, imponi, prescrivi.

*Susanna_

Lasciatemi signor;
dritti non prendo, non ne vo', non ne intendo ... oh me infelice!

*I. Conte_

Ah no, Susanna, io ti vo' far felice!
Tu ben sai quanto io t'amor: a te Basilio tutto già disse.
THE COUNT entering
Susanna, you seem
agitated and confused.

SUSANNA
Sir ... I beg your pardon ...
but ... if ever ... we were surprised here ...
please! Leave me.

THE COUNT sits in his chair, takes Susanna's hand
A moment, and I leave,
listen.

SUSANNA
I will not listen to anything.

THE COUNT
Two words. You know
the King has appointed me
ambassador to London; I have arranged
for Figaro to come.

SUSANNA
Sir, if I dared ...

THE COUNT tenderly; rises
Speak, speak, my dear,
and with those rights
you take from me today
as long as you live
Ask, impose, order me.

SUSANNA
Leave me, Sir
I do not take those rights
I do not want...
I do not mean ... oh I am so unhappy!

THE COUNT
Oh no, Susanna
I wish to make you happy!
You well know how much I love you
Basilio has told you everything.

(Act 1, scene 6)

Beaumarchais's Count takes a peculiar egotistical delight in his claim that the elimination of the droit caused trouble to the women who might have benefited from it. At the same time, he makes a point of reminding Susanna of the duties of women. On the surface, he
is reminding her of her duties as a wife (femme) to follow her husband, thus placing her within easy reach of the Count; on another level, however, he is making clear his thoughts about the duties of any woman (femme) in her interactions with him. Da Ponte's adaptation softens this scene considerably. Here, Susanna does not mention the droit or its renunciation, nor does Almaviva raise the idea of women's duties, whether to their husbands or their lords. Thus, there is a different tone to Almaviva's declaration of love for Susanna. While this operatic love is certainly not such a strongly-felt emotion that it warrants an aria, we must consider that, perhaps, Almaviva himself believes the truth of his statement. This Count is foolish, certainly, and possibly a threat, but not the same villain Beaumarchais created.

Between the point when the Count is first introduced by name and when he first appears in the flesh, there is a scene that illustrates Figaro's relationship to the Count, and his frustrated attempts to keep his master at bay. Act 1, scene 2 of Beaumarchais's play shows Figaro alone, railing against his master and vowing to thwart his efforts. However, Bartolo and Marcellina interrupt his monologue with their entrance, cutting him off in mid-thought, and forcing him to hide his anger:

**Figaro...**Attention sur la journée, monsieur Figaro! D'abord avancer l'heure de votre petite fête, pour épouser plus surement; écarter une Marceline qui de vous est friande en diable; empocher l'or et les présens; donner le change aux petites passions de monsieur le Comte; étriller rondement monsieur du Bazile; et....

*Figaro s'interrompt.*
....Héééé, voilà le gros Docteur, la fête sera complète. Hé bon jour, cher Docteur de mon coeur. Est-ce ma noce avec Suzon qui vous attire au château?

**FIGARO...** Attention on this day, Mr. Figaro! First, move up the time of your little party, so as to marry more surely; exclude Marceline who is crazy as hell for you; pocket the gold and the presents; deceive the petty passions of the Count, roundly thrash Bazile, and ....

*Figaro interrupts himself.*

Hey .... there's the stout Doctor, the festival will be complete. Hey good day, dear Doctor of my heart. Is it my wedding with Suzanne that draws you to the castle? (Act 1, scene 2)

In the transformation from play to opera, Figaro's truncated monologue becomes the cavatina “Se vuol ballare,” in which Figaro not only is allowed to complete his diatribe, but seems to emerge victorious at the end of the aria, leaving little doubt that all will end well.

Wildhagen retains the introduction of the *droit* in the opening scene between Figaro and Susanna, and in Figaro's cavatina. During “Se vuol ballare,” the staging makes Almaviva's presence nearly overwhelming. Although he is never seen in person, his personage is depicted through the trappings of his position: Rococo paintings, which Figaro literally lowers to his level, and a dressmaker's dummy with the Count's clothing on it, which stands in as a helpless avatar, while the valet engages it in a duel.

The translation of the aria is interesting here. Sanda Chiriacescu-Lüling believed that Wildhagen based his translation on that of Adolph von Knigge and his daughter, made for a Singspiel setting in 1787; however, Wildhagen's script bears little resemblance
to that of Knigge, save for the transformation of recitativo to spoken dialogue. Rather, the aria translations bear the closest resemblance to those of Hermann Levi, who made his own adaptation of *Figaro* in 1895. Levi's translation had fallen out of favor during the Nazi era due to his Jewish heritage, but was widely used in performance prior to that time.

Note the difference in tone between these two lyrics, the first from Da Ponte, and the second from Wildhagen, whose translation in this case is identical to Levi's:

**FIGARO**

Se vuol ballare,
Signor Contino,
il chitarrino
le suonerò.

Se vuol venire
nella mia scuola
la capriola
le insegnerò.

Saprò ... ma piano:
meglio ogni arcano,
dissimulando
scoprir potrò!

L'arte schermendo,
l'arte adoprando,
di qua pungendo,
di là scherzando,
tutte le macchine
rovescerò.

Se vuol ballare,
Signor Contino,
il chitarrino
le suonerò.

---

**FIGARO**

If you want to dance, little Count, I will play the tune on my guitar.

If you want to come to my school I will teach you the moves.

I'll know ... but gently: better we hide our secrets, concealing, I can discover it all!

The art of fencing, the arts I'll endeavor, here stinging, there joking, all your machinations I'll overthrow.

If you want to dance, little Count, I will play the tune on my guitar.

(Act 1, scene 2)

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**FIGARO singt**

Will der Herr Graf den Tanz mit mir wagen, Mag er's mir sagen, ich spiel ihm auf.

Soll ich im Springen ihn unterrichten, Auf Tod und Leben bin ich sein Mann.

Ich will ganz leise,
nach meiner Weise
Von dem Geheimnis
den Schleier zieh'n.

Mit feinen Kniffen,
mit kecken Griffen,
Heute mit Schmeicheln,
morgen mit Heucheln,
Werd' ich zerstören ihm
kühn jeden Plan.

FIGARO sings
Does the Count dare to
dance with me,
if he gives the word,
I'll play it.

Should I teach him
to leap,
I am his man
in life and death.

I want quietly,
in my way,
to pull away the veil
of mystery.

With subtle tricks,
with bold handling
today, with flattery,
tomorrow with hypocrisy,
I shall boldly destroy
each of his plans.62

The intent in both settings is to outwit the Count; still, only Wildhagen's version invokes
“life and death,” or goes so far as to vow the Count's utter destruction.

Although the scenes following “Se vuol ballare” remain in sequence in the shooting script, they are rearranged in the film (see appendix). This block of scenes is moved to a later point, following Rosina's introduction and prior to “Voi che sapete.” As a result, our first real encounter with Almaviva comes not during his scene with Susanna, but instead as he is signing the patent for Cherubino, while Figaro has the chorus sing about the renunciation of the droit in the background. Almaviva's first line – “Ich gab es auf, was willst Du mehr?” (“I gave it up, what more do you want?”) – refers directly to the droit. While the reasons behind this re-ordering of scenes are unclear, the effect is to return the issue of the droit to the foreground of the Count's characterization, and to pair it with his other abuse of power: sending Cherubino off to war. In the later scene that mirrors act 1, scene 6 of the opera, mention of the droit is absent (as is any claim of love from Almaviva), but by the re-ordering of the scenes, the threat is already well-established. Moreover, during the terzetto “Cosa sento! tosto andate,” Almaviva wastes no time in attempting to fondle Susanna's breast when he believes she has fainted. This keeps the imminent threat to her (presumed) virginity at center stage.

While Almaviva's threat is greater in Wildhagen's setting than in the opera, Figaro's confidence is less. He is full of bravado when battling a dressmaker's dummy, but not so sure of himself that he is immediately able to persuade the Countess of his plan. In act 2, scene 2 of Beaumarchais's play, and in act 2, scene 1 of the opera, Figaro announces his plan to allow Basile to intercept a phony letter to Rosina from an admirer. In both Beaumarchais and Da Ponte, Figaro presents this as a fait accompli. In
Beaumarchais’s setting, not only has Figaro concocted this plot single-handedly, and carried it out (without, it must be noted, consulting with the woman whose reputation he is risking in the process), but he expresses irritation that the women do not exhibit significant confidence in his skills. Later, when Susanna reassures the Countess that “he can be trusted to carry out a plot,” Figaro brags, “Two, three, four at a time, although they are complicated, intersecting.” This level of confidence appears to be contagious, as Rosina remarks, “He has so much confidence, he finally inspires me,” to which Figaro replies, “That is my intention.”

Da Ponte’s adaptation retains the letter device as a fait accompli, but reduces some of Figaro's braggadocio, eliminating both his mock-annoyance and his boasting about his own cleverness. More importantly, though, Da Ponte also changes Rosina's response to the plot. Rather than taking inspiration from Figaro's confidence, she instead turns to Susanna:

La Contessa a Susanna
Che ti par?
Susanna
Non c'è mal.

Countess to Susanna
What do you think?
Susanna
It's not bad.
(Act 2, scene 1)

63 “N'est-ce pas assez que je m'en occupe?” “Is it not enough that I'm handling this?” (Act 2, scene 2)
64 Suzanne: “On peut s'en fier à lui pour mener une intrigue.” Figaro: “Deux, trois, quatre à la fois; bien embrouillées, qui se croisent.” (Act 2, scene 2)
65 La Comtesse: “Il a tant d'assurance, qu'il finit par m'en inspirer.” Figaro: “C'est mon dessein.” (Act 2, scene 2)
In the context of the opera, this is only a minor change, one that perhaps makes Figaro a bit less insufferable, and reinforces the close relationship between Susanna and Rosina, but otherwise does not change the power dynamic of the scene significantly. Wildhagen, on the other hand, seems to rework the entire scene around this shift in tone:

Graf. Figaro, tritt näher, was sollen wir tun?
Fig. Wenn Frau Gräfin mir vertrauen, kann alles gut werden.
Graf. Also, was hast Du vor?
Fig. Ich werde dem Herrn Grafen ein anonymes Briefchen zuspielen.
Graf. Und weiter?
Fig. Darauf wird er sich mit Ihnen beschäftigen und kann sich meiner Braut nicht nähern. Inzwischen feiern wir Hochzeit. Basilio wird das Briefchen finden...
Fig. ...und der Tanz beginnt.
Graf. Findest Du das gut, Susanna?
Sus. Ich weiß nicht.

Cont. Figaro, come closer, what should we do?
Fig. If the Countess trusts me, everything will be fine.
Cont. So what are you going to do?
Fig. I will leak to the Lord Count an anonymous note.
Cont. And then?
Fig. Then he will be occupied with you and cannot approach my bride. In the meantime we will celebrate a wedding. Basilio will find the note...
Fig. ...and the dance begins.
Cont. Do you agree, Susanna?
Sus. I do not know.66

Not only does Rosina turn to Susanna for counsel here, but Susanna's opinion actually affects the plot. In Wildhagen's setting, Figaro is not simply alerting the women to a plan already in action. Instead, he is suggesting a plan; indeed, Wildhagen adds a later scene in which we see Figaro drop the phony letter in front of Basilio's window, where Basilio finds it with obvious glee. Once Susanna expresses her skepticism, and points out that

Marcellina remains a player in this game, Figaro is forced to rethink, incorporating the
element of having Susanna arrange a rendezvous with the Count, and sending Cherubino
in her place. This last aspect of the scheme occurs to him only when he spies Cherubino
in the garden; it is not a part of his original plot. In Da Ponte's libretto, Figaro has already
considered this issue, and Susanna's approval is a mere formality as the scheme is already
underway. In Wildhagen's setting, Susanna's opinion carries real weight. This change
from telling to asking on Figaro's part, and from pro forma acceptance to skepticism on
Susanna's part, radically changes the power dynamic of the scene. As depicted in
Beaumarchais, Figaro may occasionally be thwarted in his plans (as evidenced by the
abrupt truncation of his act 1, scene 2 monologue), but only by circumstance, or perhaps
arrogance, not by any failure of his own wit. Susanna, in her turn, is clever enough to
appreciate her fiancé's wit, but not so much as to challenge him. Da Ponte softens
Figaro's character, maintaining the wit while leaving behind some of the cockiness. His
Susanna not only recognizes a good plan when she sees one, but can pass that confidence
on to the Countess. Wildhagen's take on the scene shows a Figaro who, although he is full
of bluster in “Se vuol ballare,” needs Susanna's assistance – not merely to win Rosina's
approval, but to play devil's advocate and to point out any failings in his plans. As the
film progresses, Figaro will steadily become less powerful, and Susanna more so.

The two are battling a more ruthless foe in the film than in the opera. A second
instance in which Wildhagen substantially alters Almaviva's characterization comes in an
added scene, placed just prior to “Crudel! perche finora” in the film. The scene is brief, but telling:

**Graf.** Noch nicht im Taler? Die Verhandlung gegen Figaro muß sofort beginnen.

**Don Curzio.** Ge – ge – nau.

**Graf.** Und wie entscheidet er?

**Don Curzio.** Fi- Figaro hat recht.

**Graf.** Falsch Marcellina hat recht.

**Don Curzio.** Wie Herr Graf befehlen.

**Graf.** Basilio, bist Du sicher, daß der Page nicht mehr im Schloß ist?

**Basilio.** Das weiß ich nicht, all- gnädigster Herr Graf.

**Graf.** Darum begibst Du Dich sofort in die Garnison und stellst fest, ob er dort eingetroffen ist.

**Count.** No money yet? The case against Figaro must begin immediately.

**Don Curzio.** Ex - ex – actly.

**Count.** And how is he deciding?

**Don Curzio.** Fi- Figaro's right.

**Count.** Wrong. Marcellina's right.

**Don Curzio.** As the Count commands.

**Count.** Basilio, are you sure that the page is no longer in the castle?

**Basilio.** I do not know, all-gracious Count.

**Count.** Therefore run straight to the garrison, to determine whether he has arrived there.67

This scene does not exist in Da Ponte's libretto, nor in Beaumarchais's play, as we do not meet Don Curzio/Brid'oison until the trial. The brief exchange makes it quite explicit that the judge is merely a yes-man for the Count; it is another example of the latter's abuse of power. There is actually some foreshadowing of this dynamic in the second act finale (the largest unaltered section in the transposition from opera to film). Upon discovering that he has omitted the seal from Cherubino's patent, Almaviva leaves his wife's chambers and retreats to his own salon. However, almost immediately, Marcellina, Bartolo, and Basilio

67 Ibid., 65.
enter to plead their case to him. At this point, Wildhagen reveals the Count, seated at his
desk, at which there is prominently displayed a small statue of Almaviva. Lest we miss
the connection, the statue is dressed identically to its flesh-and-blood doppelgänger.
Later, in an added scene in which Figaro and the Count discuss Marcellina's case, the
dressmaker's dummy with Almaviva's clothing is not only centered in the background of
the shot, but is itself reflected in a mirror. This sort of doubling can be symbolic of a
character's inner conflict (a “split personality” of sorts), or of duplicity. Here, we can read
it as the latter, but also as a more literal sort of doubling. At least in his dealings with
Marcellina's suit, Almaviva has a judge in his pocket, an extra man whose sole job is to
carry out the Count's wishes.

Almaviva's revenge aria, “Vedrò mentre io sospiro,” is conspicuously absent from
Wildhagen's film. James Webster uses this aria as an example of a character being made
to look foolish by singing in a manner inappropriate to the situation:

In “Vedrò mentre io sospiro” (Figaro, No. 17), the Count gives vent to his
outrage that Susanna was merely leading him on, and vows to prevent his
servants' happiness as long as his own pleasure is denied. But its musical
type is the heroic/noble aria in D with trumpets and drums. This is not
only inappropriate – his only problem is wounded vanity – but he cannot
carry it off: his lack of self-control, bordering on hysteria, prevents him
from maintaining the measured, 'exalted' rhythms of the type.

In the next chapter I will show how the elimination of the Countess's arias denies her an
inner life and makes her a purely scheming character rather than a genuinely sympathetic

68 During this added scene, Figaro is shaving the Count, which cannot help but call to mind the shaving
scene in Büchner's Woyzeck, itself made into a DEFA film (Wozzeck, directed by Georg C. Klaren) in
1947.

University Press, 1991), 111.
one. Here we see a similar phenomenon. In the opera, the inappropriately high-flown aria has the effect of making Almaviva ridiculous, but also of humanizing him and of undermining any real threat he may present. By removing this softening moment, in which we are allowed to see the Count's rantings as pure bluster, Wildhagen allows him to seem more sinister and more truly dangerous to the happiness of Figaro and Susanna.

As Almaviva becomes more threatening in Wildhagen's adaptation, one might expect to see Figaro become more clever so as to better outmaneuver his master. Instead, we see a very different trajectory for Figaro. Although he begins the film in a period of strength, he cannot sustain it; instead, it is Susanna who rises to the challenge, revealing her own shrewdness in outwitting the Count. Oddly, the scene that best articulates this theme of the women out-scheming the men is one in which the men are typically not present in the opera. During the letter duet (“Che soave zeffiretto”), which I shall examine in greater detail in the next chapter, Wildhagen abruptly cuts from the scene of Susanna and Rosina singing to a shot of Figaro serving the Count his dinner. There is no dialogue; Wildhagen creates a feeling of eavesdropping by muting the music, and Ahlersmeyer and Domgraf-Faßbaender give the impression of hearing the song without being able to entirely discern the words.70 This is, of course, essential to the plot; were either Figaro or Almaviva fully aware of the women's plan, the drama would take a very different turn. To show this eavesdropping and place Figaro and the Count together visually, however, creates an odd sort of pairing between the two men. Both are aware

70 The theme of eavesdropping and being overheard runs through this adaptation of the opera, and would be a worthy topic for further research. Although I have been thus far unable to find any prior work in this area, it seems to me that there are parallels between this sort of treatment of sound and existing theoretical work on the gaze.
that a plot has been hatched, neither trusts the other, and each is, in his way, being duped: Almaviva by the women who seek to reveal him as a scoundrel, and Figaro by the same women concocting a scheme without his assistance. While this plot twist – the women concocting their own ruse without Figaro's knowledge – is a critical element of the opera as well as the film, this visual link between the loathesome Almaviva and Figaro adds insult to injury. Almaviva may be the object of the scheme, but Figaro is similarly diminished.

The pivotal moment of Figaro's emasculation comes just prior to the final scene of Wildhagen's film. Ironically, this is the very point where Beaumarchais's Figaro has his shining moment: a lengthy diatribe in which he begins by ranting about the perfidy of women, and continues with railing about his own grievous existence and the Count's plotting. This was one of the elements that led to censure of Beaumarchais's play, and was eliminated in Mozart and Da Ponte's opera. They chose to replace it with the revenge aria “Aprite un po' quegli occhi,” which never gets beyond the level of an anti-woman screed. Ronald Rabin discusses the ways in which Mozart and Da Ponte manipulate Figaro's rhetoric to suit convention. In Rabin's analysis, the adherence to convention in this aria illustrates the danger of Figaro “becoming the part rather than simply playing it” and raises his diatribe nearly to the level of caricature. 71 Richard Andrews sees similar comedy in the scene:

It is (or should be, despite some modern approaches) a comic experience rather than an emotional one, with a distancing effect on the audience: we know that this explosion of jealousy is based on a complete misunderstanding of the facts, and we can respond ironically, even derisively, to Figaro's non-existent predicament.\textsuperscript{72}

Where Mozart and Da Ponte convert a political manifesto into a comic aria of revenge, Wildhagen does away with the aria entirely, replacing it with a brief scene in which Figaro assembles a posse of village men to attack the Count:

\begin{center}
\textbf{BAUERNBURSCHE.} Und was machen wir mit den Knüppeln?
\textbf{FIGARO.} Zuschlagen!
\textbf{BAUERNBURSCHE.} Auf wen denn?
\textbf{FIGARO.} Das sollt ihr dann schon sehen. Und Du Augustues, wenn Du den Lärm hörst, läufst Du gleich ins Haus und holst die Hochzeitgesellschaft in den Park, und nun lauf los.
\end{center}

\textbf{FIGARO.} People, there will be a play tonight in the park, such as you have never seen. It is called: The surprise on the wedding night. Scatter in the park now, around the clearing, and be still. On my mark, light the torches and hurry over here.
\textbf{SWAIN.} And what do we do with the clubs?
\textbf{FIGARO.} Start beating!
\textbf{SWAIN.} Whom?
\textbf{FIGARO.} You'll see. And you Augustus, when you hear the noise, you run straight into the house, and bring the wedding party into the park. Now, off with you!\textsuperscript{73}

This Figaro has given up any pretense of cleverness or wit; from his verbal repartee and virtual duelling with the Count earlier in the film, he has been reduced to literal violence.

Moreover, since his preferred weapons – words – have failed him, he is forced to seek the

\textsuperscript{72} Andrews, “From Beaumarchais to Da Ponte,” 225.
\textsuperscript{73} Wildhagen, “Montageliste,” 88.
help of local men of the village. Finally, and perhaps most important, he has become a
genuine danger to the plan – Susanna and Rosina's plan – that might save his marriage.
Chapter 5: Rosina

Rosina, the Countess Almaviva, is the character who undergoes the most dramatic transformation, from Beaumarchais through Mozart and Da Ponte to Wildhagen. Beaumarchais created in Rosina a morally ambiguous, complex character who does not fall neatly into a type. She is not an innocent, but neither is she entirely corrupt. This complexity of character begins with Beaumarchais's *Le Barbier de Séville*. In the first of the “Figaro plays,” Rosina is the object of pursuit for both the Count and Bartolo. She is both noble and virtuous; she is not, however, a passive figure. With the Count, she adopts the dual role of pursuer and pursued, and she is not above using Bartolo's interest to manipulate him to her will. This Rosina is every bit as clever as Figaro – certainly able to hold her own in any battle of wits.

It may at first appear that Beaumarchais himself was conflicted as to Rosina's true nature. In his preface to *Le mariage de Figaro*, he wrote:

> What pleases us about the Countess is to see her frankly struggling against a growing attraction which is distressing to her, as well as against her very legitimate grievances. In one auspicious day, she sorely sacrifices her romantic inclination, and at the same time suppresses her wifely indignation in order to win back her unfaithful husband – surely, these efforts of hers need no analysis whatsoever to make us applaud her triumph: she is a model of virtue, an example to her own sex, the idol of ours.  

74 Beaumarchais, “Preface,” 12.
However, by *La mère coupable* (written in 1792), this “model of virtue” has evidently given in to her “romantic inclination” and given birth to Chérubin's son Léon. Moreover, it is likely that Beaumarchais had planned out the plot arc of the entire trilogy at this point.

Even now I have the outline of a work in mind – *La mère coupable* – and if the antipathy with which I am presently overwhelmed ever allows me to complete it, my plan is to create a vehicle which will cause the tears of all sensitive ladies to flow in torrents: in it, I shall elevate my language to the height of my situations; I shall be lavish with all the attributes of the most austere morality, and I shall inveigh loudly against the vices I have treated with too much consideration in the past.75

Beaumarchais designed his Countess as a multi-faceted character, torn between virtue and impulse, saddened by her husband's infidelity, but still capable of both scheming to win him back and indulging her own temptations.

Of course, Mozart and Da Ponte would not have known of Beaumarchais's long-term plans for his Countess. In their creation, they removed much of the moral ambiguity from Rosina's character. Her flirtation with Cherubino is just that: a flirtation. The librettist and composer also delay her appearance for the first act of the opera, investing in her an otherness that does not exist in the play. Her reputation does not merely precede her; it defines her. This reputation is full of glowing and flowery descriptions of her (via Cherubino) and expressions of sympathy for her (via Susanna). When she finally appears in person, nothing about her character contradicts these earlier reports. Da Ponte has flattened her character, simultaneously making her less complex and more sympathetic than in Beaumarchais, while Mozart's musical settings give her an almost angelic quality.  

75 Ibid., 17.
Wildhagen's adaptation undermines Mozart and Da Ponte's portrayal of Rosina. He introduces her much earlier, and she sings no arias. It is a convention of musical theater and operetta that a person speaks until emotion becomes overwhelming, at which point she must burst into song. Rosina never reaches this level of emotion. Some scholars of opera film, such as Marcia Citron, have discussed the possibilities of “interior singing” on film (singing presented in playback without any attempt at lip-syncing). In her analysis of Jean-Pierre Ponnelle's *Figaro* adaptation, Citron points out that Rosina is introduced with interior singing, which immediately associates the Countess with a “rich inner life.”

By contrast, Wildhagen's Countess has no cathartic moment, no inner life. Like Mozart and Da Ponte, Wildhagen flattens Beaumarchais's character, but Wildhagen takes her in a different direction, emphasizing her cunning, without the depth of feeling.

**Meeting Rosina**

How each of these dramatists introduces Rosina tells us a great deal about how she will be treated throughout the drama. In Beaumarchais, Rosina appears in act 1, scene 10, the scene that will become act 1, scene 8 in Da Ponte's libretto. Figaro brings the Countess and Fanchette (Barbarina in the opera), along with the peasant chorus, to see the Count. Rosina is on stage at two key moments. When Figaro and the peasants thank the Count for his renunciation of the *droit du seigneur*, Rosina is not only present, and specifically cited by Figaro as the Count's inspiration for renouncing the privilege, but

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she also adds her voice to that of the crowd, asking him to give Susanna the veil as a symbol of her purity:

**La Comtesse.** Je me joins à eux, Monsieur le Comte; et cette cérémonie me sera toujours chère, puisqu'elle doit son motif à l'amour charmant que vous aviez pour moi.

**Le Comte.** Que j'ai toujours, Madame; et c'est à ce titre que je me rends.

**The Countess.** I join them, my Lord; and this ceremony will be always dear to me, since it owes its origins to the charming love which you had for me.

**The Count.** That I still have, Madam; and it is for this reason that I yield.

(Act 1, scene 10)

Here Rosina is not just invoked by another character, but also participates directly in the scheme to keep the Count away from Susanna. She takes a similarly active role in asking forgiveness for Cherubino:

**Suzanne.** Il est au désespoir; Monseigneur le renvoie.

**La Comtesse.** Ah! Monsieur, je demande sa grâce.

**Le Comte.** Il ne la mérite point.

**La Comtesse.** Hélas! Il est si jeune!

**Le Comte.** Pas tant que vous le croyez.

**Suzanne.** He is in despair; his Lordship has sent him away.

**The Countess.** Ah! Dear Sir, I ask for clemency.

**The Count.** He does not deserve it.

**The Countess.** Alas! He is so young!

**The Count.** Not so young as you think. (Act 1, scene 10)

In Da Ponte's libretto, on the other hand, no character even mentions Rosina in the parallel scene. She is not there to lend her voice, and the request for clemency must come from Cherubino himself and from Susanna:

**Susanna.** È afflitto poveretto!
Perché il padron lo scaccia
dal castello!

**FIGARO**
Ah, in un giorno sì bello!

**SUSANNA**
In un giorno di nozze!

**FIGARO**
Quando ognun v'ammira!

**CHERUBINO s'inginocchia**
Perdono, mio signor...

**IL CONTE**
Nol meritate.

**SUSANNA**
Egli è ancora fanciullo!

**IL CONTE**
Men di quel che tu credi.

**SUSANNA**
The poor little guy is tormented
because his Lordship is driving him away
from the castle!

**FIGARO**
Ah, and on a beautiful day!

**SUSANNA**
On the day of our wedding!

**FIGARO**
When everyone admires you so!

**CHERUBINO kneels down**
Forgive me, my Lord....

**THE COUNT**
You don't deserve it.

**SUSANNA**
He is still a child!

**THE COUNT**
Less so than you think.

(Act 1, scene 8)

The Countess, absent, no longer plays an active role in attempting to win a pardon for

Cherubino, and thus tames our perception of their relationship. Instead, Cherubino begs
for forgiveness on his own behalf, and it is Susanna who protests the punishment of one so young.

When we first meet Mozart and Da Ponte's Countess, we already know much about her. They delay her first appearance until the opening of act 2, by which time nearly one-third of the opera has passed (Beaumarchais introduces his Countess considerably earlier). By this time, we already know that Count Almaviva has set his eyes on Susanna (only the latest in a string of assignations), leaving his young wife neglected. The curtain rises on Rosina in her chambers, alone, without any other character to provide dramatic context. An extended orchestral introduction effectively stops time, and the Countess is revealed as an almost otherworldly creature. She is disconnected from all other characters in the opera: the Count is bored with her; she is more an idealized object than a real person to Cherubino; and no real connection has yet been established between her and Susanna.

“Porgi Amor” is a soliloquy in the form of a ritornello aria, a nearly pure expression of grief.

**La Contessa**
Porgi, amor, qualche ristoro
al mio duolo, a' miei sospir.
O mi rendi il mio tesoro,
o mi lascia almen morir.

**The Countess**
O, Love, give me some remedy
for my pain, for my sighs.
O return my love to me,
or let me die.
(Act 2, scene 1)
Mary Hunter suggests that we might read this aria as an extended “aside,” directed specifically at the theatrical audience, as a “marker of disengagement.”77 This sort of reading further separates Rosina from her compatriots. She certainly sounds different from anything heard previously. The ritornello form is particularly apt here; although the Countess endeavors to change, she is well and truly trapped, and must inevitably return to her original state. It is only appropriate that her music would do the same. Wye Allenbrook talks about this aria alternating between amoroso and march topoi (the amoroso revealing her inner nature, and the slow march as a representation of her nobility).78 These shifts appear only in the orchestra, however, and specifically the winds; the vocal line is entirely amoroso. It is, perhaps, the fact that she is trapped in this amoroso mode – the passive state of being rather than the active state of doing signified by a march – that has prevented her from affecting any real change in her husband.

Upon Susanna's entrance, Rosina asks about the Count's attempted seduction. Susanna relays the story, and the Countess's response is exactly what one might expect from a woman so wracked with despair over her husband:

La Contessa
Ah, il crudel più non m'ama!
Susanna
E come poi
è geloso di voi?
La Contessa
Come lo sono
i moderni mariti:

per sistema infedeli, per genio capricciosi, 
e per orgoglio poi tutti gelosi.

**THE COUNTESS**
Ah, the cruel man does not love me any more!

**SUSANNA**
And then why
is he jealous of you?

**THE COUNTESS**
This is what 
modern husbands are like:
systematically unfaithful, capricious,
and made jealous by pride.
(Act 2, scene 1)

Later, as Figaro outlines his plan, Rosina only occasionally interjects, primarily to express worry about the Count's jealousy. She is not a schemer as are Susanna and Figaro; her essence is sorrowful, betrayed, but she does not yet feel compelled to act.

This scene occurs in Beaumarchais's play as well, albeit without Rosina's aria. Rather than introducing Rosina alone, this scene finds Rosina and Susanna together, with Rosina immediately asking about the Count's attempted seduction. This leads to a discussion of Cherubino, who witnessed the event, with Susanna passing on his praise for his godmother: “Ah! Suzie, she is so noble and beautiful! But so unapproachable!”

Her response, “Is that the impression I give, Suzie?” indicates that she endeavors not to be unapproachable. On the contrary, she is pleased at the attention Cherubino pays her.

Before Cherubino returns to the scene, she makes sure to fix her hair and makeup. There is no such event in Da Ponte's libretto. Finally, we reach the crux of the issue:

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79 “Ah! Suzon, qu'elle est noble et belle! Mais qu'elle est imposante!” (Act 2, scene 1)
80 “Est-ce que j'ai cet air-là, Suzon?” (Act 2, scene 1)
81 Beaumarchais, *Théâtre*, 133.
LA COMTESSE. Il ne m'aime plus de tout.
Suzanne. Pourquoi tant la jalousie?
LA COMTESSE. Comme tous les maries, ma chère! Uniquement par orgueil.
Ah, je l'ai trop m'aimé! je l'ai lasé de mes tendresses, et fatigué de mon amour; voila mon seul tort avec lui: mais je n'entends pas que cet honnête aveu te nuise, et tu épouseras Figaro.

THE COUNTESS. He loves me no more.
SUZANNE. Why such jealousy?
THE COUNTESS. Like all husbands, my dear! Only from pride. Ah, I have loved him too much! I wearied him by my tenderness, and tired him of my love, this is my only wrong: but I will not hear that this honest confession brings harm to you, and you shall marry Figaro. (Act 2, scene 1)

Mozart and Da Ponte's Countess is a mere victim of male capriciousness, while

Beaumarchais's Countess blames herself, at least in part, for the Count's actions. The distinction is small, but becomes significant in light of her behavior toward Cherubin.

Beaumarchais's Countess, true to what he writes in his Preface, has been driven to temptation by her husband's infidelities, and is honorable because she is able to resist that temptation. In Mozart and Da Ponte's setting, the temptation is never serious, so the Countess's virtue is never tested.

In Wildhagen's film, Rosina first appears at 19:15. As in Beaumarchais, she is introduced relatively early in the action. Interestingly, although the action of this scene corresponds to act 2, scene 1 of Da Ponte's libretto, Wildhagen has actually moved it earlier in the film, placing it just after Figaro's “Non piú andrai” and following it with act 1, scenes 3 through 7 (see appendix). This change most likely occurred during the editing process, as the shooting script indicates that the scenes were originally structured in the same manner as Da Ponte's libretto. Wildhagen therefore presents Rosina for the first

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82 The entire film running time is 96 minutes.
time much as Mozart and Da Ponte do, but brings her into the action of the drama far earlier and thus reduces how much we hear about her before we actually see her.

Wildhagen's staging of this scene likewise recalls both Beaumarchais and Da Ponte. As in Mozart and Da Ponte's setting, when we meet Rosina, she is alone. We see her standing at the window, her back to the camera. However, this is undermined immediately by Susanna's entrance. Wildhagen cuts “Porgi amor” and instead launches directly into Susanna's tale about the Count. There is no outpouring of grief, nor indeed much emotion at all. The only hint of emotion is her response to the Count's attempted seduction: “Schrecklich!” (“Disgusting!”).83

As Figaro outlines his plan to trick the Count, we can see the Countess's image in a mirror, flanked by Susanna and Figaro. This sort of doubling is frequently a sign of a divided self, a character struggling with an inner conflict. In this case, however, there is no real sign of any conflict. As in Da Ponte's libretto, she interjects only occasionally, asking “Ist das nicht ein gefährliches Spiel?” (“Is this not a dangerous game?”)84 She displays little affect; this is all business. Moreover, Wildhagen's Countess never wavers from this cool composed image. It might be more apt to think of Wildhagen's use of the mirroring technique as a signifier of duplicity, rather than of inner conflict. There is no turmoil beneath this veneer, because this Rosina is nothing but veneer.85

83 Wildhagen, “Montageliste,” 27.
84 Ibid., 28.
85 Aside from Rosina and Almaviva (discussed in the previous chapter), another character to get the mirroring treatment in this film is Basilio, who is clearly duplicitous, and drawn even more two-dimensionally than either the Count or Countess.
Wildhagen reveals more of Rosina's conniving nature in act 2, scene 2, the dressing up scene. In Beaumarchais, the flirtation between the Countess and Cherubino is obvious and mutual. In Mozart and Da Ponte's setting, Rosina is amused by him, and teases him over his crush, but does not particularly encourage him. In Wildhagen's film, the scene is a power play. The Countess is playing Cherubino, taking advantage of his adoration to get him to help her. She flirts with him, removing a hankie from her cleavage, for instance, but also keeps herself distant from him, encouraging pursuit:

**HERUBINO.** Frau Gräfin, was soll ich tun?
**GRÄFIN.** Gib mir sein Ständchen, Susanna.
**GRÄFIN.** Sing mir dein Ständchen vor. Oder willst Du nicht?
**HERUBINO.** Für Sie tue ich alles.

**HERUBINO.** Countess, what should I do? [referring to his orders]
**COUNTESS.** Give me his serenade, Susanna.
**COUNTESS.** Sing me your serenade. Or do you not want to?
**HERUBINO.** For you, I will do anything. 86

In the libretto, aside from a reference to Cherubino as “officer,” the patent is not mentioned, and of course in Beaumarchais the Countess has already attempted to use her position to get him clemency. Here, Cherubino asks for help and Rosina responds by demanding a performance. Whereas Beaumarchais's Countess is tempted, and Mozart and Da Ponte's is flattered, this Countess looks upon Cherubino as a means to an end.

Protesting, or protesting too much?

The finale of act 2 is a culminating moment in the drama of both the play and opera. This is especially the case in Wildhagen's film, in which this series of scenes is the

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largest block of material lifted without cuts from Mozart and Da Ponte's opera. However, even though Wildhagen kept the music of the finale intact, he made some significant changes to the lyrics. As in the transformation from play to opera, Wildhagen's changes in adapting the opera for film result in dramatic changes in Rosina's characterization. This is most clearly visible early in act 2, scene 6, after Rosina tells the Count that it is Cherubino hiding in the closet. His rage is similar in all three; the difference in her response is striking.

In Beaumarchais, the scene looks like this:

LA COMTESSE. Hélas oui; prêt à s'habiller en femme, une coiffure à moi sur la tête, en veste et sans manteau, le col ouvert, les bras nus; il allait essayer...
LE COMTE. Et vous vouliez garder votre chambre! Indigne épouse! ah! vous la garderez... longtemps; mais il faut avant que j'en chasse un insolent, de manière à ne plus le rencontrer nulle part.
LA COMTESSE se jette à genoux, les bras élevés. Monsieur le Comte, épargnez un enfant; je ne me consolerais pas d'avoir causé...
LE COMTE. Vos frayeurs aggravent son crime.
LA COMTESSE. Il n'est pas coupable, il partait: c'est moi qui l'ai fait appeler.
LE COMTE, furieux. Levez-vous. Otez-vous... Tu es bien audacieuse d'oser me parler pour un autre!
LA COMTESSE. Eh bien! je m'ôterai, Monsieur, je me lèverai; je vous remettrais même la clef du cabinet; mais, au nom de votre amour...
LE COMTE. De mon amour! Perfide!
LA COMTESSE se lève et lui présente la clef. Promettez-moi que vous laisserez aller cet enfant, sans lui faire aucun mal; et puisse, après tout, votre courroux tomber sur moi, si je ne vous convainquez pas...
LE COMTE prennent la clef. Je n'écoute plus rien.
LA COMTESSE se jette sur une bergère, un mouchoir sur les yeux. Oh ciel! il va périr.

THE Countess. Alas, yes; ready to dress as a woman, my wig on his head...without a jacket and coat, collar open, his arms bare; he was going to try...
THE Count. And you want to keep to your room! Unworthy wife! Ah! you
will keep to it...for a long time; but first I'll hunt down the insolent boy so I shall never come across him anywhere again.

The Countess falls to her knees, arms raised. My Lord, spare the child; I shall be inconsolable if I have caused...

The Count. Your fears aggravate his crime.

The Countess. He is not guilty, he was leaving: it was I who recalled him...

The Count, angry. Get up. Remove yourself ... You are audacious to dare talk to me for another!

The Countess. All right! I shall go, Sir. I will get up. I even give you the key to the closet; but in the name of your love...

The Count. My love! Perfidious!

The Countess gets up and gives him the key. Promise that you will let that child go without harm, and may, after all, your wrath fall on me, if I do not convince you...

The Count takes the key. I'll listen to no more!

The Countess throws herself on a chair, a handkerchief at her eyes. Oh heavens! he will perish. (Act 2, scene 16)

In Da Ponte's libretto, the scene looks like this:

La Contessa
Giuro al ciel ch'ogni sospetto
e lo stato in che il trovate...
scioltò il collo...
nudo il petto...
IL Conte
Scioltò il collo!
Nudo il petto! Seguitate!
La Contessa
Per vestir femmine spoglie ...
IL Conte
Ah comprendo, indegna moglie,
mi vo' tosto vendicar.
La Contessa
Mi fa torto quel trasporto,
m'oltraggiate a dubitar.
IL Conte
Qua la chiave!
La Contessa
Egli è innocente.
dandogli la chiave
Voi sapete ...
IL CONTE
Non so niente.
Va lontan dagl'occhi miei,
un'infida, un'empia sei
e mi cerchi d'infamar.
LA CONTESSA
Vado ... si ... ma ...
IL CONTE
Non ascolto.
LA CONTESSA
Non son rea.
IL CONTE
Vel leggo in volto!
Mora, mora, e più non sia,
ria cagion del mio penar.
LA CONTESSA
Ah, la cieca gelosia
qualche eccesso gli fa far.

THE COUNTESS
I swear to heaven that every suspicion –
and the state you find him in…
his collar open…
his chest bare…
THE COUNT
His collar open!
His chest bare! Go on!
THE COUNTESS
In order to dress him as a woman…
THE COUNT
Ah I understand, dishonorable wife,
and now I have my revenge.
THE COUNTESS
You wrong me with your fury,
insult me with your doubt.
THE COUNT
Give me the key!
THE COUNTESS
He is innocent.
gives him the key
You know…
THE COUNT
I know nothing.
Get out of my sight,
unfaithful woman,
you are trying to shame me.
The Countess
I will go… yes… but…
The Count
I will not listen.
The Countess
I am not guilty.
The Count
I read it in your face!
He should die, and
cause me no more suffering.
The Countess
Ah, blind jealousy
drives him to such excesses.
(Act 2, scene 6)

Both Countesses are concerned for Cherubino's welfare, but only Mozart and Da Ponte's Countess protests her own innocence as well. Of course, we can believe her sincerity because we have seen no action to make us doubt it. Beaumarchais's Rosina knows better than this; she is no innocent and does not pretend to be.

Wildhagen writes the dialogue yet another way, with his Countess repeating “God, I am not at fault and my heart is really pure!”87 Rosina protests her innocence the most vehemently in this version. However, we have seen how she treated Cherubino in the earlier scene; whether or not she is actually involved with Cherubino, her heart is most certainly not “pure.” The Countess “doth protest too much.” She has already been depicted as manipulative with Cherubino, and now that necessarily colors our perception of her words to the Count. Wildhagen also uses camera work to call her sincerity into question. At two points in the lyrics where there might be some pathos to her words –

87 “Gott, das hab ich nicht verschuldet und mein Herz ist wahrlich rein!” Ibid., 40.
“What raving, dear husband, oh spare him, I beg you, oh spare him, I beg you, oh spare him, I beg you”\(^{88}\) and “God, I am not at fault and my heart is really pure!”\(^{89}\) – she is not visible. Instead we see a shot of Susanna in the closet (in the former case) and a shot of the Count's reaction, which cuts to Susanna (in the latter). This undermines any sympathy we might develop for the Countess. We do see her plead for Cherubino's innocence:

“Could I only prove his innocence – yes, his innocence. Although his clothing, it appears suspicious, without a coat, and his arms bare.”\(^{90}\) However, by denying us any visual cues during those moments of high emotion, Wildhagen undermines our ability to see her protestations of her own innocence as sincere.

Following the money

As the drama continues in act 3, we see further radical differences in Rosina's treatment by Beaumarchais, Mozart and Da Ponte, and Wildhagen. Wildhagen's most obvious change in this act is the elimination of the Countess's recitative and aria (“E Susanna non vien” and “Dove sono”). However, a more subtle shift involves Susanna's payment of Figaro's debt to Marcellina. In Beaumarchais's play she specifically states that the money comes from the Countess:

\begin{quote}
Suzanne, accourant, une bourse à la main. Monseigneur, arrêtez; qu'on ne les marie pas: je viens payer Madame avec la dot que ma maîtresse me donne.
Le Comte, à part. Au diable la maîtresse! Il semble que tout conspire...
\end{quote}


\(^{89}\) “Gott, das hab ich nicht verschuldet und mein Herz ist wahrlich rein!” Ibid., 40.

\(^{90}\) “Könnt ich Dir nur seine Unschuld, ja, seine Unschuld. Zwar sein Anzug erscheint verdächtig, ohne Mantel, blass die Arme.” Ibid.
Suzanne, running, a purse in her hand. My Lord, stop; do not marry them: I come to pay Madam with the dowry which my mistress gives me.
The Count, aside. Damn her mistress! It seems they all conspire…(Act 3, scene 17)

In the opera, Susanna does not say where she gets the money:

Susanna
Alto, alto, signor Conte,
mille doppie son qui pronte,
a pagar vengo per Figaro,
ed a porlo in libertà.

Susanna
Stop, stop, My Lord.
I have the money ready,
I come to pay for Figaro,
and to buy his freedom.
(Act 3, scene 5)

Moreover, in view of the traditional sequence of scenes, the money could not have come from Rosina, as she has not seen Susanna since the beginning of the act, and points this out three scenes later during her “E Susanna non vien” recitative. Moberly and Raeburn's re-ordering of act 3, which places scenes 7 and 8 before the trial scene, eliminates this issue; however, as Alan Tyson points out, their sequence of scenes is not without problems.91 Once again, the shift makes Rosina less active in the opera. She no longer meddles in this business herself. Rather, she remains in her room and frets.

91 Robert Moberly and Christopher Raeburn, “Mozart's Figaro: The Plan of Act III,” *Music & Letters* 46, no. 2 (April 1965): 134-36; Alan Tyson, “Le nozze di Figaro: Lessons from the Autograph Score,” *The Musical Times* 122, no. 1661 (July 1981): 456-461. Given that Moberly and Raeburn's hypothesis was not published until 1965, we can surmise that Wildhagen would have known the traditional sequence. Although he cuts act 3, scene 8 completely, and “Andiam, andiam bel paggio” (act 3, scene 7) is not sung, the dialogue that replaces the latter does occur after the act 3 sestetto.
In Wildhagen's setting, Susanna receives the money from the Count himself, following “Crudel! perche finora.” However, an earlier added scene indicates that the plan to extract this money from Almaviva by seduction comes from Rosina:

GRÄFIN. Es sieht böse aus, Susanna.
SUSANNA. Nun muß ich dem Grafen wohl doch das Stelldichein gewähren.
GRÄFIN. Nein, wir werden unsere Kleider tauschen und ich werde heute abend, als Susanna zum Stelldichein gehen.
SUSANNA. Aber wenn Marcellina noch vor dem Abend ihren Schuldschein präsentiert, dann hilft auch das nichts mehr.
GRÄFIN. Marcellina schaff ich Euch vom Hals.

COUNTESS. It looks bad, Susanna.
SUSANNA. Well, I must indeed grant the Count his rendezvous.
COUNTESS. No, we will exchange our clothes and I will go tonight, as Susanna, to the rendezvous.
SUSANNA. But if Marcellina presents her promissory notes before the evening, it will all be for nothing.
COUNTESS. I will get Marcellina off your back.\(^2\)

This scene occurs immediately following the act 2 finale. While there are some parallels with dialogue from act 3, scene 2 of the opera, including Rosina's decision to stand in for Susanna at the rendezvous, that scene does not mention Marcellina, much less include such a bold statement from Rosina. This Countess takes charge of the situation, unlike Mozart and Da Ponte's Countess, who meekly pleads to Susanna, “Pensa, ch'è in tua mano il mio riposo” (“Think, that my repose lies in your hands”).

\(^2\) Wildhagen, “Montageliste,” 64.
The Letter Duet

The letter scene is pivotal both in Beaumarchais's play and in Mozart and Da Ponte's adaptation, albeit for different reasons. Beaumarchais presents this as the first instance when the Countess doubts Susanna's loyalty to her:

LA COMTESSE. As-tu ce qu'il nous fait pour troque de vêtement?
SUZANNE. Il ne faut rien, Madame; le rendez-vous ne tiendra pas.
LA COMTESSE. Ah! Vous changez d'avis?
SUZANNE. C'est Figaro.
LA COMTESSE. Vous me trompez.
SUZANNE. Bonté divine!
LA COMTESSE. Figaro n'est pas homme à laisser échapper une dot.
SUZANNE. Madame! Eh, que croyez-vous donc?
LA COMTESSE. Qu'enfin, d'accord avec le Comte, il vous fâche à présent de m'avoir confié ses projets. Je vous sais par coeur. Laissez-moi. Elle veut sortir.
SUZANNE se jette à genoux. Au nom du Ciel, espoir de tous! vous ne savez pas, Madame, le mal que vous faites à Suzanne! après vos bontés continues et la dot que vous me donnez!
LA COMTESSE, la relève. Hé mais... je ne sais ce que je dis! En me cédant ta place au jardin, tu n'y vas pas, mon cœur; tu tiens parole à ton mari; tu m'aides à ramener le mien.

THE COUNTESS. Have you arranged for our change of clothing?
SUZANNE. It doesn't matter, Madam, I am not keeping the appointment.
THE COUNTESS. Ah! You have changed your mind?
SUZANNE. It's Figaro.
THE COUNTESS. You are deceiving me.
SUZANNE. My goodness!
THE COUNTESS. Figaro is not one to let a dowry go.
SUZANNE. Madam! Well, what do you think?
THE COUNTESS. That, finally, you've come to an agreement with the Count, and he is angry now that you told me his plans. I know you by heart. Leave me. She tries to leave.
SUZANNE falls to her knees. In heaven's name, you do not know, Madam, the wrong you do to Suzanne! after your kindness and the dowry you have given me!
THE COUNTESS raises her up. Well but ... I do not know what I am saying!
Give me your place in the garden, you will not go, my dear; you keep your word to your husband to help me bring back mine. (Act 4, scene 3)

Here, Rosina agrees to take Susanna's place in the garden for two reasons: she must ensure the scheme to trap Almaviva continues as planned, in spite of Susanna's loss of nerve, and she must also reaffirm her faith in Susanna and in their alliance. It is worth noting here a shift in the formality of Rosina's language. To this point, she has consistently referred to Susanna as “tu.” During her moment of doubt, however, she abruptly shifts to the more formal “vous.” She then marks her reassurances to Susanna by returning to “tu.” Throughout the play, Susanna refers to the Countess using the formal term.

Da Ponte's libretto, on the other hand, almost completely eliminates the most formal language. He uses the formal “lei” to mean “you” only mockingly, during Susanna and Marcellina's duet. In some regions of Italy, and prior to the introduction of “lei” during the Renaissance, “voi” was used to indicate courtesy. Da Ponte uses this form in Figaro's and Susanna's address of both Almaviva and Rosina, and, most tellingly, in the Count and Countess's address of each other, while Rosina refers to Susanna using the informal “tu” throughout. Unlike in Beaumarchais, there is no breach of the alliance between Rosina and Susanna; instead, the letter duet serves as a turning point for Rosina, as she becomes a more active participant in their plot. Upon Susanna's return, the plan has been set in motion, and a letter must be written to Almaviva setting the place for the tryst. Now the Countess takes the active role in dictating “Che soave zeffiretto” (“The soft zephyr”). This duet is in 6/8 time, and it is here that da Ponte makes the clearest
reference to the Countess's previous life. Rosina weaves multiple layers of meaning, using a pastoral style that might be considered appropriate for Susanna. She also evokes the textual imagery of the song she sang to young Lindoro, Almaviva as a music student, in Le barbier de Séville. This is da Ponte's genius at work; in Le mariage, Beaumarchais's letter reads merely “Chanson nouvelle, sur l'air: 'Qu'il fera beau, ce soir, sous les grands marroniers'” (“A new song to the tune of 'How lovely this evening, under the great chestnut trees'”). Da Ponte cleverly expands the letter:

La Contessa
eh, scrivi dico; e tutto
Susanna siede e scrive
io prendo su me stessa.
“Canzonetta sull'aria ...”

Susanna
scrivendo
“Sull'aria ...”
La Contessa
“Che soave zeffiretto ...”
Susanna
“Zeffiretto ... “
La Contessa
“Questa sera spirerà ...”
Susanna
“Questa sera spirerà ...”
La Contessa
“She sotto i pini del boschetto.”
Susanna
“She sotto i pini ...”
La Contessa
“She sotto i pini del boschetto.”
Susanna
“She sotto i pini ... del boschetto ...”
La Contessa
Eh già il resto capirà.
Susanna
Certo, certo il capirà.

The Countess
Oh, write, and all
Susanna sits and writes
I take on myself.
“A little song to the tune ...”

Susanna
writing
“To the tune …”
The Countess
“What a sweet zephyr …”
Susanna
“Zephyr …”
The Countess
“Will whisper tonight…”
Susanna
“Whisper tonight…”
The Countess
“Beneath the pines in the grove.”
Susanna
“Beneath the pines …”
The Countess
“Beneath the pines in the grove.”
Susanna
“Beneath the pines ... in the grove …”
The Countess
The rest he will understand.
Susanna
Certainly, certainly he'll understand.
(Act 3, scene 10)

Da Ponte specifically uses the word “zeffiretto” (zephyr) here, a word that not only evokes the correct pastoral mood, but also refers back to Paisiello and Petrosellini's setting of Barbier: “Già riede primavera / col suo fiorito aspetto, / già il grato zeffiretto / scherza fra l'erbe e il fior” (“Spring is coming / in its flowery cloak, / the soft zephyrs /
are already playing among the grass and flowers”). Mozart (like Paisiello) sets his piece in triple meter, with use of bassoon and oboe as echoes of the vocal line; he also makes sure that Susanna repeats the Countess's “zeffiretto.” Obviously, the meter and instrumentation are appropriate to a pastoral aria in any case, and the repetition suits the dramatic action of dictating a letter, but the combination heightens the connection between the two arias. The duet thereby acquires a double meaning: it is the bait to lure Almaviva into their trap, and it is also a reminder to him, particularly coming as it does on the heels of “Dove sono,” of the past love she wishes to regain.

Wildhagen's take on the duet strips the scene of all but the surface meaning; Susanna composes the letter, taking Rosina's dictation, as a trap for Almaviva. Although this scene could have served as a turning point in the film, either cementing the alliance between Rosina and Susanna, or allowing a genuine emotional moment for the Countess, Wildhagen's direction and Sabine Peters's performance resist such an interpretation. This is in large part due to Wildhagen's choice to cut “Porgi amor” and “Dove sono” from the opera. Without those arias to set the stage, seria moments illustrating Rosina's hope for a true reconciliation with her husband, the balance in this duet between scheming and genuine affection is lost. Sabine Peters's performance compounds this issue. Angelika Hauff's Susanna, with her knowing smile, seems appropriate to the part, but Peters's Countess affects nearly the same mannerisms. From her behavior, one might guess that she was the one reciting text written by someone else. Moreover, in his adaptation of the scene, Wildhagen eliminates the reference to an existing tune:
GRÄFIN. Setz Dich hin und schreibe ihm einen Brief. Ich nehme alles auf mich.

SUSANNA singt
Nun soll ich?

GRÄFIN singt
„Wenn die sanften Abendlüfte...”

SUSANNA
„Sanften Abendlüfte...”

GRÄFIN
„Über unsere Fluren wehen...”

SUSANNA
„Über unsere Fluren wehen...”

GRÄFIN
„Im Gebüsch des Pinienhaines...”

SUSANNA
Pinienhaines?

GRÄFIN
„Im Gebüsch des Pinienhaines...”

SUSANNA
„Im Gebüsch des Pinienhaines.”

GRÄFIN
O, das wird er schon verstehen...

SUSANNA
Ja, gewiß, er wird's verstehen

GRÄFIN & SUSANNA
Ja, das wird er schon verstehen.

GRÄFIN
Zeig, was Du geschrieben!

SUSANNA
„Wenn die sanften Abendlüfte...”

GRÄFIN
„Über unsere Fluren wehn...”

SUSANNA
„Im Gebüsch des Pinienhaines...”

GRÄFIN
O, das wird er schon verstehen.

SUSANNA
Ja, gewiß, er wird's verstehen.

COUNTESS. Sit down and write him a letter. I take all the blame onto myself.

SUSANNA sings
Shall I do it now?

COUNTESS sings
“When the gentle evening breezes …”
SUSANNA
“Gentle evening breezes ...”
COUNTESS
“Waft through the corridors …”
SUSANNA
“Waft through the corridors …”
COUNTESS
“In the bushes in the pine grove ...”
SUSANNA
Pine grove?
COUNTESS
“In the bushes in the pine grove …”
SUSANNA
“In the bushes in the pine grove.”
COUNTESS
Oh, he'll understand ...
SUSANNA
Yes, certainly, he will understand it
COUNTESS & SUSANNA
Yes, he'll understand.
COUNTESS
Show me what you have written.
SUSANNA
“When the gentle evening breezes …”
COUNTESS
“Waft through the corridors …”
SUSANNA
“In the bushes in the pine grove …”
COUNTESS
Oh, he'll understand it.
SUSANNA
Yes, certainly, he will understand it.93

There is no longer any appeal to their past love, and Peters's performance, combined with the script changes in this scene (including Rosina's command to Susanna, “Show me what you have written”) and the elimination of all prior seria moments have transformed

93 Wildhagen, “Montageliste,” 77.

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the scene from one combining plotting with genuine affection, to one of pure
machination.

The second possible significance of this scene as a turning point – one that
solidifies the bond between Rosina and Susanna – is similarly absent here. There has
never been any real breach of their alliance to this point, no change in their relationship to
one another. Throughout this relationship, they maintain a formality of language;
although Rosina refers to Susanna with the familiar “Du,” Susanna never uses the
familiar form, and most frequently addresses the Countess as “Frau Gräfin.” While
Wildhagen the screenwriter has emphasized the formality of the relationship between
Susanna and Rosina, Wildhagen the director uses this scene to undercut the idea of the
friendship between them being anything beyond a business arrangement. The duet opens
with both women in frame; Susanna sits to write, and the Countess stands behind her,
dictating the letter. When Rosina begins the phrase “Im Gebüsch des Pinienhaines,”
however, the camera follows her to the window, leaving Susanna behind. At Susanna's
reply, the camera cuts back to her, and remains there (even through Rosina's music) until
“O, das wird er schon verstehen.” At this point, Wildhagen cuts to a shot of Rosina at the
window, alternating with a shot of the garden outside during Susanna's response. When
the two finally sing together, we see only Rosina. For the reprise of the melody, we once
again see the two women together, but now Wildhagen cuts away from the scene
entirely, and we see instead Figaro serving dinner to the Count, while Susanna and the
Countess sing off-screen. This change of focus undercuts the very idea of this piece as a duet, and thereby subverts the idea of a true alliance between Susanna and Rosina.

An undermined reconciliation

From Beaumarchais's play to Mozart and Da Ponte's opera, the changes to the scene of reconciliation are in keeping with the other changes made to the Countess's personality. In response to the Count's sudden contrition, Beaumarchais's Countess laughs and replies “You'd say 'No, no,' in my place; and me, for the third time today, I give [my forgiveness] unconditionally.”\(^\text{94}\) In the opera, the Countess is not nearly so jovial: “I am gentler than you, / and I grant [my forgiveness].”\(^\text{95}\) Without the laugh or the reference back to her earlier forgiveness of the Count, the tone of the reconciliation changes, making the opera's finale seem more sincere than that of the play. In the play, this is merely the latest in a long line of times the Countess has had to forgive her husband, while in the opera, this particular incidence of forgiveness is marked as fundamentally different. However, in most other aspects, the opera follows the action of the play directly, including Susanna teasing a jealous Figaro, Cherubino nearly giving away the plot when he spots Rosina in disguise, and the Count inadvertently attempting to seduce his own wife.

While Wildhagen's changes throughout the film are substantial, his changes to the opera's ending are nothing short of mind-boggling. As we have seen, Figaro's solitary

\(^{94}\) “Vous diriez Non, non, à ma place; et moi, pour la troisième fois aujourd'hui, je l'accorde sans condition.” (Act 5, scene 19)

\(^{95}\) “Più docile io sono, / e dico di sì.” (Act 4, final scene)
recitative and aria in act 4, scene 8 ("Tutto e disposto" and "Aprite un po quegli occhi") are transformed into a brief scene of dialogue. The film then jumps straight to "Tutto e tranquillo e placido," skipping "Deh vieni non tardar," the interlude with Cherubino, and, most shockingly, the Count's scene with Rosina. It appears that this change was not part of Wildhagen's original vision for the film, as the missing scenes do appear in the shooting script. As with the rest of the film, the recitative has been rendered as straight dialogue, but the arias remain intact. Moreover, it looks as though the missing scenes may have been shot, as there are a few clear shots of Rosina dressed as Susanna (along with Susanna's considerably less convincing costume as Rosina), but the disguise is never used. The cut from act 4, scene 8 to "Tutto e tranquillo e placido" is jarring, both visually and musically. We see Figaro with his men; they exit, leaving Figaro alone, and the camera fades to black on him. Suddenly, we are in the woods, and see the Count hunting for somebody – presumably Susanna – intercut with Figaro watching from the bushes. Once the Count has departed, Figaro begins to sing. The scene of Figaro and his men contains no music. Then, underscoring the visual of the Count, we are suddenly presented with the last two beats of measure 107 of the Finale (without the 16\textsuperscript{th}-note anacrusis that precedes them in the NMA score), a B-flat minor 7\textsuperscript{th} chord in a single measure of common time, resolving to E-flat major for the ¾ time of act 4, scene 13.\footnote{Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, \textit{Le nozze di Figaro}, in \textit{Neue Mozart-Ausgabe: Digitized Version}, edited by the Internationale Stiftung Mozarteum Salzburg., Series II: Theatre Music, Werkguppe 5, Band 16, Vols. 1-2 (Internationale Stiftung Mozarteum Online Publications, 2006), 545. http://dme.mozarteum.at.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu/DME/nma/start.php?l=2.} This brief introduction to "Tutto e tranquillo e placido" comes out of the blue, creates a distinctly
ominous tone to underscore the brief appearance of the Count, and then immediately resolves itself for the scene between Figaro and Susanna.

Without personal or company papers explaining the change, we can only speculate as to why these scenes were cut. Let us look instead at the impact of their removal. Certainly, “Deh vieni non tardar” is not the only aria to be cut, and as Wildhagen has directed his film, the incident with Barbarina and the pin is enough to raise Figaro's jealousy to the point of convening a posse. Removing “Deh vieni” does have the effect of “purifying” Susanna's motives; there is no longer any deliberate attempt to deceive Figaro. The scene with Cherubino primarily serves to build suspense prior to the critical scene between the Count and Countess, and might have been cut for reasons of length. Cutting the seduction scene, however, is hard to explain. The result of this editing is that the Count never actually follows through on his planned bad deed. We know why he is in the woods, as does everyone else, but we also see that he never finds Rosina until she appears for the scene of forgiveness. But if he is never caught, and never keeps his rendezvous with “Susanna,” what is the Countess forgiving him for? For intending to be unfaithful? She has no more evidence of this now than she did at the beginning of the film. For doubting her? She has forgiven him for this already, during the act 2 finale.

In fact, the changes made to the final scene of the film are simply the logical extension of the changes made to Rosina's character throughout. In Mozart and Da Ponte's opera, Rosina is sympathetic, and the emotional center of the aristocracy. Because
of her genuine desire to regain her husband's love, the reconciliation between the
Almavivas is an objective no less important than the titular marriage between Figaro and
Susanna. Although Beaumarchais's Countess forgives her husband, her statement of that
forgiveness is perfunctory. In the opera, the scene of forgiveness is more drawn out, and
carries more emotional baggage thanks to the treatment of Rosina throughout her earlier
scenes.

Wildhagen's scene of forgiveness comes straight from the opera, but he has
sabotaged its emotional impact by eliminating Rosina as an emotional being, and by
preventing the viewer from seeing the Count's crime. Richard Will points out that the
scene of reconciliation in the opera, and particularly the tempo of the moment of
reconciliation, tends to reinforce the tone set for the Countess during her earlier seria
moments, and the following tutti continues in that mode. In the film, though, we have
no seria moment prior to this with which to draw a comparison. We see her invoking the
same sort of rubato and emotive elements we see in other performances (Kiri Te
Kanawa's portrayal in Jean-Pierre Ponnelle's film comes to mind), but since we have
never seen this sort of emotion from her before, it is difficult to believe in it now. Then,
as the tutti begins, Wildhagen cuts away from the Count and Countess entirely, focusing
instead on the local peasants and long shots of the entire ensemble (in which the Count
and Countess are barely visible), followed by the departure of the Count and Countess
into the house. They do not sing with the rest of the ensemble during the tutti.

Throughout their exit, Mathieu Ahlersmeyer keeps his gaze on Sabine Peters; she, on the other hand, looks steadily ahead, sparing him only one glance as they climb the steps to the palace.

As in all classic comedy, the lovers are reunited and a new life can begin, but the only lovers here are Susanna and Figaro. The Count and Countess have no part in this new life; their reconciliation, far from being an equal objective of the drama, has become a mere tactic to allow Figaro and Susanna's marriage to occur unimpeded. Their treatment throughout the film has flattened them into mere surfaces, and by the end, they have become completely irrelevant.
Chapter 6: Conclusions

Wildhagen made only one other opera film for DEFA, *Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor*, and then parted company with DEFA, in part due to changes made (against his will) to the conclusion of his second film, and returned to the West. He seems to have been not a socialist ideologue, but simply a young director in search of a platform for his artistic theories. DEFA provided him with such a platform, but not without a cost. This raises key questions about the changes to Figaro. Which came from Wildhagen, and which were imposed from without? And, more important, how are we then to interpret these shifts in characterization in the context of the nascent GDR? Taken as a whole, one thing becomes clear: within this new world, there is no place for aristocrats such as the Almavivas. Much like the Junkers of the Soviet Zone, they are effectively purged from the scene to make room for the new proletariat.

It is a relatively simple matter to banish the corrupt Count, who was never especially sympathetic. Wildhagen heightens the villainy of this unsympathetic character, first by placing greater emphasis on his desire to reinstate the *droit*, and then by foregrounding and repeating the connection between Almaviva and Cherubino's patent, along with the visual connection of that patent to the brutality of the recent Nazi past. This creates a link between the corruption of the aristocracy and fascism, making the
Count's elimination at the end virtually essential. Removing Mozart and Da Ponte's sympathetic, idealized Countess is more problematical. As Caryl Emerson makes clear, adapted texts cannot stand alone; each one comments on and interacts with its predecessors, creating new layers of meaning and redefining the work as a whole. This is an especially salient point in the case of a figure as revered in Germany as was Mozart, and an opera as well-known as *Le nozze di Figaro*. In order to justify removing the Countess, it is essential for the film to re-invent her, to tell its audience, in effect, that she was never who they believed her to be. Instead, she must be made as corrupt and soulless as her husband, so that we feel no sympathy for either her or the Count when they return to the house and to their miserable lives in the finale.

The changes in Figaro and Susanna are a bit trickier to unravel. Once Figaro's revenge aria was cut from the script, Wildhagen could presumably have re-inserted an adaptation of Beaumarchais's monologue, which could have been read as a socialist message. Indeed, Beaumarchais's Figaro would have required almost no alteration to be positioned as a proletarian hero. Alternatively, Wildhagen could have distilled the misogynist venom of “Aprite un po' quegli occhi” into a brief monologue. Instead he makes Figaro a threat to his own plans, without any particular incitement. Why? Could this be some sort of Bakhtinian mask, a new persona adopted by Figaro? The change of characterization here is intensely problematical.

I suggest that, far from acting as a witty *commedia* type, this Figaro serves as an agent of the audience, no more clever than the average person and (as we see through

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their visual pairing during the letter duet) no more clever than the Count. As such, he is just as prone to frustration and despair as the average person, and just as likely to resort to desperate measures and violence as a result. Where, then, could a 1949 German audience look for a character worthy of emulation? It is perhaps more useful here to consider not Figaro as the singer of “Apriete un po' quegli occhi,” but rather Susanna as the object of his malice. Figaro may doubt her but he is never given the chance to malign her character. As in the play, Wildhagen's Susanna is bound by duty, always respectful, clever but not deceitful, using her wit only at the service of others and to protect her own virtue. If Figaro is the audience, then Susanna is who that audience must aspire to be. In this way she exemplifies the ideal of the “new socialist woman” who would take a leading role in popular culture in the GDR during the 1950s and later. This embodiment of womanhood was strong, intelligent, and appropriately proletarian, but also beautiful and feminine: all traits emphasized in Wildhagen's Susanna.99

Under the Nazi regime, Mozart's “German-ness” was a critical cultural touchstone, enough so that his collaboration with Da Ponte (a baptized Jew) was considered a minor inconvenience; the opera was simply performed in one of several German translations.100 The 1938 annexation of Austria helped fulfill a vision of a unified cultural and political entity, with composers such as Mozart, Bach, Handel, and

Beethoven as a single body emblematic of the greatness of German music. The 1941 sesquicentennial of Mozart's death prompted Goebbels to commission new editions of all three Da Ponte operas, and the Reich to issue a series of commemorative stamps bearing Mozart's image. Even for those who might not have had an intimate knowledge of Mozart's music, his status as an icon of German culture was well-established. In a sense, then, this reinvention of Le nozze di Figaro serves as a reinvention of Mozart himself. In the chaotic atmosphere of the Soviet Zone of Occupation, escapism was needed, as was a sense of normalcy, continuity, and stability. A film setting of Figaro could provide just that: a light costume drama, with classical arias sung in German and Mozart's name on the marquee, but re-cast in a socialist framework.

Bibliography


Helm, Everett. “International Conference on Opera in Radio, TV and Film.” *The Musical Times* 98, no. 1368 (February 1957): 87-89.


Pinkert, Anke. Film and Memory in East Germany. Indiana University Press, 2008.


## Appendix: Scene Sequence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Da Ponte Libretto</th>
<th>Wildhagen Shooting Script</th>
<th>Wildhagen Film</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overture</strong></td>
<td><strong>Overture</strong></td>
<td><strong>Overture</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Act 1, Scenes 1-2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Act 1, Scenes 1-2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Act 1, Scenes 1-2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#1 Cinque...dieci...venti – Susanna, Figaro</td>
<td>#1 Cinque...dieci...venti – Susanna, Figaro</td>
<td>#1 Cinque...dieci...venti – Susanna, Figaro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recit</strong> Cosa stai misurando – Susanna, Figaro</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Susanna, Figaro</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Susanna, Figaro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2 Se a caso madama – Susanna, Figaro</td>
<td>#2 Se a caso madama – Susanna, Figaro</td>
<td>#2 Se a caso madama – Susanna, Figaro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recit</strong> Or bene, ascolta, e taci – Susanna, Figaro</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Susanna, Figaro</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Susanna, Figaro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3 Se vuol ballare – Figaro</td>
<td>#3 Se vuol ballare – Figaro</td>
<td>#3 Se vuol ballare – Figaro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Act 1, Scene 3</strong></td>
<td><strong>Act 1, Scene 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recit</strong> Ed aspettaste il giorno fissato – Bartolo, Marcellina</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Bartolo, Marcellina</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4 La vendetta – Bartolo</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Act 1, Scene 4</strong></td>
<td><strong>Act 1, Scene 4</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recit</strong> Tutto anchor no ho perso – Susanna, Marcellina</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Susanna, Marcellina</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5 Via resti servita – Susanna, Marcellina</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Act 1, Scene 5</strong></td>
<td><strong>Act 1, Scene 5</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recit</strong> Va la, vecchia pedante – Susanna, Cherubino</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Susanna, Cherubino</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>#6 Non so più cosa son – Cherubino</td>
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<tr>
<td>Da Ponte Libretto</td>
<td>Wildhagen Shooting Script</td>
<td>Wildhagen Film</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Added Scene</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Basilio, student</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Act 1, Scenes 6-7</strong></td>
<td><strong>Act 1, Scenes 6-7</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recit</strong> Ah, son perduto – Cherubino, Susanna, Almaviva, Basilio</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Cherubino, Susanna, Almaviva, Basilio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#7 Cosa sento! tosto andate – Susanna, Almaviva, Basilio</strong></td>
<td><strong>#7 Cosa sento! tosto andate – Susanna, Almaviva, Basilio. During this scene, cut to Figaro gathering village girls outside. Music fades into girls laughter.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recit</strong> Basilio, In traccia tosto – Almaviva, Susanna, Cherubino, Basilio</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Act 1, Scene 8</strong></td>
<td><strong>Act 1, Scene 8</strong></td>
<td><strong>Act 1, Scene 8</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#8 Giovani liete, fiori spargete – Coro</strong></td>
<td><strong>#8 Giovani liete, fiori spargete – Coro</strong></td>
<td><strong>#8 Giovani liete, fiori spargete – Coro</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recit</strong> Cos'e questa commedia? – Almaviva, Figaro, Susanna</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> (begins during chorus) Figaro, Almaviva, Basilio (with Susanna, Cherubino present)</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> (begins during chorus) Figaro, Almaviva, Basilio (with Susanna, Cherubino present)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#9 Coro Giovani liete, fiori spargete – Coro</strong></td>
<td><strong>#9 Giovani liete, fiori spargete – Coro</strong></td>
<td><strong>#9 Giovani liete, fiori spargete – Coro</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Recit</strong> Evviva! – Figaro, Susanna, Basilio, Cherubino, Almaviva</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> (Giovani liete fades underneath) – Figaro, Susanna, Basilio, Cherubino, Almaviva</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> (Giovani liete fades underneath) – Figaro, Susanna, Basilio, Cherubino, Almaviva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#10 Non più andrai – Figaro</strong></td>
<td><strong>#10 Non più andrai – Figaro</strong></td>
<td><strong>#10 Non più andrai – Figaro</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dialog to end scene</strong></td>
<td><strong>Dialog to end scene</strong></td>
<td><strong>Dialog to end scene</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Act 2, Scene 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Act 2, Scene 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Act 2, Scene 1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#11 Porgi amor – Rosina</strong></td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Rosina, Susanna, Figaro</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Rosina, Susanna, Figaro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recit</strong> Vieni, cara Susanna – Rosina, Susanna, Figaro</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Cherubino, Susanna, Almaviva, Basilio</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Cherubino, Susanna, Almaviva, Basilio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Added Scene</strong> – Cherubino, Basilio (Cherubino sneaking past window, Basilio serving him with</td>
<td><strong>Added Scene</strong> – Cherubino, Basilio (Cherubino sneaking past window, Basilio serving him with</td>
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<tr>
<td>Da Ponte Libretto</td>
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<td>Wildhagen Film</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Act 1, Scene 3</strong></td>
<td>Dialog – Bartolo, Marcellina</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Act 1, Scene 4</strong></td>
<td>Dialog – Susanna, Marcellina</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Act 1, Scene 5</strong></td>
<td>Dialog – Susanna, Cherubino</td>
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<td>Added Scene</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dialog – Basilio, copyist</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Act 1, Scenes 6-7</strong></td>
<td>Dialog – Cherubino, Susanna, Almaviva, Basilio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#7 Cosa sento! tosto andate</strong></td>
<td>Fades out before end of terzetto to show Figaro assembling village girls outside. Note that this makes little sense in context, as he is clearly gathering them for purposes of singing “Giovani liete,” which has already occurred.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Added Scene – Figaro, Cherubino – Cherubino asks for Figaro's help with the patent; shot of fake letter</td>
<td>Added Scene – Figaro, Cherubino – Cherubino asks for Figaro's help with the patent; shot of fake letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Added Scene – Figaro, Basilio – passing off fake letter (this happens offstage in Da Ponte's libretto)</td>
<td>Added Scene – Figaro, Basilio – passing off fake letter (this happens offstage in Da Ponte's libretto)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Act 2, Scene 2</strong></td>
<td>Act 2, Scene 2</td>
<td>Act 2, Scene 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recit</strong> Quanto duolmi, Susanna – Rosina, Susanna, Cherubino</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Rosina, Susanna, Cherubino</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Rosina, Susanna, Cherubino</td>
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<tr>
<td>Da Ponte Libretto</td>
<td>Wildhagen Shooting Script</td>
<td>Wildhagen Film</td>
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<tr>
<td>#12 Voi che sapete – Cherubino</td>
<td>#12 Voi che sapete – Cherubino</td>
<td>#12 Voi che sapete – Cherubino</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Recit</strong> Bravo! Che bella voce! –</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Rosina, Susanna, Cherubino</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Rosina, Susanna,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rosina, Susanna, Cherubino</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cherubino</td>
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<tr>
<td>#13 Venite...inginocchiatevi –</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Susanna</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Recit</strong> Quante buffonerie –</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rosina, Susanna, Cherubino, Almaviva</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Added Scene</strong> – Basilio, Almaviva</td>
<td><strong>Added Scene</strong> – Basilio, Almaviva</td>
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<tr>
<td>(delivering letter).</td>
<td>(delivering letter).</td>
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<td><strong>Act 2, Scene 2, cont’d</strong></td>
<td><strong>Act 2, Scene 2, cont’d</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Rosina, Susanna,</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Rosina, Susanna, Cherubino (getting Cherubino dressed)</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Rosina, Susanna, Cherubino (getting Cherubino dressed)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cherubino (getting Cherubino dressed)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Rosina, Susanna,</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Rosina, Susanna, Cherubino,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cherubino, Almaviva</td>
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<td><strong>Act 2, Scene 3</strong></td>
<td><strong>Act 2, Scene 3</strong></td>
<td><strong>Act 2, Scene 3</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Recit</strong> Che novita – Almaviva,</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Almaviva, Rosina</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Almaviva, Rosina</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rosina</td>
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<tr>
<td>#14 Susanna, or via, sortite –</td>
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<tr>
<td>Susanna, Rosina, Almaviva</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Recit</strong> Dunque, voi non aprite? –</td>
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<tr>
<td>Almaviva, Rosina</td>
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<td><strong>Act 2, Scene 4</strong></td>
<td><strong>Act 2, Scene 4</strong></td>
<td><strong>Act 2, Scene 4</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>#15 Aprite, presto, aprite –</td>
<td>#15 Aprite, presto, aprite –</td>
<td>#15 Aprite, presto, aprite –</td>
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<tr>
<td>Susanna, Cherubino</td>
<td>Susanna, Cherubino</td>
<td>Susanna, Cherubino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recit</strong> Oh guarda il demonietto –</td>
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<tr>
<td>Susanna</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Act 2, Scene 5</strong></td>
<td><strong>Act 2, Scene 5</strong></td>
<td><strong>Act 2, Scene 5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recit</strong> Tutto e come io lasciai –</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Almaviva, Rosina</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Almaviva, Rosina</td>
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<tr>
<td>Almaviva, Rosina</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Act 2, Scenes 6-11</strong></td>
<td><strong>Act 2, Scenes 6-11</strong></td>
<td><strong>Act 2, Scenes 6-11</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16 <strong>Finale</strong> Esci, omai, garzon</td>
<td>#16 <strong>Finale</strong> Esci, omai, garzon</td>
<td>#16 <strong>Finale</strong> Esci, omai, garzon</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Da Ponte Libretto</th>
<th>Wildhagen Shooting Script</th>
<th>Wildhagen Film</th>
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<tr>
<td>malnato – Susanna, Rosina, Marcellina, Basilio, Almaviva, Antonio, Bartolo, Figaro</td>
<td>malnato – Susanna, Rosina, Marcellina, Basilio, Almaviva, Antonio, Bartolo, Figaro</td>
<td>malnato – Susanna, Rosina, Marcellina, Basilio, Almaviva, Antonio, Bartolo, Figaro</td>
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<tr>
<td>Added Scene - Rosina, Susanna</td>
<td>Added Scene - Rosina, Susanna</td>
<td>Added Scene - Rosina, Susanna</td>
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<tr>
<td>Added Scene - Almaviva, Figaro</td>
<td>Added Scene - Almaviva, Figaro</td>
<td>Added Scene - Almaviva, Figaro</td>
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<tr>
<td>Added Scene - Almaviva, Don Curzio, Basilio</td>
<td>Added Scene - Almaviva, Don Curzio, Basilio</td>
<td>Added Scene - Almaviva, Don Curzio, Basilio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Act 3, Scenes 1-3</td>
<td>Act 3, Scenes 1-3</td>
<td>Act 3, Scenes 1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recit Che imbarazzo e mai questo – Almaviva, Rosina, Susanna</td>
<td>Dialog – Almaviva, Susanna [Note that Rosina is cut from this scene]</td>
<td>Dialog – Almaviva, Susanna [Note that Rosina is cut from this scene]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17 Crudel! perche finora – Susanna, Almaviva</td>
<td>#17 Crudel! perche finora – Susanna, Almaviva</td>
<td>#17 Crudel! perche finora – Susanna, Almaviva</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recit E perche fosti meco – Almaviva, Susanna, Figaro</td>
<td>Dialog – Almaviva, Susanna, Figaro</td>
<td>Dialog – Almaviva, Susanna, Figaro</td>
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<tr>
<td>Act 3, Scene 4</td>
<td>Act 3, Scene 4</td>
<td>Act 3, Scene 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18 Recit &amp; Aria</td>
<td>#18 Recit &amp; Aria</td>
<td>#18 Recit &amp; Aria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Hai gia vinta la causa – Almaviva</td>
<td>- Vedro mentri'io sospiro – Almaviva</td>
<td>- Vedro mentri'io sospiro – Almaviva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act 3, Scene 5</td>
<td>Act 3, Scene 5</td>
<td>Act 3, Scene 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recit E decisa la lite – Don Curzio, Marcellina, Figaro, Almaviva, Bartolo</td>
<td>Dialog – Don Curzio, Marcellina, Figaro, Almaviva, Bartolo</td>
<td>Dialog – Don Curzio, Marcellina, Figaro, Almaviva, Bartolo</td>
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<tr>
<td>#19 Riconosci in questo amplesso – Susanna, Marcellina, Don Curzio, Almaviva, Bartolo, Figaro</td>
<td>#19 Riconosci in questo amplesso – Susanna, Marcellina, Don Curzio, Almaviva, Bartolo, Figaro</td>
<td>#19 Riconosci in questo amplesso – Susanna, Marcellina, Don Curzio, Almaviva, Bartolo, Figaro</td>
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<tr>
<td>Act 3, Scene 6</td>
<td>Act 3, Scene 6</td>
<td>Act 3, Scene 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recit Eccovi, o caro amico – Marcellina, Bartolo, Susanna,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Da Ponte Libretto</td>
<td>Wildhagen Shooting Script</td>
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<tr>
<td>Figaro</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Act 3, Scene 7**

**Recit** Andiamo andiam bel paggio
– Barbarina, Cherubino

**Act 3, Scene 8**

**#20 Recit & Aria**
- E Susanna non vien – Rosina
- Dove sono – Rosina

**Act 3, Scene 9**

**Recit** Io vi dico, signor – Antonio, Almaviva

**Act 3, Scene 10**

**Recit** Cosa mi narri – Rosina, Susanna

**#21 Che soave zeffiretto**
– Susanna, Rosina

**Recit** Piegato e il foglio – Susanna, Rosina

**Act 3, Scene 11-14**

**#22 Ricevete, o padroncina**
– Coro

**Recit** Queste sono, madama – Barbarina, Rosina, Susanna, Antonio, Almaviva, Cherubino, Figaro

**#23 Finale** Ecco la marcia...andiamo – Susanna, Rosina, Almaviva, Figaro, Coro.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>#22 Ricevete, o padroncina</strong></th>
<th><strong>#22 Ricevete, o padroncina</strong></th>
<th><strong>#22 Ricevete, o padroncina</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Coro</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Recit</strong> Queste sono, madama</th>
<th><strong>Dialog</strong> Rosina, Susanna</th>
<th><strong>Dialog</strong> Rosina, Susanna</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barbarina, Rosina, Susanna,</td>
<td>Barbarina, Antonio, Almaviva,</td>
<td>Barbarina, Antonio, Almaviva,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antonio, Almaviva, Cherubino,</td>
<td>Cherubino, Figaro, Basilio with</td>
<td>Cherubino, Figaro, Basilio with</td>
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<tr>
<td>Figaro</td>
<td>donkey</td>
<td>donkey</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>#23 Finale</strong> Ecco la marcia...andiamo – Susanna, Rosina, Almaviva, Figaro, Coro.</th>
<th><strong>#23 Finale</strong> La marcia/Amanti Constanti – Almaviva, Figaro, Coro. There is no opening solo. March begins under dialogue with Basilio, then into chorus.</th>
<th><strong>#23 Finale</strong> La marcia/Amanti Constanti – Almaviva, Figaro, Coro. There is no opening solo. March begins under dialogue with Basilio, then into chorus.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Act 4, Scene 1</strong></td>
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<td>#24 L’ho perduta...me meschina - Barbarina</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Act 4, Scenes 2-3</strong></td>
<td><strong>Act 4, Scenes 2-3</strong></td>
<td><strong>Act 4, Scenes 2-3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recit Barbarina, cos'hai? - Figaro, Barbarina, Marcellina</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> - Figaro, Barbarina (No Marcellina). Underscoring from #23 continues under dialog</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> - Figaro, Barbarina (No Marcellina). Underscoring from #23 continues under dialog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Added Scene – Brief scene with Rosina and Susanna, showing that they have changed clothing (Rosina dressed as Susanna, and with dark hair, while Susanna's only disguise is a lace mantilla along with her usual costume)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Act 4, Scene 4</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Recit Presto, avvertiam Susanna – Marcellina</td>
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<tr>
<td>#25 Il capro e la capretta – Marcellina</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Act 4, Scenes 5-7</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Recit Nel padiglione a manca – Barbarina, Figaro, Basilio, Bartolo</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Basilio, Bartolo</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Basilio, Bartolo</td>
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<tr>
<td>#26 In quegli anni in cui val poco - Basilio</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Act 4, Scene 8</strong></td>
<td><strong>Act 4, Scene 8</strong></td>
<td><strong>Act 4, Scene 8</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>#27 Recit &amp; Aria</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Figaro, men</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Figaro, men</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Tutto e disposto – Figaro</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Aprite un po quegli occhi – Figaro</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Act 4, Scenes 9-10</strong></td>
<td><strong>Act 4, Scenes 9-10</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Da Ponte Libretto</td>
<td>Wildhagen Shooting Script</td>
<td>Wildhagen Film</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Recit</strong> Signora ella mi disse –</td>
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<tr>
<td>Susanna, Marcellina, Rosina, Figaro</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#28 Recit &amp; Aria</strong></td>
<td><strong>#28 Aria</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Giunse alfin il momento – Susanna</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Deh vieni, non tardar – Susanna</td>
<td>- Deh vieni, non tardar – Susanna</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Act 4, Scenes 11-14 &amp; Scena Ultima</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Recit</strong> Perfida! – Figaro, Cherubino, Almaviva</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Rosina, Figaro, Barbarina, Cherubino</td>
<td><strong>Dialog</strong> – Rosina, Figaro, Barbarina, Cherubino</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#29 Finale</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Pian pianin le andro più presso – Cherubino, Rosina</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Ecco che la mia Susanna – Almaviva, Susanna, Figaro, Cherubino, Rosina</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Tutto e tranquillo e placido – Figaro, Susanna</td>
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<td>- Pace, pace – Figaro, Susanna</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Non la trovo – Almaviva, Figaro, Susanna</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Gente, gente, all'armi – Almaviva, Figaro, Basilio, Coro, Cherubino, Barbarina, Marcellina, Antonio, Susanna, Rosina</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Grand finale</td>
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<td>- Pace, pace – Figaro, Susanna</td>
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<td>- Non la trovo – Almaviva, Figaro, Susanna</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Gente, gente, all'armi – Almaviva, Figaro, Basilio, Coro, Cherubino, Barbarina, Marcellina, Antonio, Susanna, Rosina</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Grand finale – does not include Almaviva &amp; Rosina</td>
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<td>- Tutto e tranquillo e placido – Figaro, Susanna</td>
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