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Simon P. Keefe

University of Sheffield

THE ORCHESTRA OF THE CAPPELLA REALE, NAPLES, 1750–1800

Anthony R. DelDonna

Georgetown University



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Anthony R. DelDonna
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One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
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The Orchestra of the Cappella Reale, Naples, 1750–1800

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Anthony R. DelDonna
Georgetown University

Author for correspondence: Anthony R. DelDonna, deldonna@georgetown.edu

Abstract: The most prestigious musical ensemble of early-modern Naples remained the Royal Chapel or Cappella Reale di Palazzo.

Conceived to serve directly the ruling authority of the capital city – whether the viceroy (Spanish or Austrian) or monarchs (Carlo di Borbone then Ferdinando) – membership in this elite organization offered prestige, financial security, and access to the broader networks of music culture in Naples, attracting the best musicians within and beyond the physical confines of the capital. This Element introduces readers to the largely unknown history of the Neapolitan Cappella

Reale in the second half of the eighteenth century. It is based on primary sources, reconstructing the entire personnel of the ensemble (1750–99), recovering previously unstudied contractual agreements, offering details about the musicians while also examining the original music of the principal musicians of the orchestra.

Keywords: Naples, eighteenth century, Cappella Reale, instrumental music, orchestras

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