# Luigi Legnani's Missing Opus 9

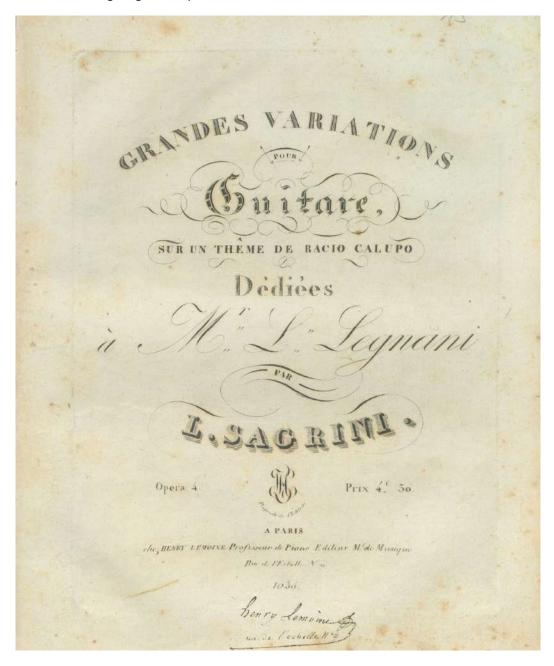
ROBERT COLDWELL

THE GUITARIST-COMPOSER LUIGI LEGNANI (1790–1877) published some 250 works with opus number, most of them for solo guitar; 1 yet his catalog contains many gaps. 2 More research on Legnani will potentially recover some of the compositions that have gone missing. This article fills in one of these gaps by identifying opus 9 as a set of *Variations brillantes*, published in 1825/6 by Richault in Paris and dedicated to the guitarist Luigi Sagrini (1809–74). The score for these variations survives and is reproduced in an appendix to this article. In the discussion below, I explore the circumstances that led to the discovery of these variations, with particular focus on Legnani's connection with Sagrini.

A possible association between the two guitarists has only recently come to scholarly attention.<sup>3</sup> Born in Chambéry, France, Louis "Luigi" Sagrini may have first encountered the music of Legnani in 1820, when performing in Turin, a year after Legnani began publishing his music with Ricordi.<sup>4</sup> On March 15, 1824, Sagrini performed for the first time in Paris, where he gave at least seven more concerts, the last of them on May 11, 1825. It was in Paris, in the middle of that same year, that Sagrini began publishing his compositions, and on November 11, 1825, his opus 4 was announced, published by Lemoine. On its title page is a dedication to Legnani (figure 1):

- 1 The original version of this article was published in Italian in *Il Fronimo*, no. 194 (April 2021): 13–16, with facsimile insert; a translation in Japanese appeared in *Gendai Guitar*, no. 696 (September 2021): 22–33, 129–39. The current article has been expanded with new information.
- 2 From opp. 1 to 250, only forty-three published compositions are known, to which can be added published compositions without opus number as well as posthumous editions. A catalog of Legnani's first editions is available in this series of articles: Marco Mustardino, "Luigi Rinaldo Legnani: Catalogo tematico delle prime opere a stampa per chitarra," *Il Fronimo*, no. 147 (July 2009): 36–50; and *Il Fronimo*, no. 148 (October 2009): 43–56. An updated, more complete catalog is in preparation by Mr. Mustardino. The opus numbers for which no references have been found are 13, 35–39, 41–59, 65–86, 88–200, 205–21, 223, 225–36, 239–49. References to the publication of opp. 17 and 33 have been found but no copies of the editions have been located. Opp. 14 and 15 are known only in manuscript (located in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin Preußischer Kulturbesitz), and no references regarding their publication have been found.
- 3 Bernard Lewis and Robert Coldwell, *In Search of Sagrini* (Dallas: DGA, 2021), <a href="https://www.dga-editions.com">https://www.dga-editions.com</a>.
- 4 Legnani's music was first published in 1819, by Ricordi in Milan.

**Figure 1** Sagrini, *Variations on a Theme by Racio Calupo*, op. 4: title page with a dedication to Legnani. *Slg. Freie Vereinigung zur Förderung guter Guitaremusik*, Staats- und Stadtbibliothek Augsburg, Germany.



GRANDES VARIATIONS / pour /
Guitare, / SUR UN THÊME DE
RACIO CALUPO / Dédiées / à Mr.
L. Legnani / par / L. SAGRINI / Opera:
4 (1038, Lemoine).<sup>5</sup>

One of Legnani's works, meanwhile, contains a dedication to Sagrini: his Potpourri en caprice, op. 32, published in Paris by Pacini (figure 2). While no announcements of Legnani's publications by Pacini have been found to allow exact dating, opus 32 was likely published between 1825 and 1829. It was in 1825 that Legnani first traveled to Paris, while 1829 is the date of a Pacini catalog that lists Legnani's opus numbers 29-34 and 40 (figure 3).6 The dedication is significant, since it is not included in an edition of the same opus published by Jean André in Offenbach am Main.<sup>7</sup> The Pacini edition was published in Paris, where it is most likely the two guitarists met.

POT-POURRI / en / CAPRICE / Pour la Guitare / Composé et Dédié / à / Mr. Sagrini / par / LUIGI LEGNANI / Euv. [sic] 32 (1336, Pacini).8

- 5 Copy located in Stadtbücherei Augsburg. Announced as "Grandes variations pour guitare seule.—4 fr. 50 c," in *Journal général d'annonce de musique, estampes, livres nouveaux, etc.*, no. 45 (November 11, 1825): 342.
- 6 Catalogue de musique, du magasin de Pacini, éditeur des Opéras de Rossini, boulevard des Italiens, no. 11 (1829), Bibliothèque nationale de France. Included in the 1829 Pacini catalog is an entry for Legnani's opus 33 as *Thême varié*, which is a previously unknown composition. No copies have been found of this edition.
- 7 No publication date for the André edition is given in Mustardino's catalog (see note 2 above), but it was likely the first edition.
- 8 Copies located in the Appleby Collection, Guildhall School of Music & Drama, London, and the Hudleston Collection, Royal Irish Academy of Music, Dublin.

Figure 2 Legnani, *Pot-pourri en caprice*, op. 32: title page of the Pacini edition, with dedication to Sagrini. Appleby Collection, Guildhall School of Music & Drama, London.

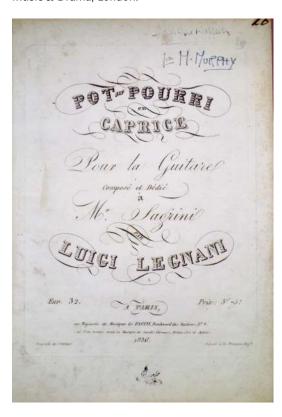


Figure 3 Legnani's Pot-pourri en caprice, op. 32, mentioned in Pacini's catalog. Catalogue de musique, du magasin de Pacini, éditeur des opéras de Rossini, boulevard des Italiens, N° 11 (1829). Bibliothèque nationale de France.

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	Thême de la Cenerentola, varié;		
	ор. 30.	5	
-	Pot-pourri brillant, op. 31.	3	- 30
-	Pot-pourri en caprice, op. 52.	3	75
-	Thême varié, op. 53.	4	50
-	Grand caprice, op. 54.	4	50
00-	Introduction et thême varié, op. 40.	4	50

a de fr.	e 1 fr. e.
Guerant. Recneil de marches 2	LEGNANI, Op. 7. Cavatine del'Italienne à
GOLDICK. Six walses	on 9 Chann at mondo de l'Ita-
- op. 10. Trois thêmes varies 4	lianna à Alman
op. 11. Trois exercices 6 op. 15. Le Deluge, sonate senti- mentale 4	Dame du Lac, variés 4 50
Kuffren. Op. 16 et 22. Deux airs varies,	faciles
op. 51. Air autrichien national , varié	op. 22. Variations sur la marche de Robin des Pois
très-faciles	cutées par Sagrini
onterre	op. 27. Variations sur un theme
Alger, de Rossini	
- op. 4. Variations sur le trio Piache l'impegno 5;	5 PRADATSCH. Six variations
op. 5. Duo de l'Italienne à Alger, varié	ciles, suivies de l'air du Clair
op. 6. Grand caprice 5;	de Buile, vance.

Figure 4 A Richault catalog from around 1826 refers to a set of "Brilliant Variations, Performed by Sagrini," with opus number 23. Notice ou Supplément des nouveautés qui viennent de paraître chez S. Richault, éditeur de musique, boulevart Poissonnière, No 16, au premier, à Paris (c. 1826). Bibliothèque nationale de France.

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2. Ouverture de l'Ita-		thême de Preciosa	4
-A'b stien a Alger, de Rossini.	- 5 75	8. Six andantes à plu-	
soong ab_15. Grand exercice ou	1	od e sieurs parties,	5 75
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5, Duó de l'Italienne		de contredanses	3 75
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6 Grand Caprice	3 75	un air suisse favori,	
Cavatine de l'Ita-		chante par Mmc Stockau.	
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19. Fantaisie et varia-		mands, avec variations	
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Figure 5 A later Richault catalog, issued around 1831, again refers to a set of variations performed by Sagrini, but now with opus number 9, apparently correcting the opus number assigned in the earlier catalog. Catalogue des ouvrages composant le fonds de musique de Simon Richault ... Paris, Boulevart Poissonnière, N. 16, au premier (c. 1831). Bibliothèque nationale de France.

It is of further significance that Legnani usually did not add dedications to his editions, yet three of the seven works published by Pacini carry them. A possible explanation is that they were added by the publisher—a common occurrence during this period—but one of the three, opus 40, is dedicated as son ami Fr. Pacini. It is reasonable to assume, therefore, that all three dedications on the Pacini editions were added by Legnani himself.

Although Sagrini and Legnani can both be placed in Paris in 1825, and the mutual dedications discussed above can be dated within a few years of each other, these facts might not seem sufficient to prove a connection between the two. Further detail, however, is provided by three Richault catalogs listing a set of *Variations brillantes* by Legnani and mentioning Sagrini by name. The first, from 1826, includes an entry for "op. 23. Variations brillantes exécutées par Sagrini" (figure 4).<sup>11</sup> The opus number is an apparent mistake, as Artaria had already published Legnani's opus 23 in 1822.<sup>12</sup> The correct number, 9, was provided a few years later in a c. 1831 Richault catalog, which gives "Œuv[re] 9. Variations brillantes, exéc[utées] par Sagrini" (figure 5).<sup>13</sup> An even later Richault catalog gives the same information (figure 6).<sup>14</sup>

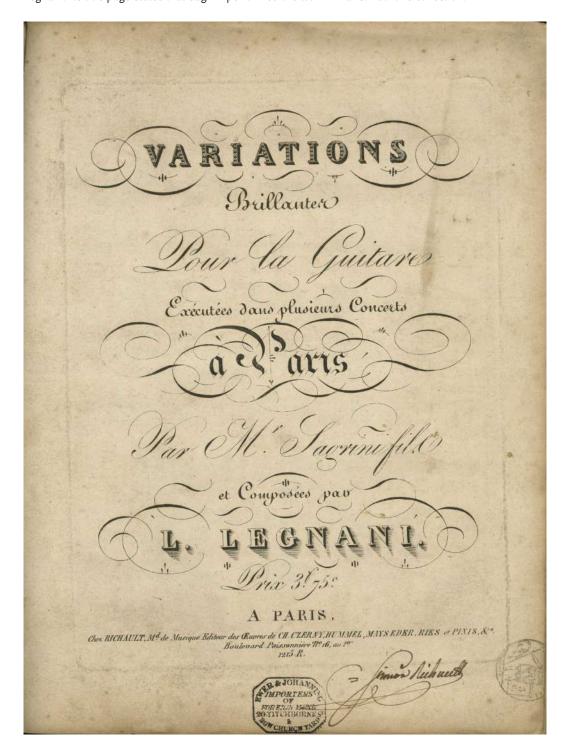
- 9 Of Legnani's known published opus numbers, thirteen include dedications.
- 10 No copies of opus numbers 30 and 33 by Pacini have been found.
  Opus 30, published by A. Meissonnier and Jean André, were both dedicated "à Monsieur J. Rossini." Opus 34, published by Pacini, Probst, Kistner, and Vizzari, all carry the dedication "à Monsieur Carulli." Opus 40 is not known to have been published by anyone but Pacini, and Legnani did not dedicate any other compositions to Pacini.
- 11 Notice ou Supplément des nouveautés qui viennent de paraître chez S. Richault, éditeur de musique, boulevart Poissonnière, Nº 16, au premier, à Paris (c. 1826). Bibliothèque nationale de France.
- 12 DUETTO / concertante / Chitarra e Flauto / composto dal Sigr. / Luigi Legnani (2726, Artaria & Co.). Advertised in *Wiener Zeitung*, December 19, 1822, 1168.
- 13 Catalogue des ouvrages composant le fonds de musique de Simon Richault ... Paris, Boulevart Poissonnière, N. 16, au premier (c. 1831), Bibliothèque nationale de France.
- 14 Catalogue de musique spécial pour la harpe, la guitare et l'accordéon: Extrait du catalogue général publie par S. Richault, éditeur; boulevard des Italiens, no. 4, au premier (c. 1850), Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, http://opacplus.bsb-muenchen.de/title/BV040194636/ft/bsb11135099, and Google Books (digitized 20 February 20, 2014). The library has marked this catalog as "c. 1850," although Richault was not at boulevard des Italiens until 1862, according to Donald William Krummel and Stanley Sadie, eds., Music Printing and Publishing, The New Grove Handbooks in Music (London: Macmillan Press, 1990), 392.

Figure 6 A still later Richault catalog again lists the variations performed by Sagrini as opus 9. Catalogue de musique spécial pour la harpe, la guitare et l'accordéon. Extrait du catalogue général publie par S. Richault, éditeur, boulevard des Italiens, N° 4, au premier. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek.

LEIGNANI et LEIDESDORF. OEuvre 28. Va-

riations concertantes sur un thème de Rossini, avec acc. de quatuor..... LEGNANI. OEuvre 1. Le Tremblement de EGNANA OEuvre 2. Ouverture de l'Italienne à Alger.... OEuvre 3 Grand exercice ou études. - OEuvre 4. Trio priache l'impegno, OEuvre 5. Duo de l'Italienne à Alger. - OEuvre 6. Grand caprice..... - OEuvre 7. Cavatine de l'Italienne à Alger. ..... - OEuvre 8. Chœur et rondo, id. . . . . 6 2 . OEuvre 9. Variations brillantes exécutées par Sagrini..... Scherzo avec quatre variations. . . . . - OEuvre 11. Rondo..... - OEuvre 12. Tyrolienne variée..... - OEuvre 16. Nel cor più, air varié.... - OEuvres 18 et 24. Deux thèmes de la Dame du Lac, varies..... OEuvre 19. Fantalsie et variations fa-Oliuvre 20. Trente-six caprices dans les tons majeurs et mineurs..... - OEuvre 21. Air de Zelmira, varié... OEuvre 22. Marche de Robin des Bois, variée.... OEavre 28 Thoma de Schuster xar. Zelmira ..... - OEuvre 27. Thème original varié... 7 50 OFuvre 34. Caprice ..... - OEuvre 60. Grande étude..... OEuvre 61. Grande fantaisie..... 7 50 OEuvre 62. Introduction et rondo... OEuvre 63. Trente-six valses..... OEuvre 64. Thême varié..... Trois girs de danses espagnoles

Figure 7 A bound volume of nineteenth-century guitar music contains a set of *Variations brillantes* by Legnani. Its title page states that Sagrini performed the work in Paris. Author's collection.



**Figure 8** The opening measures of Legnani's *Variations brillantes*, from the same copy as figure 7. Note the blank space after the word "Oeu[vre]" (opus), with no number after.



After a search through published research on Legnani revealed no mention of Sagrini or opus 9, I reviewed my personal files and collection of scores.<sup>15</sup> In a bound volume of guitar music from the nineteenth century, I found a Legnani edition that mentions Sagrini on the title page (figure 7):

Variations / Brillantes / Pour la Guitare / Exécutées dans plusieurs Concerts / à Paris / Par Mr. Sagrini fils / et Composées par / L. Legnani. / Prix 3.f 75.c / A PARIS, / Chez RICHAULT. Md. de Musique Editeur des Œuvres de CH. CZERNY, HUMMEL, MAYSEDER, RIES et PIXIS, &c. / Boulevard Poissonière No. 16, au 1er / 1215.R.

The title page does not give an opus [French, æuvre] number, while the first page of music has a printed "Oeu:" followed by only a blank space (figure 8). There is a very faint ink print of "Largo" between the printed composer's name "L. LEGNANI" and the "Oeu:." The indication "Largo" is clearly printed above the stave, making it apparent that an engraving change was made. There is, however, no indication that an opus number was ever in the print. And yet even without an explicit opus number, the unique mention of Sagrini performing this work both in the Richault catalogs and on the title page of the edition indicate that this is indeed the opus 9 of Legnani that was published in 1825 or 1826. 16

- 15 In addition to the aforementioned articles by Marco Mustardino, I reviewed the following books and articles: Philip Bone, *The Guitar and Mandolin* (London, Mainz, Leipzig: Schott, 1st ed., 1914; 2nd ed., 1954); Josef Zuth, *Handbuch der Laute und Gitarre* (Hidelsheim, New York: Georg Olm, 1972; facsimile of Vienna, 1926–8); Romolo Ferrari, "Luigi Legnani," *Der Gitarrefreund*, Heft 7/8 (1926) through Heft 1/2 (1927); Domingo Prat, *Diccionario de guitarristas* (Buenos Aires: Romero y Fernández, 1934); *Dizionario dei chitarristi e liutai italiani* (Bologna: La Chitarra, 1937); Daniela Rossato, "Luigi Rinaldo Legnani," *Il Fronimo*, no. 27 (April 1979): 5–15; Danilo Prefumo, "L'attività concertistica di Luigi Legnani nei resoconti dei giornali dell'epoca," *Il Fronimo*, no. 41 (October 1982): 8–23; Daniela Rossato, "Luigi Rinaldo Legnani," *Nova Giulianiad* 2, no. 7 (November 1985): 154–63; Douglas James, "Luigi Rinaldo Legnani: His Life and Position in European Music of the Early Nineteenth Century" (DMA diss., University of Arizona, 1994); Sergio Monaldini, *Chitarra romantica: Luigi (Rinaldo) Legnani e il virtuosismo strumentale nell'Ottocento* (Ravenna: Longo, 2015).
- 16 No Richault catalogs have been found between 1820 and 1826, and no newspaper announcements have been found to permit dating this edition more precisely.

The reference to Sagrini on the title page is not a conventional dedication, in that it does more than mention him by name: rather, it calls out his performances of the composition "in several Paris concerts." Unfortunately, newspaper reviews of Sagrini's concerts in Paris rarely list the works he performed. If Sagrini did indeed perform these variations several times, then it would have been during the eight known performances by him that coincide with the dates when Legnani was in Paris. 17 Legnani performed in Geneva on November 23, 1824, and he may have arrived in Paris in the first months of 1825, judging by an announcement of the publication of his opus 22 by Richault on April 29 of that year. 18 Between November 1824 and April 1825 the activities and location of Legnani are unknown. He performed on July 3, 1825, in the salle du Wauxhall in Paris; then, on December 12, 1825, he was back in Geneva performing in concert. If Legnani arrived in Paris in late 1824, then Sagrini might have performed the opus 9 Variations in his December and January concerts; it seems more likely, however, that he would have performed them in his March and May concerts. Sagrini's activities after May 1825 and until September 1826 are unknown, so there might have been additional concerts in which he performed Legnani's opus 9. It is a testament to the abilities and popularity of Luigi Sagrini that this was not just a dedication to a fellow performer: Sagrini, Legnani, and Richault must have stood to gain some promotional value from the specific mention of performances of this work. It seems reasonable, then, to date the publication of opus 9 to 1825 or 1826, when the two guitarists were active in the city and both could receive immediate benefit from the publication.

Some additional context for dating the work comes from the title page of the copy in my collection, which includes an import stamp in the name of Ewer & Johanning, with the address "20 Titchborne St & Bow Church Yard" (see again figure 7). The company was located at this address from approximately 1826 until 1829, when their partnership dissolved. This narrows the date of the printed score's import into England to within a few years of its publication.

A printed reference to Sagrini performing a work of Legnani does not appear until February 1833, in a Paris newspaper: "The young guitarist Sagrini was heard in the intermission, and performed with as much brilliance as clarity the famous

<sup>17</sup> Sagrini's known performances in Paris span the period from March 1824 to May 1825. They are as follows: (1) salle Pfeiffer, March 15, 1824; (2) rue de Cléry, June 6, 1824; (3) salle Favart, June 13, 1824; (4) rue de Cléry, December 29, 1824; (5) rue de Cléry, January 5, 1825; (6) salon de Mme Creep-Bercytter, March 14, 1825; (7) rue de Cléry, March 23, 1825; (8) rue de Cléry, May 11, 1825.

<sup>18</sup> VARIATIONS / Pour la Guitare / sur la marche favorite / de l'Opéra / DER FREYSCHÜTZ / de Ch. M. de Weber / Par / L. LEGNANI (997, Richault). Copy located in the Hudleston Collection, Royal Irish Academy of Music, Dublin. Announced in Journal général d'annonce de musique, estampes, livres nouveaux, etc., no. 17 (April 29, 1825): 135, as "VARIATIONS, sur la marche de Robin des Bois, pour guitare, par Legnani. Op. 22 . . . 3-75."

<sup>19</sup> The stamp reads: "Ewer & Johanning / Importers / of / Foreign Music / 20 Titchborne St / & / Bow Church Yard."

<sup>20</sup> Charles Humphries and William C. Smith, Music Publishing in the British Isles (London: Cassell, 1954), 143.

variations of Legnani; we find all the music of this composer engraved at Pacini."<sup>21</sup> It is unfortunate that the title of the work he performed is not included. With the phrase "the music of this composer," the reviewer refers to the Pacini editions of Legnani listed in the 1829 catalog above (see again figure 3), for Legnani is not known to have published any works with Pacini other than those in the catalog. Sagrini never published with Pacini, although the latter sold tickets to two of his concerts in 1824. Concert programs from Sagrini's performances in Bristol from September 1833 give an indication of the Legnani works that he may have been performing in prior years. He performed a set of *Grand variations* on September 3 and September 18, and an *Aria variata* on September 7. Unfortunately, these titles are not precise enough to identify which of Legnani's works he performed.

As for the bound volume of guitar music that contains Legnani's op. 9, it has a stamp on the inside front cover that reads "H.-L.-F. Guermonprez. 'Pratten Legacy.' 1889." According to Andrew Britton, the "Pratten Legacy" items were bequeathed to Guermonprez by his friend William Sidney Pratten (1820–82), a piano prodigy and son of Stephen Pratten (1799–1845). Stephen's other children were Frederick Stephen Sidney Pratten (1823–73), a double bass player in a London orchestra, and Robert James Sidney Pratten (1824–68), a flute prodigy who married Catharina Josepha Pelzer (1824–95)—later known as Madame Sidney Pratten. In the September 18 concert in Bristol mentioned above, William Sidney Pratten performed with Sagrini. The "Pratten Legacy" volume contains works by guitarists who performed in Bristol, including a work by Sagrini. How Stephen Pratten acquired opus 9 and whether Sagrini was involved is unknown.

The remaining gaps in Legnani's opus numbers deserve more research to understand the specific circumstances for each. While it may be impossible to definitively identify each missing opus, it is fortunate that one piece of the puzzle has been found and set in position. It is important to note how this particular discovery came to be made: not by investigating Legnani directly but through a broad investigation of one of his contemporaries—Sagrini—who, though unknown today, was a well-known prodigy, performing with many famous musicians of the time. More details of Legnani's relationships with his contemporaries, his publishers, and his other compositions may be discovered through research into the records and activities of other musicians, prominent at the time but now forgotten.

<sup>21 &</sup>quot;Le jeune guitariste Sagrini s'est fait entendre dans l'entr'acte, et a exécuté avec autant de brillant que de netteté les célèbres variations de Legnani; on trouve toute la musique de ce compositeur gravée chez Pacini." Vert-Vert: Journal des salons et des théatres (Paris), no. 175, February 23, 1833, 3.

<sup>22</sup> This entire volume is available as a digital edition: Pratten Legacy (Dallas: DGA, 2020), https://dga-editions.com/pratten-legacy.html.

<sup>23</sup> Andrew Britton, "The Guitar in the Romantic Period: Its Musical and Social Development, with Special Reference to Bristol and Bath" (PhD diss., Royal Holloway College, University of London, 2010), 269n176.

<sup>24</sup> Britton, 261.

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ROBERT COLDWELL began his guitar research activities in 1991 with his first article, "History of the Guitar in Japan," published on Matanya Ophee's *Guitar and Lute Issues* website in 1997. Online and print output of his research was formalized with his creation of Digital Guitar Archive and DGA Editions in 2005. Digital Guitar Archive, www.digitalguitararchive.com, contains numerous articles, over fifty thousand pages of historical guitar journals, and a database of over thirty thousand sheet music editions in library collections. The print catalog of DGA Editions, www.dga-editions. com, consists of twenty titles. He currently resides in Dallas, Texas.

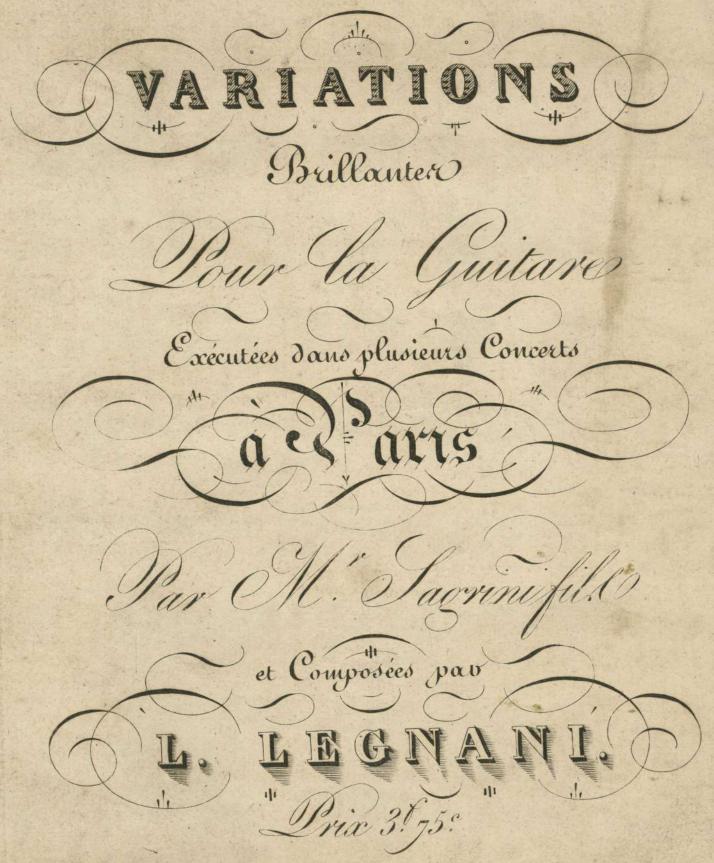
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