

The Old Church of the *Ospedale della Pietà*

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One who wants to satisfy their curiosity to know how a particular area of Venice appeared in an older time, has no more than to put an eye on the never sufficiently admired prospect of Venice by De Barbari¹ and enjoy the ancient view. This not so, however, for one who wishes to see the place and appearance of the old church of the Pietà: evidently, at the end of the 1400s, it had not yet been built between the *Calle della Pietà*, clearly visible in De Barbari's prospect, and the nearby bridge of *Sepolcro* (towards the East), which took its name from the pre-existing monastery site immediately after that bridge.

It is not improbable that for the religious practices of the pious women who worked caring for abandoned infants, and for the residents grown in age, that one would have thought, initially, of a simple chapel within the building, that perhaps occupied an area immediately behind today's Hotel Metropole, with a door on the *Calle della Pietà* and the altar facing East. But as the *Ospedale* lived exclusively thanks to the offerings of the population, it later became necessary that the church faced the *Riva degli Schiavoni*, a place of great traffic, and not the narrow *calle*. Determining when this happened is rather difficult; it remains purely speculation, but it certainly happened at a date well after that of the prospect by De Barbari.

To find visual traces of the old church of the Pietà we must turn to the engravings of A. Porzio and A. della Via, published in 1686. We believe that these authors did not have strictly topographical intentions: their drawings were meant more as illustrations of "festive and military Games"² than to trace the exact profiles of the buildings that we see in the background.

When, in the previous century, A. Quadri had the happy idea to trace the profile of the buildings that line the *Canal Grande* and the *Riva degli Schiavoni*³, he seems to have reproduced the old design. We need however to add that for many decades the old church was totally incorporated in the *Ospedale* (replaced now by the new church, which is the current one) and restructured internally, according to its new functions. The inevitable transformations were not, it seems, completely radical, as in the plan of the *Combatti*⁴ it appears one can still read, as a whole, the entire area of the old church.

In a very well-known painting by Francesco Guardi (*The Departure of the Bucintoro*, Paris, the Louvre) both the new church of the Pietà and the old are clearly identifiable, almost like in a color photograph⁵. The new, naturally, is shown with the face of the building incomplete; the old church, to the right, at the extreme edge of the painting, is clearly identifiable, poor enough in its architectural lines, but with a certain dignity, and not quite so ungainly, therefore, as it appears in the engravings just cited.

Guardi's painting deserves attention, because it gives us an idea of the height of the old building: the top of the roof barely passes the height of the gutter of the new church. The perimeter walls are of the same height as today's Hotel Metropole.⁶

It is still possible today to reveal the depth of the room of the old church following the path of the *Calle della Pietà* and paying attention to the small entrance on the external wall, twenty meters from the entrance of the *calle*. Here began the presbytery, the area, that is, in which the main altar was found.

We have the opportunity to verify what's been said (that is that the old church of the Pietà could be found on the right side of the *calle*) by examining the prospect of Venice done by Ughi in 1729.⁷

For those who want a clearer idea regarding the surface and the volume of the old church, we can point out the church of San Basso (facing the *piazzetta dei Leoni*, next to the Basilica of S. Marco) that has remained intact in its internal structures and has come to be used in our times as a hall for meetings and cultural events.⁸

The old church of the Pietà, compared to the churches of the other *Ospedali* of Venice, was undoubtedly the poorest in artistic embellishments: on the five altars that could be found in it, and likewise on the walls, there were no paintings of great note.

In all probability the four altars along the side walls were of wood "painted as fake marble", as was widely the custom in those times.

It has been noted that several years passed before the project for the new church of the *Ospedale della Pietà* came to be actually realized. In this time period various problems inherent to the realization of the project were addressed and resolved by the Governors of the *Ospedale*, and among these that of acquiring an area for the new construction such that the new church would appear as the most important building in that section of the *Riva degli Schiavoni*. Even if it was believed up to then that Massari's project would be entirely realized, there was a question to resolve: the enlargement of the shorefront curb (*fondamenta*) upon which the new church would face. For this problem the '*Savi ed Esecutori alle Acque*' were called,⁹ and in the records of this Magistracy can be found, dated 27 December 1740, a written report signed by Bernardino Zendrini and Giovanni Filippini. The report is accompanied by a map in which it is verifiable how the old *fondamenta* was somewhat "curved inward", as can be read in the elaboration. The consulting technicians were of the opinion that the projected enlargement of the *fondamenta* would not be the cause of any damage. In the case of the minimum project being built they suggested the curving of the two outer sides of the new *fondamenta*, and this for giving the maximum flow to the water, which according to the course of the tide entered or exited from the two side canals. In the execution of the larger plan, that is a greater enlargement of the new *fondamenta*, the curvature of the two sides was said to not be necessary.¹⁰

We hold the reproduction of this map to be important because we may find on it the following useful annotations:

The old church expanded to a depth equal to that of the new; "...including the walls..." it would have also expanded in width.¹¹ The old *calle* that follows the side of the church would have acquired greater width (almost double).¹²

The map accounts for only the “church doorway” in its reference to the old church of the Pietà, not for the presbytery which was at the back and was of slightly less width than that of the church. There is no trace of the elevated corridor that connected the old building of the *Ospedale* with that of the new acquisition. To the drafters of the report these particulars were of no interest, as they were outside the questions which required their technical opinion. What we do know is that this is, if not the only, one of the very few graphic documents in which the old church of the *Ospedale* appears, which while small (about twenty meters in depth, about ten wide, the same or a bit more in height), could welcome a certain number of the faithful, even more if we consider that the church doorway was completely clear of benches or kneeling pads. The lateral walls, where there were altars, and also those of the entrance, were covered in wood (up to about two meters in height), on which was fixed a long seat for the comfort of the faithful.¹³ Among the churches of the four Venetian *Ospedali*, that of the Pietà was without doubt the smallest and remained so until Massari’s project was finally realized.

In the anonymous satirical quatrains published by Francesco Degrada in 1965, we find a lively description both of the women of the *coro*, who were singers or instrumentalists, and of the crowd that thronged in the church to enjoy their performances, the one caught up in their skills or personal characteristics, the other in the typical attitude of one about to profoundly enjoy the offered melodies.¹⁴

In the last decade of the 17th Century, work of a certain solidity was done in the old church: the area of the presbytery, with the recession of the rear wall, was enlarged and a new altar was built completely in marble.¹⁵ This work was done to accommodate a worthy burial for a distinguished benefactor of the *Ospedale della Pietà*, Giusto Vaneyche, a noble originally from Anversa, who had worked in Venice for decades and had been one of the Governors of the same *Ospedale*.

In truth, Vaneyche, in his will,¹⁶ did not specify where his body should be buried, only that he desired to be interred either in his parish, at S.S. Apostoli, or in the church of the Pietà; we do not know why the choice fell to the Pietà. The name of the designer of the work is known: the architect Domenico Margutti, who was part of the school of Baldassare Longhena. The company for which he worked was that of Baldissera Garzotti, who was designated by Longhena as his sole heir. The sculptures were realized by Enrico Merengo (or Mayringo, as we find written in the payments).¹⁷

It is not improbable that the rear wall of the presbytery ended in a small apse, in the door of which the new altar could have found a place.

These new works ultimately involved the *Coro* proper of the Pietà, the place that is which would be occupied by the singers and the instrumentalists of the *Ospedale* for musical performances, and that was found over the main altar (as the *Coro* is even today in the church of the *Ospedaletto*); but we do not have exact information and particulars of the work related to the *Coro*.

The area of the *Ospedale*, with the acquisition of the rentals of factories outside the *calle* (towards West), was enlarged, and required the construction of a connecting passage between the old and that which – at least for the acquisition in use – one could call the new *Ospedale*. On 14 July 1719 it was decided to build a “*passalitio*” that crossed the *calle* at the height of the second floor of the factories.¹⁸

Several years later, precisely on 4 June 1723, the request was put forward to build, to the sides of the existing *coro*, two *coretti* to provide a place for all the members of the already famous musical group. The proposal, put to a vote, was not passed. On the following 2 July the request was resubmitted and this time obtained a favorable vote. On 6 August the project plans were voted on and accepted.¹⁹ And here we want to underline a fact which is not just incidental: on the same day during which the construction of the two side *coretti* was approved, the Governors of the *Ospedale* also decided to commission Vivaldi to supply the *Ospedale* with two concertos per month "...to conserve...the credit of the *Choro* until now reported..."²⁰

In a report of the Deputies to the Church and the *Coro*, without any date, but clearly after the completion of the work just discussed, we read that the two new side *coretti* had to be completed by putting in, rather than a covering in wood, a "grate of figured iron" like in the old *coro*. It suggested also that the angles where the new iron grates join with the old "...remain more extended..." to give a view to the *figlie* performing behind them in order that they may see the *Maestra* conducting the *Choro*..."²¹

In his will of 8 September 1739, the Noble Pietro Foscari,²² Governor of the *Ospedale della Pietà*, left an annuity of 300 ducats to go to the *Maestro di Coro* of the *Ospedale*, with the specific charge to compose "...every Sunday of the year a motet or antiphon for one of the *figlie* of the *Coro*, one after the other..." excluding the months of June and October (for the planting in June and the harvest in October perhaps it was not a few who left the city, and therefore there were smaller crowds of people in the church). The bequest of Foscari had two aims: to oblige a rotation of the women of the *coro* and to ensure an adequate annual salary for the *Maestro di Capella*. In his codicil of 4 October 1744 the testator, revealing that the *Ospedale* had in the meantime provided for a higher salary for the *Maestro di Coro*, stipulated that the annuity that went towards the salary of the *Maestro di Coro* was to be divided between him and the other music teachers (*Maestri*) at the *Pietà*.²³

In the church of the *Pietà* the musical presentations were given in the best of styles, as revealed in the poetic composition already mentioned and by the never diminished affluence of the faithful who attended the church, from which, it would seem, there were no notable defections, as happened instead, around 1730, at the *Mendicanti*.²⁴ In this church concerti were performed, such as those by Vivaldi which were commissioned on the occasion of the enlargement of the old *coro*, which we have mentioned. The performers were poor women, who labored greatly to interpret them and offer them to the faithful who habitually attended the church on Sundays and festivals. They did not exhibit themselves in the middle of the church, like "beautiful moving statuettes"; they stayed in their *coro* or *coretto*, not completely invisible, but kept separate enough to keep the church a church, and not have it become a concert hall.

In the church there were two active organs, one in the *coro* proper and the other, from September 1735 on, in the "...side *coretto*..."; this last was commissioned to the organ-maker Giacinto Pescetti: it had to be "in unison" with the other and for this 200 ducats were budgeted.²⁵

In the *Ospedale* there was a small organ, but this could not serve the purpose required, so it was given to the organ-maker who reduced the cost of the new organ by 40 ducats.

We cannot be certain, but we hold that it is not improbable that this small organ is the same one that Francesco Maria Ondeo, in the summer of 1667, wanted to sell in a public lottery, but that in the end was donated to the Pietà and sent for use with that *coro*, as can be read in his will dated 10 July 1667, a testament, however, that was never put in to effect.²⁶ In the testament of 10 October 1694, published the following 11 November,²⁷ the organ is no longer mentioned, exactly because, we believe, it had already been in use at the Pietà for years.

With the passing of time and the inevitable decline of human things, the Pietà fell from that pedestal upon which, for the work of some and the material assistance of many, it had deservedly stood. One of the new organs was almost sold²⁸ (and no trace can be found of the date of its disappearance). It almost appears that what came to be called the artichoke policy was applied: a little at a time everything went, beginning with the women who formed the *coro*, then moving on to the very rich collection of music and of instruments, of which very few were saved and remained in Venice, albeit in other locations.²⁹

To say that the Governors of the Pietà (who were laymen) had in mind for the construction of the new church “...its dual function as sacred place and more still as concert hall...”³⁰ is less than exact. Such a design did not enter their plans: in fact not even once did they use the new church for a concert performance. They only hoped, and their expectations were legitimate, to have a sacred place in which musical performance could be given with more decorum than in the old church: but, it would appear, the results were not in line with the expectations.³¹ Perhaps the most discerning had regrets for the old church, which went to another end, used for the specific needs of the *Ospedale*, without leaving any document trail as to how these changes happened. One thing is probable: the acoustic problems with the new church could have had the Governors of the Pietà thinking about the opportunity to have a specific place for eventual concerts; but that did not happen. When, given the multiplying number of requests from foreign visitors to Venice, the problem arose of using a space where illustrious guests could hear special concerts, the Governors answered the need with that which had been their old meeting hall; but, also in this case, the purpose was not to have a “*salotto di musica*” as did the Governors of the *Ospedaletto*, but to avoid damage to the walls caused by the decorations that were used to adorn the space (sometimes chosen in advance according to the identity of the group of visitors) and the dangers of fire caused by the necessary illumination for such occasions.³²

From time immemorial, in the church of San Marco, on the occasion of the Christmas Eve Mass, “concerts” were held. The performers occupied a dais behind the altar, outside of the “*pala d’oro*”. What was requested of them was a specific performance, not a public exhibition. We do not believe that it should be surprising that this happened just the same at the Pietà, in specific “liturgical moments”. We add as well that this would be repeated, on particular festivals and holidays, in almost all the Venetian churches, parochial or religious as they were, such that in early April 1639 the *Provveditori di Comun*,³³ receiving an invitation from the ecclesiastical authorities, called “... the Guardians, *Gastaldi* and all other sort of leaders...” of the Venetian confraternities to their subject, because instruments should not be used which were “...warlike such as trumpets, drums and similar more suited to drill practice than in the house of God...”. On the same occasion they also called on leaders “...to not permit changing the words in this music, or singing words that are improvised and not taken from the sacred books...”. To this exhortation we immediately add: “...save for at the offering, at the elevation and after the Agnus Dei,

and so at Vespers between the psalms one may sing motets with pious and devout words, which are taken from the sacred books and ecclesiastical authors...". In San Marco, during Christmas Mass, a motet was also sung after the epistle.

For the women of the *Coro* of the Pietà, that which at San Marco was a Christmas exception (in fact for that event the best voices and the best instrumentalists that could be found in Venice were recruited) was a daily practice. From the comments of the connoisseurs that have reached us, it seems that these "girls of the *coro*" were ever at the height of their skill; and it could not be otherwise, given their assiduous preparation and continuous application, just as befits one for whom music is almost a reason for living.

In the introduction of a little book of piety, printed for the use of the regular afternoon attendees of the churches of the four *Ospedali* of Venice, one notes the fact that each *Ospedale* had its own particular collection of motets: but, at least at the Pietà, other than these, *concerti* were also performed.³⁴

¹ G. Mazzariol, T. Pignatti, *La pianta prospettica di Venezia of 1500 drawn by Iacopo de' Barbari*, Venezia, 1963.

² G. Cassini, *Piante e vedute prospettiche di Venezia*, Venezia, 1971, p. 89: *Veduta prospettica della riva destra del Canal Grande dall'Arsenale a Palazzo Moro-Lin*, engraved by A. Porzio and A. Della Via and included in *Giochi festivi e militari...* di G. M. Alberti, Venezia, 1686.

³ A. Quadri, *Il Canal Grande di Venezia rappresentato in tavole rilevate ed incise da Domenico Moretti*, Venezia, 1828.

⁴ B. and G. Combatti, *Nuova planimetra della regia città di Venezia*, Venezia, 1848, (Table IX). This work was reproduced as a copy in 1982 with an introduction by G.D. Romanelli.

⁵ Undoubtedly it is somewhat surprising to note come chimneys on the right side of the roof of the old church; we need to realize however that the church entry occupied in large part only the left half of the building, all the rest was for other uses of the *Ospedale*.

⁶ We don't know when the current hotel came to occupy this building, the needs of which required the remodeling of the inside areas and outside as well including the entrance doors and the windows. The perimeter walls remain of the same measure.

⁷ G. Cassini, op. cit., p. 118: *Pianta topografica della città*, 1729, drawn by L. Ughi.

⁸ The church of San Basso, including the presbytery, is about 20m long, 9m wide and 10m high.

⁹ Archivio di Stato di Venezia (abbrev. ASV), *Savi ed Esecutori alle Acque, Relazioni Periti circa la Laguna*, Filza 56, Report of 27 December 1740, accompanied by a drawing which was recently numbered 20, being, in progression, the twentieth in this file.

¹⁰ The minimum project called for a 4 foot enlargement of the *fondamenta* (1.39m) towards the Sepolcro bridge and of 8 feet towards the other bridge (2.78m), while the full project called for 7 and a half feet on one side and of 15 on the other (2.6m and 5.2m). A Venetian 'foot' measured .347735m; see A. Martini, *Manual of Metrology, or Measures, Weights and Money in use currently and in the past by all the people*, Torino, 1863, p. 817

¹¹ The 58 feet indicated in the plan correspond to 20.17m.

¹² The old *calle* was 2.47m wide, with the new church it would have had a width of 5.04m.

¹³ The faithful were offered, with the request of a small donation, wooden stools fitted with backrests. These could still be seen in some churches around 1940.

¹⁴ F. Degrada, *An unpublished testimony from the 1700s on the Ospedale della Pietà*, Edizioni di Convengo, Torino, 1965. The poetic composition (71 quatrains of eight syllable verses) was also published by R. Giazotto, *Antonio Vivaldi*, Torino, 1973, pp. 389-396. It is truly embarrassing to choose among the rhymes regarding the women of the *Coro*: Appolonia "dry and ugly"; Agata of the "pretty face" but with the fingerless left hand; and so on. There is mention of Maria la Bolognese which gives us the opportunity to date the poetic composition: in verse XXVII her age is given as just over 20 years. From a registry of the Pietà we find that she was born (or at least was left there) on 16 February 1706 (v. ASV, *Ospedali e luoghi pii*, Busta 907, Collection dated 12 March 1793). We are therefore

near 1730 or a few years earlier. She was made *Maestra del Coro* on 31 May 1748 and held the position until 31 August 1794, when her “jubilee” came, as they used to say when one retired (v. ASV, *Ospedali e luoghi pii*, Busta 684, Filza parti)

¹⁵ ASV, *Ospedali e luoghi pii*, Busta 80, Fasc. 15. There is a draft of a contract, dated 12 May 1692, for the new altar, signed by “Paulo Calalo, sculptor to Charity” in which statues are discussed, “*puttini* in marble and heads of cherubim”; However, the execution of the project was later given to others. In the description of the work a room is mentioned in which was the “*rioda*”, the niche through which newborns could be left at the Ospedale, a room which was incorporated in the project for the new altar, and so the “*rioda*” was moved. Mentioned also are lateral walls being cut, the placement of new beams, and new door openings between the altar and the sacristy which stood behind it.

¹⁶ The family name of the distinguished benefactor of the Pietà appears in the documents in various forms: we believe the one to accept is that used by Cicogna (Biblioteca Museo Correr [abbrev. BMC], *Codici Cicogna*, 2013, n. 12, in which the inscriptions in the new church are reported by Cicogna himself, regarding which at no. 6 on the list we read that on the steps of the Capella Maggiore there was an inscription which recorded that there lay the bones of Giusto Vaneyche). The benefactor’s will is recorded in print in Fascicolo n. 15 mentioned in the previous note. There also exists a printed account of Vaneyche’s funeral, as recalled by Cicogna, in the “*Pallade Veneta*” of March 1688, a copy of which can be found in BMC, *Almanacchi*, 263

¹⁷ The names Margutti, Garzotti and Merengo can be read in the account registers of the *Ospedale*, see ASV, *Ospedali e luoghi pii*, Busta 696. The contract for the year 1692, dated 1 July, 28 July and 6 February 1693 respectively are the first payments to Garzotti (c. 13) (where we find that the contract for the new altar was signed the previous 12 June), to Merengo (c. 16) (whose family name is misrepresented as “Emirin”) and to Margutti (c. 37). In Busta 197, in the Register “Contract for the year 1693”, we read of the balance of payments between 20 and 25 for Merengo (whose last name is written as “Meyringo”, 23 for Margutti and 25 for Garzotti. The old altar was acquired on 20 June 1782 by Gregorio Morlaiter, for 250 ducats (v. ASV, *Ospedali e luoghi pii*, Regsitro 1024, c. 2458, where the name of the buyer is misrepresented as Gerolamo). It is not improbable that Merengo’s statues, of which we do not know the subjects, could be found in another church in Venice or nearby. Baldassare Longhena’s will (v. ASV, *Notarile, Testamenti*, Busta 487, Cedola n. 62) was published by L. Puppi in *Interpretazioni veneziane: Studi di storia dell’Arte pubblicati in onore di Michaelangelo Muraro*, Venezia, 1984, in the appendix *Le case, e il testamento* di Baldassare Longhena, p. 391.

¹⁸ ASV, *Ospedali e luoghi pii*, Busta 690, Notatorio M, c. 5.

¹⁹ ASV, *Ospedali e luoghi pii*, Busta 691, Notatorio N primo, respectively c. 175, c. 180 and c. 189.

²⁰ ASV, *Ospedali e luoghi pii*, Busta 691, Notatorio N primo, c. 179,

²¹ ASV, *Ospedali e luoghi pii*, Busta 691, Notatorio N primo. There is a sheet inserted in to the registry. The report has the autograph signature of Governor Pietro Foscari, *Procuratore Marciano*. The proposed work was approved on 7 January 1723 ‘*more Veneto*’ (= 1724) as one can find in the same registry at c. 216.

²² ASV, *Notarile, Testamenti*, Notaio L. Mandelli, Busta 794, Cedola 58.

²³ ASV, *Ospedali e luoghi pii*, Busta 692, Notatorio R, c. 126. When on 6 January 1741 ‘*more veneto*’ (=1742) Nicolò Porpora was nominated *Maestro di Coro*, he was assigned an annual salary of 570 ducats. To his successor, Andrea Bernasconi (26 May, 1744, see ASV, *Ospedali e luoghi pii*, Busta 693, Notatorio S, c. 9 recto), an annual salary of 500 ducats was given. Even after the fall of the Republic the *Ospedale della Pietà* continued to benefit from the bequest of Foscari: Giannagostino Perotti, who died on 28 June 1855, as is recalled in the obituary published in the *Gazzetta Ufficiale di Venezia* (n. 152 of Thursday 5 July 1855), was paid for his position as *Maestro di Coro* from Foscari’s bequest. We are certain of the veracity of this information, even if in the same text we read that among his predecessors were Biffi and Galuppi, which is not true.

²⁴ ASV, *Ospedali e luoghi pii*, Busta 651, Filza atti Ospedale Mendicanti. On 28 August 1731 it was decided to give the *figlie di coro* a share of the profits collected from renting the “*scagni*” (wooden stools with backs), to incentivize them to do better. This was related to a report on these earnings between 1729 and 1731, which showed a constant decline. The Governors of the *Ospedale* emphasized that these “rentals” were made “...during the Masses and Vespers that they sing through the year...”. In A. Tursi’s preface to the publication of A. Pancino, *Cenni sulle origini e vicende dell’Istituto della Pietà*, a quote from Goethe is cited: “...they pay two soldi for the seats while two ducats would not be too much...”. In the church of the Mendicanti (ASV, *Ospedali e luoghi pii*, Busta 642,

Inventarii) in 1721 there were 320 “*scagni*”; at two soldi per seat this would give 640 soldi, that is the equivalent of 32 lire or 5 ducats and one lire. The church of the Pietà was smaller, and the faithful who would have wanted to make use of a “*scagno*” were therefore in smaller numbers.

²⁵ ASV, *Ospedali e luoghi pii*, Busta 693, Notatorio S, c. 54. On the organs and organ makers active in the church of the Pietà see G. Vio, *Documenti di storia organaria veneziana*, “L’Organo”, XVI (1978), pp.169-197.

²⁶ Francesco Maria Ondeo, keyboardist, was mentioned by Pietro Francesco Caletti, called Cavalli, in his will of 12 March 1675, presented to a notary the following 14 January (ASV, *Notarile, Testamenti*, Busta 488, Cedola 206). We thank our friend Dr. Loris Stella for bringing this unpublished document to our attention.

²⁷ ASV, *Notarile, Testamenti*, Busta 487, Cedola 195. In his will Ondeo says that he is related to Don Giovanni Domenico Partenio, Maestro di Cappella at San Marco. In the death certificate (Archivio Parrocchiale di Santa Maria Formosa, *Morti*, Registro 1673 – 1695, p. 470, dated 11 November 1694), we read: “he will be interred by the Maestro di Capella, his uncle”. This relation was due to the fact that in the previous July Ondeo had married one of Partenio’s nieces. We add that Partenio was born in Venice and was baptized at San Giovanni in Bràgora on 5 June 1633.

²⁸ Two new organs were placed in the new church, commissioned to Don Pietro Nacchini, already by 11 October 1759 (see L. Livan, *Notizie d’arte tratte dai Notatori e dagli Annuali* del N. H. P. Gradenigo, Venezia, 1942, p. 45). But these were not able to be fully used due to the less than perfect acoustics of the church (ASV, *Ospedali e luoghi pii*, Busta 694, Notatorio V, c. 71 verso, dated 22 August 1766).

²⁹ For the instruments see: *Raccolte Correr, Elenco degli oggetti esposti*, Venezia, 1899, p. 277 and following. Actually these same instruments can be found at the Fondazione Levi.

³⁰ U. Franzoi, D. Di Stefano, *Le chiese di Venezia*, Venezia, p. 484. In the “*Scrittura Zandrini – Poleni*”, dated 4 February 1744 ‘*more veneto*’ (= 1745), on page 6 we read that the new church would have to have “a shape such as would render the singing stronger and more harmonious” (see BMC, Codici Cicogna, 2320, III, *Intorno la nuova fabbrica del Pio Luogo della Pietà di Venezia*, p. 6); this is different than what has been confirmed.

³¹ Apart from the need to sweeten the tone of the organs “... the registers of which have been found up to now mostly inoperable...” (as is recalled in note 28) also the *cantorie* turned out to be insufficient for all the women, singers or instrumentalists that they were: ASV, *Ospedali e luoghi pii*, Busta 676, Filza parti, dated 22 August 1766.

³² ASV, *Ospedali e luoghi pii*, Busta 694, Notatorio V, c. 81 verso. The decision dates to 13 February 1766 (= 1767). Something similar happened at the Mendicanti, as can be read on p. 73 of the *Annali della città di Venezia*, Venezia, 1766 (BMC, Opuscoli provenienze diverse, 442): on 17 May (the eve of Pentecost) there was a musical entertainment in “the usual ground floor rooms” that we believe can be identified as the location of the current pharmacy inside the Hospital.

³³ ASV, Povveditori di Comun, Busta 47, *Terminationi et ordini dell’Illustrissimi Signori Provveditori di Comun...*, Venezia, undated, edited by G.P. Pinelli. In the envelope are collected various editions of these terminations, labeled with progressive numbers on the exterior cover, in pencil. The text we have cited is found on pp. 52 and 53 of the one labeled with number 123.

³⁴ *Salmi che si cantano in tutti Vesperi dei giorni festivi di tutto l’anno dalle figliuole nelli Quattro Ospitali di questa città*, Venezia, 1752, by Antonio Groppo (BMC, Opuscoli provenienze diverse, 6581)