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*Abstract*

From 1803 to the early twenties, Giovanni Simone Mayr's letters often deal with aspects of the working relationship between the composer and his librettists (Romanelli, Rossi, Prividali, Foppa, Romani, Anelli): suggestions for topics and subjects, indications of literary models to be turned into librettos and assessments of the musical potential of those suggestions. In these exchanges, theatrical jargon frequently emerges: "punto, situazione, circostanze, argomento, soggetto, fatto, sviluppo, piano d'opera, schizzo, selva, distribuzione, scheletro, ossatura, filatura". In particular, then, we examine the relationship between Mayr and Gaetano Rossi, documented in some twenty letters 1803-1817, and specifically the case of the opera *Lanassa* (1817), the subject of a detailed correspondence between the two.