

A jewel of Genoa

Dynamic Recordings is celebrating 40 years with the release of a Paganini special



▲ Alberto Dellepiane: 'Other labels cannot move as quickly as us'

Based in a palatial 19th-century villa perched high above the city of Genoa, staff at Dynamic Recordings enjoy eye-popping views across the Ligurian Sea from Corsica to the French Riviera.

Dynamic's 40th anniversary, coupled with release of its Paganini edition – which by happy coincidence runs to 40 CDs – may give similar elevation to the family-run Italian label's global profile.

The business was founded in the 1960s by the musicologist Edward Neill, who was brought to Genoa as a child and became fascinated by the works of Paganini. 'He found a lot of old scores of Paganini's works and wanted to record them,' says Alberto Dellepiane, Dynamic's managing director.

But his efforts were mainly distributed among friends until he teamed up with friends Pietro Mosetti Casaretto, a surgeon and keen amateur violinist, and his wife Marisa, to set up Dynamic as a commercial label in 1978.

'The first recording was of Salvatore Accardo playing Paganini's own violin, and the recording is included in the Paganini edition,' Dellepiane says. 'In the beginning

they recorded mainly chamber music.'

Artists such as Ruggiero Ricci, Bruno Canino, Rocco Filippini, Mirella Freni and Ferruccio Furlanetto recorded for the label.

The Mosetti Casaretto's daughters joined the business, Christina training as an audio engineer and Daniella, having studied English, helping with booklet translations.

Dellepiane entered the company in 1992 – he studied for ten years as a tenor but entered Genoa's shipping industry. Then while singing in a chorus he met Cristina, they married and he was drawn into the Dynamic dynasty as its founder prepared to retire.

Dynamic, he says, was a late convert to CD, issuing its first silver disc in 1987, but under his guidance was early into opera videos, its first such release in 2003 being Donizetti's *Maria Stuarda* from Bergamo. 'I was an opera lover and still am, and Italy is the home of bel canto.'

Dynamic finances its recordings and retains all rights, including tv, video on demand, streaming and cinema. 'Other labels cannot move as quickly as us because they have to find partners for co-production, we can be more agile and follow our own instincts.'

Opera and festival directors often contact Dynamic a few days before opening night to say rehearsals have confirmed they have an outstanding production, and the label swings into action.

The label has developed lasting partnerships with many of Italy's leading opera houses as well as events such as the Rossini festival in Pesaro. Recently it has also developed partnerships in Madrid and Barcelona. Dynamic was also an early entrant into digital relays of opera to cinemas, starting with the Barber of Seville from La Fenice ten years ago, but found being first was costly. 'We started too early with a big investment in the satellite bands and the cost of production and subtitles, but it was a bad investment.' While the Met's relays from New York with big-name casts and showbiz presentation draw huge audiences worldwide, Dynamic struggles to find cinema partners.

On the other hand, Dellepiane says: 'The tv market is growing because there are a lot of thematic channels across the world. Once you have 100 or 200 titles available, revenue can be quite good, but the important thing is to retain all rights.'

He also sees audio and video streaming growing as broadband capacity improves. 'Rare operas are proving most popular for streaming,' he says.

Instrumental music has seen successes, particularly since Naxos took over Dynamic's manufacturing and distribution in 2014. Giacomo Scinaro's recording of Satie's piano music was a surprise hit.

He expects the Paganini edition to be a big seller in Japan, the US and Germany. But, while the artist ranks alongside St George and Christopher Columbus as a Genoese hero – last month's Paganini Festival is accompanied by six months of *Paganini Rockstar* events comparing the violinist to figures such as Jimi Hendrix and Maradona – that benefits Dynamic little. Only 10% of its sales are in Italy.

As for the next 40 years, Dellepiane hopes for a complete Rossini edition, 'possibly in partnership with Naxos'.

www.dynamic.it