Kære ven af Hafnia Chamber Orchestra

Du kan nu bestille billetter med rabat til

Gaetano Donizettis

Maria di Rohan

Lørdag den 19. Juni kl. 19.30

i Gentofte Rådhus, Bernstorffsvej 161, Charlottenlund

Søndag den 20. Juni kl. 16.00

i KFUM Salen, Store Kannikestræde 19, København

Nu får Donizettis tredjesidste opera fra 1843 endelig sin danske førsteopførelse. Dette oversete mesterværk ligner på mange måder et forstudie til Verdis "Maskeballet"; Dramatisk trekantsdrama med dødelig udgang fra Kardinal Richelieus Frankrig, hvor smægtende lyriske melodier står side om side med bravurarier. Operaen præsenteres koncertant i en version for kammerorkester. Blandt sangerne høres den polske tenor **Dawid Różański**, sopranen **Cecilia Lindwall**, sopranen **Ingeborg Børch**, barytonen **Lars Fosser** og bassen **Jakob Zethner**. Hafnia Chamber Orchestra dirigeres af **Simon Casali**

Der serveres vin og vand ad libitum i pausen
(...så længe lager haves)

Billetter til om lørdagen bestilles på www.belcanto.dk og ved at anvende rabatkoden **!k78** vil du som ven af Hafnia Chamber Orchestra kun betale 130 kr. mod 160 kr. i alm. løssalg.

Bestillinger til koncerten om søndagen kan kun ske ved enten at indtelefonere på **39 63 12 94**

eller ved at skrive mail med bestillingen til k.djoerup@mail.dk

A RUN-UP TO MARIA DI ROHAN
(with an acknowledgment to her mother-in-law)

A.

Caterina di Guisa (Carlo Coccia). Melodramma in due atti by Felice Romani. Source: Alexandre Dumas *Henri III et sa cour* Paris 1829

Fp Teatro alla Scala, Milan 14 February 1833. *Personaggi* Enrico duca di Guisa (tenor in the original version – basso in 1836 vsn), Caterina di Cleves (soprano), Arturo di Cleves (musico - her cousin), Conte di San Megrino (tenor). There are no comprimari.
Set in 1578 in the Louvre in Paris, Enrico (Henri *duc* de Guise) *Capo della Lega* (*Le Balafré* [see p7] real-life father of Donizetti's Claude *duc* de Chevreuse, who was born the very same year in which Coccia's opera is set and has been rechristened "Enrico" in *Maria di Rohan*) is jealous of his wife Caterina (Catherine de Clèves) who is in love with the conte di San Megrino (*comte* de Saint-Megrin) a *mignon* of the King. A husband consumed by rage he sets out to destroy the tenor by inveigling him into a rendezvous with his wife where a gang of assassins await him. The long hours of waiting by the Duchess expecting the fatal arrival of her lover into the trap set by her husband are punctuated by a succession of striking clocks. The opera has a nightmare scenario of trysts, suspense and threats. Her lover's offstage murder accomplished the distraught Caterina is left at the end to curse her husband. The plot has a vague basis in history (unlike *Maria di Rohan),* highly successful and given a major revision in 1836 it attracted a series of great singers. Donizetti, in a letter outlining his first projected *Maria di Rohan* on 23 September 1837 says "*A Venezia farò Un duello sotto Richelieu, una specie di Caterina di Guisa*" Zavadini 264. [Both musically and quite literally *Caterina di Guisa* was the real-life mother-in-law of *Maria di Rohan*!]

B.

Un duello sotto Richelieu (Federico Ricci). Melodramma in due atti (no librettist named but Francesco Dall'Ongaro, Antonio Gazzoletti and Antonio Somma). Source: Joseph-Philippe Simon pseud. Lockroy and Edmond Badon *Un duel sous le Cardinal de Richelieu* Paris 1832

Fp Teatro alla Scala, Milan 17 August 1839. *Personaggi* Duca di Chevreuse (basso), Maria di Rohan, vedova del contestabile di Luynes (soprano), Armando di Gondi (musico/tenor), Conte di Chalais, favorito di Luigi XIII (tenor), plus four comprimari including both the King and the Queen.
Based on the same source used by Cammarno/Donizetti, set outside Paris then in the Louvre and in the same places as the Donizetti/Cammarano opera but at an imprecise date, the opera has a far more complicated intrigue, invokes a whiff only of its *Caterina* predecessor and proposes only *some* of the aspects of the Donizetti plot to come (there is no secret marriage to Chevreuse, he tells Gondi that Maria is his wife at the outset) the issues are mainly political with jealously playing a default role but the opera ends momentously with the two celebrated pistol shots. With stretches of poor motivation and problems with casting, this opera was far from successful and had only one troubled series of performances blighted by illness and bad temper that played havoc with the score. The whole made little impact (either on Donizetti or indeed on the public - but Cambiasi ascribes it a "*Buono*")

C.

Il conte de Chalais (Giuseppe Lillo). Melodramma tragico in tre atti, libretto by Salvadore Cammarano. Source: derived from both sources above.

Fp Teatro S. Carlo, Naples 6 November 1839. *Personaggi* Riccardo, Conte di Chalais (tenor), Enrico, Duca di Chevreuse (basso), Maria, Contessa di Rohan (soprano), with Armando di Gondi (basso) and four other comprimari. Set "*in the reign of Louis XIII*" the opera was given sixteen performances and was therefore very far from the failure believed by Donizetti. The plot that now emerges will be that – with few digressions - as set by the Bergamesc. But for Lillo there is a more concentrated text, less sentimental and with a focus upon the tenor rather than upon either the basso or the soprano as the title indicates, Chalais is less a victim, indeed he is positively pugilistic in the *finale primo*, more virile in Act II, and in Act III he takes part in a trio in scene eight when he is almost absent at the same point in Donizetti's score where the injured husband begins to let fly. As a general principle, Donizetti diminished the role of Chalais to enhance that of Chevreuse (a diminution even more marked in the Paris version where the music of the major emotional outburst of Chalais – the Act II slow cabaletta - has been appropriated by Maria). In Giovanni Basadonna, Lillo had a higher-profile tenor than the Chalais of Donizetti, Lillo's Chevreuse, sung by Paul Barroilhet, is more noble a character than that offered by the rabid Ronconi, and his opera ends without the sarcasm and violence of the Donizettian *prima* of 1843. This, Cammarano's initial libretto, is marginally more fluent, less self-indulgent, its drama more consistent and contrasts quite strongly with the taste for passe-partout operatic portraits in vogue in Vienna. Musically, this latter of course favoured Donizetti's unchallenged dramatic gifts but moved even further away from the actual life and loves of the historic exemplars.

D.

Maria contessa di Rohan (Giovanni Pacini). Melodramma tragico in tre atti, libretto by Salvadore Cammarano. Sources as above.

Cammarano supplied Pacini with a revised version of Lillo's text in 1841; the subject was approved for performance by the Presidente Mocenigo of La Fenice on 30 June 1841. *Personaggi* Maria, Contessa di Rohan (prima donna), Riccardo, Conte di Chalais (primo tenore), Enrico, Duca di Chevreuse (primo basso), Il visconte di Suze (secondo tenore), Armando di Gondi (secondo basso), Di Fiesque (altro secondo tenore), Aubry (altro secondo basso). Set as above and initially intended for a staging at La Fenice during the *carnevale* of 1841-2 Pacini refused to continue with the project on the grounds that he was ready to adhere only to the distribution of roles as specified above whereas Mocenigo wanted the role of Gondi tailored to a protégée contralto. [It is ironic that Donizetti who had himself encountered similar situations on earlier occasions in Venice only consented to enlarging the role of Armando di Gondi for a contralto musico in the Paris revision later in 1843]. Pacini, it seems, had sketched his music and was not prepared to make any changes whatsoever to his concept of the score. Large sections of the abandoned Pacini text are perfectly identical with those of the libretto for Lillo but in this particular

instance it is Maria who receives the major attention, not Chalais or Chevreuse, and not - initially at least - in terms of additional *arie* or *cabalette* for the prima donna but in respect of a renewed emphasis of her manner, deportment, facial expressions etc., as appropriate to a tragic heroine and downplaying the insensate fury of her husband and despair of her lover. These changes consist of very slight adjustments to her behaviour patterns made to the taste of the composer which he was ready to endorse with his music. [Some of the textual variations in both this libretto for Pacini and its predecessor for Lillo were to appear, rather puzzlingly, in a purported edition of the text for Donizetti's opera in a printed libretto of *Maria di Rohan* as published in Naples in 1857 (as *Il conte di Chalais e Maria di Rohan*)]

Also to be considered in the run-up must be the opera *Guise ou les États de Blois* by George Onslow (livret by Planard and St.Georges) which boasts a complementary argument and had its première in Paris on 8 September 1837 at the Opéra-Comique. Too early of course for Donizetti to have attended but a vocal score had been published and it is one of the very rare operas to have survived in a transcription by the composer for string quartet (opus 60)
[Grateful thanks to Jérôme Hantaï for the basis of this footnote]

It remains something of a surprise that Cammarano's libretto for Giuseppe Lillo should have been so freely available to other composers and so very soon after its original appearance. Possibly Lillo had not paid for his libretto as would normally have been the case, perhaps it was conceded as a special gift, maybe Cammarano despaired of it finding a maestro and was eager to find a outlet for a text which had been long in genesis and given him so much trouble. Bellini had looked at the plot several years before, Donizetti had discarded it in 1837 (in favour of *Maria de Rudenz*) and Federico Ricci had taken the initiative in the interim. In the event the twenty-five year old Lillo had been lucky that it had fallen in his lap so readily. As for the Bergamasc composer, he had never forgotten his original interest in 1837 and in view of the intrusion of no less than three rival maestri in its wake a certain amount of irritation probably coloured the few comments that have come down to us. In June 1840 he proposed it for Rome (an initiative that Pacini - a friend of the Roman impresario – no doubt attempted to trump). It is at this stage that the usually well-informed Donizetti made the odd suggestion that Lillo's opera had not been a success even though several items from it were already in print and that Donizetti - even in Paris - was never without a host of friends in Naples eager with a stream of operatic updates: *"Quanto al Poema, mi fu detto che un buon Poema di Cammarano ebbe poco esito per causa della musica del M.° Lillo. Se ciò è vero, voi potete far venire il poema, sommetterlo alla Revisione, dir se vi piace, e se lo trovate adatto alla vostra compagnia...E se volete nuova poema, non mancate certo di autori"* [Letter to Vincenzo Jacovacci of 7 June 1840: Zavadini 339]. This last remark is significant in that the text he used for his brilliant *Maria di Rohan* at Vienna in 1843 was not directly supplied by Cammarano: according to John Black he "*called in a poet to make some small changes*" and that "*The changes that were made for this setting were not made by Cammarano and were almost certainly never authorized by him – probably not even known to him*" [Black 63]. The same applies, presumably, to all the subsequent modifications made to *Maria di Rohan* – and that the fairly liberal supply of new *arie*, *cabalette* etc and other textual additions and subtractions made for Paris and Naples were

the work of other poets (unless of course those for the S.Carlo were due to a renewed collaboration with the celebrated poet?)

But in point of fact, as regards real substance, Donizetti's libretto differs only marginally from the original for Lillo et al.

AW



HENRI 1ER DE LORRAINE, DUC DE GUISE

A direct descendant of *Lucrezia Borgia*, a cousin of *Maria Stuarda* and father-in-law of *Maria di Rohan*, it was left to Coccia (and Onslow) to set him to music