

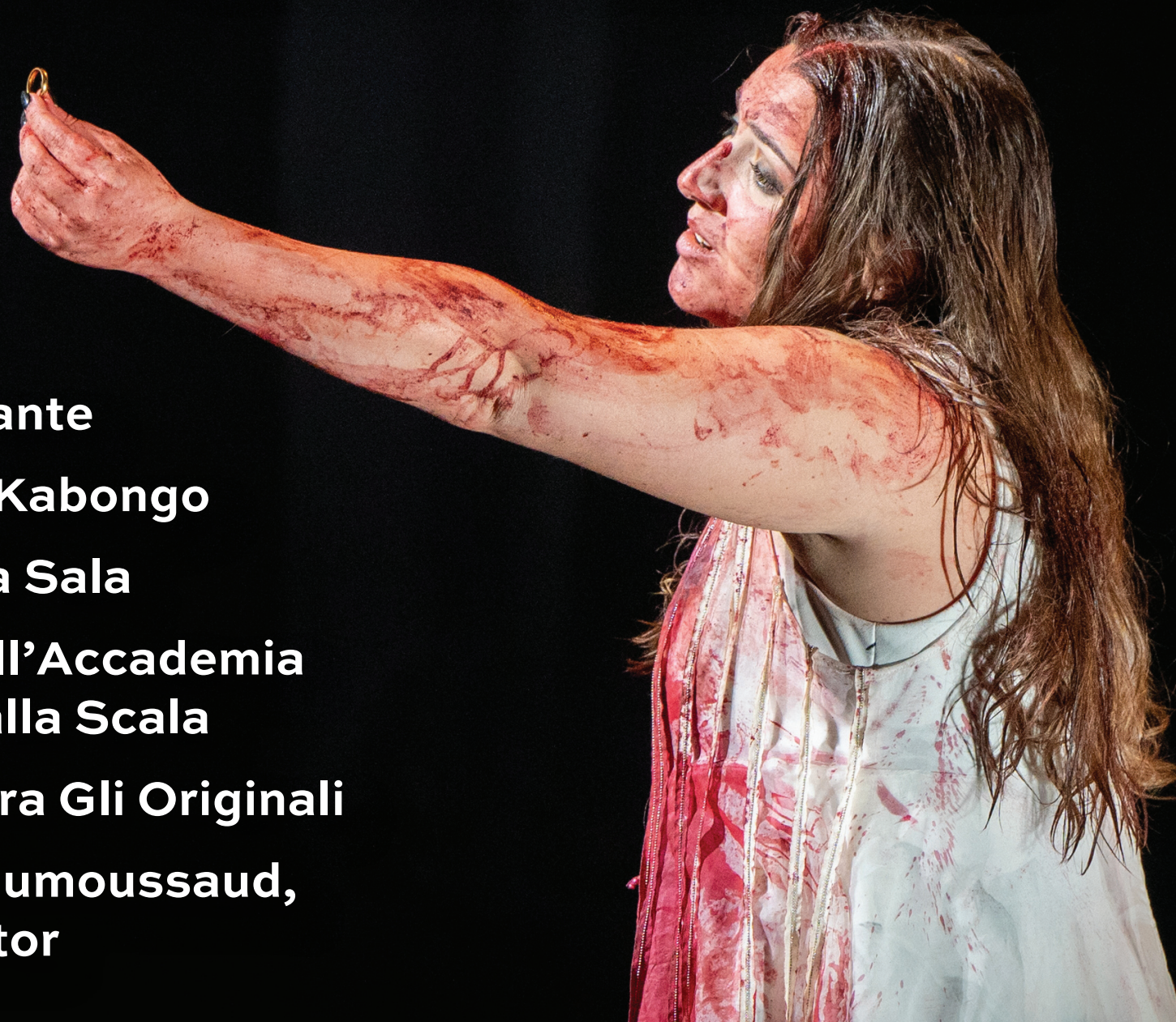


DONIZETTI

Lucie de Lammermoor



DONIZETTI OPERA



Vito Priante

Patrick Kabongo

Caterina Sala

**Coro dell'Accademia
Teatro alla Scala**

Orchestra Gli Originali

**Pierre Dumoussaud,
Conductor**

Gaetano
DONIZETTI
(1797–1848)

Lucie de Lammermoor

Opera in three acts (1839)

French libretto by Alphonse Royer (1803–1875) and Gustave Vaëz (1812–1862)

Original Italian libretto (*Lucia di Lammermoor*) by Salvatore Cammarano
(1801–1852), after the novel *The Bride of Lammermoor* (pub. 1819)
by Walter Scott (1771–1832)

First performance: 6 August 1839 at the Théâtre de la Renaissance, Paris

Henri Ashton	Vito Priante, Baritone
Edgard Ravenswood	Patrick Kabongo, Tenor
Lord Arthur Bucklaw	Julien Henric, Tenor
Gilbert	David Astorga, Tenor
Raimond, Protestant minister	Roberto Lorenzi, Bass-baritone
Lucie, Ashton's sister	Caterina Sala, Soprano

Coro dell'Accademia Teatro alla Scala

(Salvo Sgrò, Chorus master)

Orchestra Gli Originali

Pierre Dumoussaud, Conductor

Act I

No. 1. Introduction et Choeur

- 1 Introduction: Larghetto – Allegro giusto –
Scene 1 Couronnez la crête des montagnes
(Gilbert, Chorus)
No. 2. Scène et Air
2 **Scene 2** Recitative: Quel air sombre! (Gilbert, Ashton)
3 Cavatine: D'un amour qui me brave (Ashton, Gilbert) –
Scene 3 Le soleil hors de la plaine
(Chorus, Ashton, Gilbert)
4 A moi, viens, ouvre tes ailes (Ashton, Chorus, Gilbert)
No. 3. Scène et Choeur
5 **Scene 4** Recitative: J'arrive le dernier
(Arthur, Ashton, Gilbert, Chorus) –
Scene 5 Il part, c'est me voler (Gilbert)
No. 4. Scène et Cavatine
6 **Scene 6** Recitative: Gilbert! – C'est moi, mademoiselle
(Lucie, Gilbert) –
Scene 7 O fontaine, o source pure! (Lucie)
7 Cavatine: Que n'avons-nous des ailes... (Lucie)
No. 5. Scène et Duo
8 **Scene 8** Recitative: C'est moi, Lucie (Edgard, Lucie)
9 Duo: Sur la tombe de mon père (Edgard, Lucie)
10 Vers toi toujours s'envolera (Lucie, Edgar)

Act II

No. 6. Scène et Duo

- 11 **Scene 1** Recitative: Ainsi tu viens de France?
(Ashton, Gilbert) –
Scene 2 Je t'attendais, approche (Ashton)
12 Duo: Quand mon cœur se désespère (Lucie, Ashton)
13 Pleurant son absence (Lucie, Ashton)
14 Entends-tu ces chants de fête? (Ashton, Lucie)
No. 7. Finale
15 **Scene 3** Suivons l'amant qui nous conduit
(Chorus, Arthur)
No. 8. Scène et Sextuor
16 Eh bien! Lucie? (Arthur, Ashton, Chorus) –
Scene 4 Voici ton époux...
(Ashton, Lucie, Arthur, Raimond, Chorus, Edgar)

- 17 **Scene 5** Sextuor: J'ai pour moi mon droit –
Sur sa tête qu'il relève
(Edgard, Ashton, Lucie, Raimond, Gilbert,
Arthur, Chorus)
No. 9. Suite et Stretta du Finale

- 18 Loin de nous, j'ordonne en maître (Arthur, Ashton,
Chorus, Edgar, Raimond, Lucie, Gilbert)

Act III

No. 10. Entr'acte

- 19 Allegro vivace
No. 11. Récitatif et Duo
20 **Scene 2** Recitative: Oui, Monseigneur, à la petite porte
(Gilbert, Ashton) –
Scene 3 Recitative: Edgar! – Oui, moi! ton juge aussi
(Ashton, Edgar)
21 Duo: Souviens-toi qu'en ce domaine (Edgard, Ashton)
No. 12. Choeur sur le théâtre
22 **Scene 4** Elle a quitté ces lieux (Chorus)
No. 13. Scène et Choeur
23 **Scene 5** Malheur! Malheur! Destin terrible!
(Raimond, Chorus)
24 Hymen funeste! O sort étrange! (Chorus, Raimond) –
No. 14. Scène et Air ['Mad Scene']
Scene 6 Elle s'avance, hélas! (Raimond)
25 Mon nom s'est fait entendre (Lucie, Raimond, Chorus)
26 **Scene 6** Ashton s'avance (Raimond)
Scene 7 Dites-moi! Cette affreuse nouvelle?...
(Ashton, Raimond, Lucie, Chorus)
27 Air: Je vais loin de la terre
(Lucie, Ashton, Raimond, Chorus)
No. 15. Scène et Air
28 **Scene 8** Recitative: Tombes de mes aïeux (Edgard)
29 Air: Bientôt l'herbe des champs croîtra (Edgard) –
Scene 9 Ravenswood, à ton attente (Chorus, Edgar) –
Scene 10 Que la prière au ciel l'escorte!
(Raimond, Edgar, Chorus)
30 Air: O bel ange dont les ailes
(Edgard, Chorus, Raimond)

David Astorga (Gilbert) and Vito Priante (Henri Ashton)

Photo: Gianfranco Rota



Gaetano Donizetti (1797–1848)

Lucie de Lammermoor

A native of Bergamo, Donizetti was, for nearly a decade after the early death of Bellini in 1835, the leading composer of Italian opera. He had his first success with *Zoraida di Granata* in 1822. There followed a series of nearly 60 more operas and a move to Paris, where Rossini had been induced to settle to his profit. His final illness confined him to a hospital in France for some 17 months before his return to Bergamo, where he died in 1848. Donizetti was not exclusively a composer of opera; he wrote music of all kinds – songs, chamber music, piano music and a quantity of music for the church.

A Consistent Dramaturgy

A conversation with Pierre Dumoussaud

Alberto Mattioli: *Lucie de Lammermoor* at the Teatro Sociale is the occasion for the Italian debut of Pierre Dumoussaud, the French conductor who is making a name for himself in 19th-century operatic repertoire, recently conducting Thomas's *Hamlet* at the Paris Opéra with great success. Maestro, what is your story with *Lucia di Lammermoor*?

Pierre Dumoussaud: A really peculiar one, because *Lucia* was the first opera I ever conducted, in 2018 at the Opéra in Bordeaux. The production was directed by Francesco Micheli, that is, the artistic director of Donizetti Opera, who invited me to conduct *Lucie de Lammermoor*, the French version, in Bergamo, in Donizetti's hometown, which was a novelty for me because until now I had always conducted the 'original' *Lucia*. I must say that studying *Lucia* was a revelation. As a proper French musician, I was quite biased against Italian bel canto, but instead I was immediately fascinated. However, I was also very impressed by the difference between what is written and what is usually performed. In any case, I'm delighted to conduct this *Lucie de Lammermoor*.

AM So, let us talk about the differences between the two versions.

PD I would say that we can speak of two similar but different operas. What Donizetti produced in 1839 for the Théâtre de la Renaissance in Paris was not a simple translation but a complete adaptation of the opera, also making it suitable to the more limited means of the Théâtre de la Renaissance, which was a privately owned theatre, not subsidised by the state. This remake produced a clarification of the dramaturgy, which became more cohesive and consistent. The list of dramatis personae also changes: now Lucie is the only female character, which accentuates her condition as a woman captive of a male and patriarchal world, used as a bargaining chip for political reasons. Donizetti adds several recitatives, cuts some pages, replaces some passages, simplifies others, eliminates the storm in Act III, and strips the action of some secondary intrigues. The overall effect is a certain simplification of the opera.

AM Among the several changes is the one to Lucie's cavatina. Instead of *Regnava nel silenzio*, here she sings *Que n'avons-nous des ailes*, which is the French translation of the cavatina of *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* that Fanny Tacchinardi Persiani, the first interpreter of the opera, had already begun to introduce into the Italian *Lucia*...

PD I don't know why Donizetti endorsed this substitution. What I do know is that, as always, a different musical solution also produces a dramaturgical one. This cavatina presents Lucia's character in a different way. Her katabasis, her descent into the underworld, becomes even more profound in the French version, precisely because at the beginning the character has a sort of dreamy lightness, like the flight of birds evoked by her words; not to mention that the link with the timbre of the flute that will be found in the mad scene becomes already established here. So, at the beginning of the opera, Lucie is more innocent and naive, unlike Lucia, who presents herself with a tragic cavatina, evoking frightening omens.

Caterina Sala (Lucie)

Photo: Gianfranco Rota



AM Her confidante, Alisa, also disappears, while we have Gilbert, a sort of mixture between Alisa and the *delator* Normanno.

PD Alisa is merely a confidante, a supporter of Lucia, the traditional second lead to whom the prima donna confides her hopes and loves. Alisa's function is, if anything, inherited by Raimond, who also has much less to sing in the French version than in the Italian one, because the duet with Lucia disappears and his aria before the mad scene is replaced by a recitative. Instead, Gilbert is a deeply corrupt character, '*falot*', cunning and treacherous from beginning to end. In *Lucia*, one has to wait until the end of the opera, and in particular a recitative after the mad scene – a recitative which is often cut – for Normanno's betrayal to be fully revealed. In *Lucie*, on the other hand, Gilbert's nefarious role in the tragedy that will cause the two lovers' death is clear from the beginning.

AM To what extent did the features of the Théâtre de la Renaissance affect Donizetti's rewriting? For one thing, Donizetti spoke of a singing company of '*juvenes et cani*'.

PD The Théâtre de la Renaissance admittedly did not have the same resources as the great Parisian theatres. And yet nothing happens more often in the history of musical theatre than composers having to deal with constraints and limitations and managing to transform them into inspiration and opportunities. Exactly as Donizetti did with *Lucie de Lammermoor* – this opera moves us and speaks to us. *Lucie* is not an abridged version of *Lucia*, a surrogate or a substitute. It surely is a 'smaller' opera, but perhaps even more brutal and emotional.

AM Does Donizetti include any specifically French touches in the new Parisian score, for example in the orchestration?

PD No, *Lucie*'s orchestration is almost the same as that of *Lucia*, very Classical. If anything, the influence of French culture is found in the new recitatives, where there are quite clear influences of French Romanticism or even Gluck's operas. For example, in the pages added to introduce the character of Gilbert who, as we have seen, is new. Perhaps this changed Hector Berlioz's view of the opera: he had been very harsh on *Lucia*, whereas his review of *Lucie* was much more lenient.

AM Yes. Incidentally, why was Berlioz always so critical of Donizetti?

PD To tell the truth, Berlioz was critical of a lot of people. This is a good question, and perhaps the answer lies in the long-standing dichotomy between the French and Italian understanding of musical theatre, which dates back to the origins of the genre. The bone of contention has always been the all-Italian art of bel canto, the fact that the voice is always in the foreground. For Berlioz – imbued with the reformative ideas of Gluck, whose heir he considered himself to be – opera was above all drama, and the voice a mere instrument.

AM By the way: what do you think of the famous cadenza with the flute in the mad scene, which not only is not by Donizetti but is a much later 'improvement'? And, in any case: to accompany the madness, which is better, between flute and glass harmonica?

PD I have directed *Lucia di Lammermoor* twice so far. In one production there was the glass harmonica and in the other the flute. For *Lucie*, we don't have the problem of choosing because there is a simple cadenza, much less extravagant than the late 19th-century invention formalised by tradition – a tradition also contradicted by the fact that Donizetti, working on *Lucie* just four years after the opera's debut, did not change the mad scene and, in particular, did not feel the need to add any cadenza. I insist on the need, even when one does the 'Italian' *Lucia*, to polish up the text, to follow the author's example, to eliminate these posthumous and apocryphal inferences. We were talking of the relationship between French audiences and the bel canto operas: one thing they struggled with were these exaggerations. And as we have seen, *Lucie* is a simplification of *Lucia*, so Donizetti felt no need to add vocal agility. However, I would like to point out that it is quite wrong to think that Donizetti only wrote beautiful melodies and, for the rest, mere vocal accompaniments. For a conductor, every measure of his is worthy of the greatest interest: often great music, always great theatre.

AM Donizetti is also the only 19th-century Italian operatic composer to write for all three 'official' Parisian opera houses: the Opéra, the Opéra Comique and the Théâtre des Italiens. Why is it so, in your opinion?

PD On the one hand, Donizetti was incredibly versatile from a stylistic point of view. On the other, this was certainly easier, or less difficult, in the first half of the 19th century than in the second. It would be difficult to imagine Verdi writing for the Opéra Comique. Compared to what was to happen with Verdi, Donizetti's relationship with the 'grand boutique' – the Paris Opéra, the desired venue of all 19th-century opera composers – was also less complicated.

AM And what was his relationship with the French language?

PD We know that he mastered it well but not perfectly. As a conductor, I love to work on language, pronunciation and prosody. I must therefore say that the prosody of this *Lucie* could be improved in certain passages. So, there are two hypotheses we could make. Either Donizetti's French was not perfect, or the problem lies with his two librettists, Alphonse Royer and Gustave Vaëz, who certainly knew French but had to write new words to pre-existing music. The libretto usually precedes the score, but for *Lucie de Lammermoor* it is the other way around.

AM In *Madame Bovary*, Flaubert sends Emma to the theatre precisely to see *Lucie de Lammermoor*, which had therefore been metabolised by French culture...

PD Lucie and the other great heroines of French opera of the day, such as Marguerite or Juliette, do have something in common: they are all inspired by literary models. And literature, in 19th-century society, had a very different and much more important role than it has today. Shakespeare, Goethe, Walter Scott and Victor Hugo were the real stars of the time, and they were very well known throughout Europe. Therefore, the success of these characters also comes from the popularity of the literary works that inspired them.

AM To conclude: what other opera by Donizetti would you like to conduct?

PD I would love to do *La Fille du régiment*. Among other things, I find it to be an orchestration masterpiece.

Alberto Mattioli

English translation: Michela Compagnoni

Courtesy of Fondazione Teatro Donizetti

Caterina Sala (Lucie)

Photo: Gianfranco Rota



Synopsis

Act I

In Scotland, during a hunting party, Henri Ashton tells his confidant Gilbert that, for political reasons, he has decided to give his sister Lucie in marriage to Lord Arthur Bucklaw, nephew of the powerful Lord Athol. Lucie, however, loves Edgard Ravenswood, last member of a family who have long been enemies of the Ashtons. Gilbert informs Henri that, disobeying his orders, Lucie and Edgard have organised to meet at the fount Scottish lovers use to exchange their love vows [1]–[4].

While the hunters take a rest in a cool meadow near the fount, Arthur joins them. He tells Henri his suspicion that Lucie may be in love with Edgard rather than himself, but Henri reassures him. In any case – says Arthur – his uncle is sending Edgard on a diplomatic mission to France. Henri is overjoyed to hear the news [5].

After the hunters leave, Lucie arrives for her meeting with Edgard. Posing as a friend, Gilbert promises the woman that he will watch over the two lovers so that nobody may chance upon them. While she waits for her beloved, Lucie reflects on the hatred that divides their families and is an obstacle to their love [6]–[7]. Upon his arrival, Edgard brings the bad news of his departure. Before, however, he intends to ask Henri for Lucie's hand, even though he knows that his chances of success are very slim. The two lovers exchange vows and rings, and they say goodbye [8]–[10].

Act II

Gilbert has followed Edgard to France; he has intercepted and destroyed his letters to Lucie and furtively made a copy of the ring she had given him. Back in Scotland, he reports to Henri, who is more than ever intentioned to conclude the marriage between his sister and Arthur [11]. In a dramatic confrontation, he tells Lucie that Edgard no longer loves her, and shows her, as proof, the copy of the ring made by Gilbert [12]. Then he insists that only her marriage with Arthur can save him from ruin [13]. This throws Lucie into despair [14]. Escorted by a joyous retinue, Arthur arrives [15], and Lucie, convinced she has been abandoned, is reluctantly forced to sign the marriage contract [16]. Suddenly, in bursts Edgard, who challenges Henri and Arthur. To avoid a clash, the chaplain shows Edgard the signed contract. Feeling betrayed, without allowing Lucie the time for any explanations, Edgard throws away the ring she had given him and storms out, after cursing her [17]–[18].

Act III

Gilbert informs Henri that a man wants to speak to him [20]. It is Edgard, who challenges his enemy to a duel. To put an end to their long feud, Henri accepts: they will fight at dawn [21]. Meanwhile, in the castle of the Ashtons, the wedding feast is brusquely interrupted by the chaplain, who announces the death of Arthur, murdered by a delirious Lucie [22]–[24]. In she comes, raving about her love for Edgard, the curse he hurled at her, and predicting her imminent death [25]–[27].

Edgard, who is waiting for his enemy at the convened place [28], is joined instead by some envoys, who inform him that Henri, detained at the bedside of his dying sister, will not be coming. Lucie still calls his name – they say – but in one hour she will have stopped suffering. Distraught and realising that the woman never betrayed him, Edgard decides to be united with her in death. Calling the name of his beloved for the last time, he stabs himself and dies [29]–[30].

Daniela Pilarz

Caterina Sala (Lucie), Julien Henric (Lord Arthur) and the Coro dell'Accademia Teatro alla Scala

Photo: Gianfranco Rota





Acknowledged as a definitive model of Italian Romantic melodrama, *Lucia di Lammermoor* was one of Donizetti's greatest triumphs, and its popularity led him to produce a French version for Parisian audiences. *Lucie de Lammermoor* became the 'other Lucia', with the opera's tragic tale of feuding families and doomed romance modified in a way that deepens the characters and makes it an even more brutal and emotional theatrical experience than the original. This new *Lucie de Lammermoor* made its debut in 1839 with enormous success, becoming a cornerstone of French culture.



Gaetano
DONIZETTI
(1797–1848)

DONIZETTI OPERA

Lucie de Lammermoor

Opera in three acts (1839)

Libretto by Alphonse Royer (1803–1875) and Gustave Vaëz (1812–1862)

Henri Ashton **Vito Priante, Baritone**
Edgard Ravenswood **Patrick Kabongo, Tenor**
Lord Arthur Bucklaw **Julien Henric, Tenor**
Gilbert **David Astorga, Tenor**
Raimond, Protestant minister **Roberto Lorenzi, Bass-baritone**
Lucie, Ashton's sister **Caterina Sala, Soprano**

Coro dell'Accademia Teatro alla Scala

(Salvo Sgrò, Chorus master)

Orchestra Gli Originali • Pierre Dumoussaud

1–10 Act I 42:04 11–18 Act II 33:38 19–30 Act III 49:22

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet.

The French libretto and an English translation can be accessed at www.naxos.com/libretti/660578.htm

Recorded live: 1 December 2023 during the Donizetti Opera Festival at the Teatro Sociale, Bergamo, Italy

Revised edition based on the original sources by Jacques Chalmeau © Casa Ricordi, Milano

Producer: Alberto Dellepiane • Engineers: Rino Trasi, Michele De Rossi • Editor: Rino Trasi

Booklet notes: Alberto Mattioli, Daniela Pilarz, Courtesy of Fondazione Teatro Donizetti • Cover photo: Gianfranco Rota

© 2024 & © 2025 Naxos Rights (Europe) Ltd • www.naxos.com