



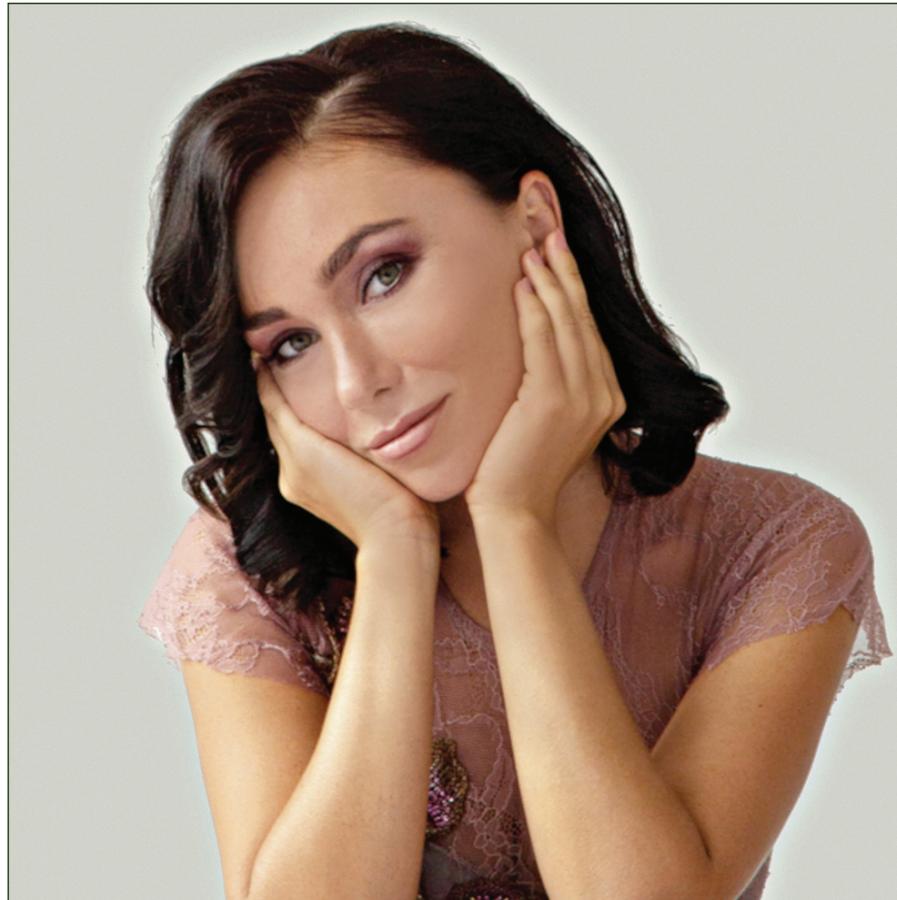
# DONIZETTI

## Songs

La ninna-nanna • Le petit montagnard  
Ah, rammenta, o bella Irene • La mère et l'enfant

**Margarita Gritskova, Mezzo-soprano**

**Maria Prinz, Piano**



1	<b>Su l'onda tremola</b> (date unknown) Text: Anonymous	3:51
2	<b>Tu mi chiedi s'io t'adoro</b> (1840) Text: Anonymous	4:04
3	<b>La ninna-nanna</b> (pub. 1839) Text: Achille de Lauzières (1818–1894)	10:22
4	<b>Le petit montagnard</b> (date unknown) Text: Anonymous	5:50
5	<b>A mezzanotte</b> (pub. 1836) Text: Anonymous	4:30
6	<b>La zingara</b> (pub. 1842) Text: Carlo Guaita (fl. c. 1800–1850)	4:07
7	<b>La mère et l'enfant</b> (1830) Text: Auguste Richomme (fl. 1775–1800)	5:24
8	<b>L'amante spagnolo</b> (pub. 1837) Text: Leopoldo Tarantini (1811–1882)	2:18
9	<b>Una lacrima</b> (pub. 1841) Text: Anonymous	4:45
10	<b>Questo mio figlio è un fiorellin d'amore</b> (pub. 1869) Text: Anonymous	5:06
11	<b>Au tic-tac des castagnettes</b> (date unknown) Text: Anonymous	2:55
12	<b>La lontananza</b> (pub. 1837) Text: Felice Romani (1788–1865)	2:27
13	<b>Leonora</b> (1843) Text: Marie Pierre Yves Escudier (1819–1880)	2:54
14	<b>Il barcaiolo</b> (pub. 1836) Text: Leopoldo Tarantini	3:14
15	<b>Lu trademiento</b> (date unknown) Text: Anonymous	2:54
16	<b>La sultana</b> (pub. 1839) Text: Leopoldo Tarantini	6:11
17	<b>Ah, rammenta, o bella Irene</b> (1830 or 1831) Text: Pietro Metastasio (1698–1782)	5:57

## Gaetano Donizetti (1797–1848)

### Songs

Gaetano Donizetti is known primarily as a prolific opera composer, to the effect that his entry in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* states: 'it is by his operas that Donizetti's reputation stands or fails'. That cannot be said for his songs, though this undiscovered area of his output is at last receiving more exposure – the catalogue bolstered by recent discoveries numbers close to three hundred. While writing for the opera was indeed Donizetti's main source of income and recognition, the medium of song held a private importance, in spite of an admission to his brother-in-law in 1837 that he would write a song 'while the rice was cooking'. These compositions were made for intimate performances, saved as gifts to friends, or provided to professional singers and wealthy amateurs.

Vocal chamber works, as they are often labelled, were a crucial element of salon music in Italy and across Europe during the first half of the 19th century. Donizetti's consist mostly of works for a single singer with piano accompaniment, with a range of texts, from Pietro Metastasio to contemporary poets Carlo Guaita and Leopoldo Tarantini. They are the continuation of a form established in Italy by Rossini through his *Soirées musicales*, and many have evocative titles.

There is a notable intersection between Donizetti's public and private persona. Dramatic opportunities for text setting and virtuoso possibilities are rarely passed up, while in the longer settings the piano, often orchestral in scope, takes on the key role of narrating scene alterations in an aria.

The selection of songs on this album, reflecting Donizetti's career in alternation between Italian and French, gives frequent glimpses of the composer of *L'elisir d'amore* and *Maria Stuarda*, yet there are confidential asides into Donizetti's private life and loves. There are also musical concessions to the qualities of the singers for whom the songs were written.

Each song shows off Donizetti's abundant melodic gifts and structural acumen, working well within set frameworks but happy to bend the rules in response to the text. The rhythm of the waltz can often be found, with Donizetti writing in triple time most attractively on the *arietta* *Tu mi chiedi s'io t'adoro*. This is one of four songs in this collection written for Zélie de Coussy, the wife of Donizetti's Parisian banker and dedicatee of *Don Pasquale*.

Also bearing her dedication is *La ninna-nanna* ('The Lullaby'), a substantial *ballata* published in Naples in 1839 as part of the set *Un hiver à Paris*. Setting text by Achille de Lauzières, who worked with Verdi on *Don Carlos*, the song begins with a soft chime from the piano, signalling the evening hour. A modulation brings an extended entreaty for sleep from the singer, observing the Cherubim playing and singing sweetly beside the child. With its long phrases for the singer, and a distinctive melodic refrain, the song encourages the sleep of love.

The third de Coussy dedication, *Le petit montagnard* is more conventional, with long, controlled phrases as the mountain child returns home to console his mother. Having begun in F minor, the song emerges into the sunlight of the major key for its last verse. *La mère et l'enfant*, again dedicated to de Coussy, tests the soprano's lower range in a sombre setting later expanded for orchestra. The *mélodie's* emotive cadenza is countered by a turbulent coda from the piano, the child now dying of hunger.

The range of moods covered by the songs is clear from the persuasive refrain of *Su l'onda tremola*, a light canzonetta. Meanwhile the sprightly *arietta* *A mezzanotte* gives the singer room to show their worth, in a chromatic second verse.

*La zingara*, sharing its title with Donizetti's first Neapolitan opera in 1822, is similarly theatrical *arietta* with its stern opening recitative, while the frothy *arietta/bolero L'amante spagnuolo*, taken from the *Soirées d'automne à l'Infrascata* of 1837, is an urgent song, responding to the opening words 'Corri destrier, deh, celere!' ('Run, steed, oh, swift!') From the same collection is the *arietta La lontananza* ('The Distance'), a lament of love from afar.

The *preghiera Una lacrima* ('A Tear') is another dramatic setting, leaving the singer unaccompanied while asking for a single tear that 'melts the ice in the heart'. The posthumously published *berceuse Questo mio figlio è un fiorellin d'amore* has a sombre introduction answered by the singer in expressive long notes, unfolding to a calmer end while moving from minor to major key.

Picking up the pace, the *canzonetta/aria Au tic-tac des castagnettes* is another sprightly waltz, the piano depicting the ticking of the castanets and the sound of pipes while the girls dance under the green elm trees. Sharing the same key of D major, the romance *Leonora* exhibits an easy charm.

Keeping its eye firmly on the stage, *Il barcaiolo* ('The Boatman') is a descriptive aria, its lighter refrain encouraging the sailor to row with elaborate lines for the singer. The composer relishes the contrast of imagery between the serenity of a calm sea and the raging storm of the third and final verse. The singer is also centre stage for the *canzone napoletana Lu trademiento*, lamenting the betrayal of a traitor and warning against future assignations.

*La sultana*, another excerpt from *Un hiver à Paris*, sets Tarantini's dark tale of a cavalier who arrives to serenade a sultan's wife in spite of her warnings. Returning the next night he finds her missing, with ominous signs from the bloodstains on the balcony. In the more optimistic coda of the *ballata*, the distant and tender song of love is heard.

Donizetti relishes longer settings such as the *cavatina Ah, rammenta, o bella Irene*, a setting of Pietro Metastasio where chromatic inclinations and virtuosic writing in the vocal line are countered by a quasi-orchestral piano part.

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### 1 Su l'onda tremola

Sull'onda tremola,  
Ride la luna,  
Regna il silenzio  
Sulla laguna.

Bice, t'aspetta  
La mia barchetta,  
Ma perché palpiti?  
Di che temer?

Ci saprà reggere  
Da gondoliere  
Questo naviglio  
Di Cipria il figlio.

Vieni, già l'anima  
Gioia m'inonda  
Non vo' piú riedere,  
Bice, alla sponda.

Non voglio un trono  
Se teco io sono,  
Vieni, io dimentico  
Sul mar tra i venti

Che i soavissimi  
Tui giuramenti  
Sono piú instabili  
Di vento e mar.

Bice, la luna  
Ride sull'onda  
Ci saprà reggere  
Di Cipria il figlio.

*Anonymous*

### 2 Tu mi chiedi s'io t'adoro

Tu mi chiedi s'io t'adoro,  
Se fedele sono ancora,  
Se ogni giorno, se ad ogn'ora  
Tu sei l'arbitra del cor?  
Sì, mio bene, ti son fida,  
A te penso in ogni istante.  
Tu sei l'angelo, la guida,  
La mia gioia, il mio dolor.

*Anonymous*

### 3 La ninna-nanna

Dormi fanciullo mio,  
Dormi e riposa  
Nella pace del sonno  
Trasparente;

Dormi, sí, dormi,  
E la pupilla ascosa  
Si volga al ciel  
Silenziosamente.

Dormi, dormi, i Cherubini  
A te scherzano d'accanto;  
I lor labbri porporini  
Stanno aperti a dolce canto.

Uno spirto t'han creduto  
Dalle sfere qui caduto  
Ed al coro a cui tu manchi  
Ricondurti vonno in ciel.

Ah! dormi, o figlio mio,  
Dormi il sonno della pace;  
Dormi, dormi, gli occhi stanchi  
Covra il sonno col suo vel.

Ah! sí, non senti un alito  
Che ti carezza il viso?  
Ah! sí, non vedi gli angioli  
Scesi dal paradiso

Che intorno a te s'aggirano  
Come farfalle ai fior?  
O figlio, dormi candido,  
Il sonno dell'amor.

E la tua culla argentea  
Come una navicella  
Solca tranquilla l'etere,  
Passa di stella in stella,

Vogano lieti gli angioli,  
Tu dormi in mezzo a lor,  
Dormi, sí dormi placido  
Il sonno dell'amor.

*Achille de Lauzières (1818–1894)*

**4 Le petit montagnard**

Ouvre-moi, bonne mère,  
Je reviens au pays  
Consoler ta misère.  
C'est Julien, c'est ton fils.  
Quand j'ai fui ta demeure,  
Tu m'as dit en pleurant,  
"Faudra-t-il que je meure  
Sans revoir mon enfant?"

N'as-tu pas souvenance  
De ce joyeux refrain  
Que j'ai redit en France  
Pour te gagner du pain?  
Écoute, bonne mère,  
Un bruit plus doux encor,  
Écoute en ta chaumière  
Sonner mes trois louis d'or

L'enfant de la montagne  
Ainsi chantait la nuit  
Quand le chien l'accompagne  
Loin du pauvre réduit.  
Sous la neige qui tombe  
Dort l'objet de ses vœux.

Hélas, la même tombe  
Les réunit tous deux.  
Une modeste pierre  
Dit au passant surpris,  
"Pleurez la pauvre mère,  
Pleurez le tendre fils."

*Anonymous*

**5 A mezzanotte**

Quando notte sarà oscura  
e le stelle in ciel vedrai,  
cheto, cheto mi verrai  
nel mio asilo a ritrovar.

Nel silenzio della notte  
dentr'all'umile mio tetto,  
vieni pure, o mio diletto,  
la tua ninfa a consolar:

canta pur la tua canzone  
ch'io t'attendo sul balcone.  
ah!

Ma non debbo a te soltanto  
aprir l'uscio a notte bruna:  
coprirebbe la luna  
vereconda in suo pudor.

Noi due soli non saremo,  
verecondia nol consente,  
vuò che un terzo sia presente  
e quel terzo sia l'amor.

Canta pur la tua canzone,  
ch'io t'attendo sul balcone,  
io t'attendo a mezzanotte,  
cheto cheto ne verrai,  
noi due soli non saremo,  
vuò che il terzo sia l'amor.  
ah!

*Anonymous*

## 6 La zingara

Fra l'erbe cosparse di rorido gelo,  
coverta del solo gran manto del cielo,  
mia madre esultando la vita me diè.

Fanciulla, sui greppi le capre emulai,  
per ville e cittadi, cresciuta, danzai,  
le dame lor palme distesero a me.

La ra la. ah! la zingara.

Io loro predissi le cose note,  
ne feci dolenti, ne feci beate,  
segreti conobbi di sdegno, d'amor.

La ra la, etc.

Un giorno la mano mi porse un donzello;  
mai visto non fummi garzone piu bello:  
oh! s'ei nella destra leggessimi il cor!

*Carlo Guaita (fl. c. 1800–1850)*

## 7 La mère et l'enfant

Un voile blanc couvrait la terre,  
la neige en gros flocons tombait:  
et retenu dans sa carriere  
captif le torrent s'arrêtait;  
l'hiver partant désolait la nature;  
on dit qu'alors dans sa mansarde obscure,  
une mère pleurait, et la mort dans le sein,  
disait: du pain, du pain, oh! s'il vous plaît, du pain!  
mon pauvre enfant se meurt de faim.

Pour t'épargner des maux horribles  
rien au monde ne m'a coûté:  
la travail, les veilles pénibles  
ont hélas! détruit ma santé.  
L'âme brisée et voyant ta souffrance,  
j'ai des passans mendié l'assistance,  
oui, pour toi, mon enfant, oui, j'ai tendu la main,  
disant: du pain, du pain, oh! s'il vous plaît...

Ici personne pour m'entendre!  
Mes cris, mes maux sont superflus:  
Ah! jusqu'à demain, s'il faut attendre,  
ni lui, ni moi ne serons plus; du pain...

*Auguste Richomme (fl. 1775–1800)*

## 8 L'amante spagnuolo

Corri destrier, deh, celere!  
Corri! La via divora!  
Recami accanto all'angelo  
Che la mia vita infiora.  
Deh, pria che l'alba in cielo  
Spanda il suo roseo velo,  
L'avverta il tuo nitrito  
Che il suo fedel tornò.  
E il volto a lei di giubilo  
Tu scintillar farai,  
E de' suoi di delizia,  
O mio destrier, sì, sarai.  
Verrà la man pudica  
A carezzarti amica,  
E men di te felice  
Io stesso allor sarò.

*Leopoldo Tarantini (1811–1882)*

## 9 Una lacrima

Dio, dio, che col cenno moderi l'ira d'un mar che freme Dio!  
Che col cenno agli uomini porgi costanza e speme,  
stendi la man benefica, sul lungo mio dolor.  
Non chieggo a te la tenera gioja del cor felice  
non la speranza provvida d'affanno incantatrice,  
ti chieggo sol la lagrima, che scioglie il gelo al cor.

*Anonymous*

**10 Questo mio figlio è un fiorellin d'amore**

Questo mio figlio è un fiorellin d'amore  
Che per candore non la cede al giglio.  
È un fiorellin d'amor questo mio figlio  
Che al giglio non la cede per candore.  
La ninna-nanna con la voce santa  
Te la canta dal cielo la Madonna:  
Dormi, dormi, angioletto mio...  
In questo ciel di Dio non v'è una stella  
Che dica: son più bella al figlio mio;  
Non v'è una stella in questo ciel di Dio  
Che al figlio mio può dir: io son più bella...  
Non v'è nel paradiso un cherubino  
Che al mio bambino rassomigli in viso.  
Un cherubin non v'è nel paradiso  
Che rassomigli in viso al mio bambino.

*Anonymous*

**11 Au tic-tac des castagnettes**

Au tic-tac des castagnettes,  
Au son du chalumeaux,  
Chantez, dansez, fillettes,  
Sous ces verts ormeaux.  
Laissez dans la prairie  
Vos brébis, vos moutons  
Paître l'herbe fleurie  
Et nos tendres gazons.  
Berger, à ta bergère  
Soupir ton amour,  
Ici point de mystère,  
On s'aime sans détour.  
Et toi, gente Lisette,  
Au si joli troupeau,  
Ne t'en va pas seulette,  
Il fait nuit sous l'ormeau.

*Anonymous*

**12 La lontananza**

Or ch'io sono a te rapita,  
Or che tolto a me tu sei,  
Con le spine di mia vita  
Gli altrui fior non cangerei.

Se a soffrir è solo un core,  
Quel soffrir si fa dolore,  
Caro amore, caro amor!

*Felice Romani (1788–1865)*

**13 Leonora**

Partir conviene: Leonora, addio.  
Dolce idol mio, pianger perché?  
Dolor d'un giorno, dolor mendace!  
Nulla è fugace più dell'amor.  
Farà ritorno la vela amata;  
Sol te cangiata ritroverà.  
All'onde infide io m'abbandono.  
Dell'ora il suono sul cor piombò.  
Deh! guarda il cielo, vaga donzella;  
La fida stella mai non cangiò.  
Per noi rinnova la capinera  
Di primavera la sua canzon.  
Il tempo crudo tutto distrugge,  
Ma tutto fugge per ritornar.

*Marie Pierre Yves Escudier (1819–1880)*

**14 Il barcaiolo**

Voga, voga, il vento tace,  
pura è l'onda, il ciel sereno,  
solo un alito di pace  
par che allegri e cielo e mar:  
voga, voga, o marinar.

Or che tutto a noi sorride,  
in sí tenero momento,  
all'ebrezza del contento  
voglio l'alma abbandonar.  
Voga, voga, o marinar.

Chè se infiera la tempesta,  
ambedue ne tragge a morte,  
sarà lieta la mia sorte  
al tuo fianco vuò spirar [sí].  
Voga, voga, o marinar.

*Leopoldo Tarantini*

**15 Lu trademiento**

Ah! tradetore, tu m'haje lassata  
E m'haje scagnata pe chella llà,  
Gnorsi, che chella de me è cchiù bella,  
Ma pe' fedele, po se vedrà.

Lu trademiento ca mo' me faje,  
Non passa craje, te lo farà.  
E cheste lagrime che mò m'annozzano,  
Porzi cò ausura l'haje da scunttà.

*Anonymous*

**16 La sultana**

Là sedeva, sull'erton verone,  
in un'estasi muta d'amore;  
d'un destriero al nitrito,  
il suo core d'un insolita gioia brillò.  
E la notte col manto stellato,  
d'un sorriso allegrava il creato,  
e dal colle lontano,  
s'udia un tenero canto d'amor.  
"Bello è il cielo cogl'astri dorati,  
è soave ogni raggio di stella,  
ma del cielo degl'astri più bella è colei  
che m'impera sul cor, è più bella del sole,  
più bella del ciel."

Fuggi, o caro, sclamava la mesta,  
va t'invola al mio truce tiranno;  
già il pugnale egli aguzza in tuo danno  
sua vendetta sul capo ti stà, si ti stà.  
Sì sclamava e la luna fratanto del suo volto  
velava l'incanto e dal colle lontano s'udia  
un tenero canto d'amor.  
Passò un giorno, la notte riedea, il destriero nitriva,  
ma invano;  
la Sultana al veron non siedea,  
caldo sangue macchiava il veron.  
Pur la notte col manto stellato d'un sorriso allegrava  
il creato e dal colle lontano, lontano,  
s'udia il tenero canto d'amor.

*Leopoldo Tarantini*

**17 Ah rammenta, o bella Irene**

Ah rammenta, o bella Irene,  
Che giurasti a me costanza;  
Ah ritorna, amato bene,  
Ah ritorna al primo amor,

Qual conforto, oh Dio, m'avanza?  
Chi sarà la mia speranza?  
Per chi viver più degg'io,  
Se più mio non è quel cor?

*Pietro Metastasio (1698–1782)*

English translations of tracks **1 3 7 9 12 16 17**  
are available at [www.naxos.com/libretti/557780.htm](http://www.naxos.com/libretti/557780.htm)

## Margarita Gritskova

Born in St Petersburg, Margarita Gritskova graduated from the city's State Conservatory in 2010. As a student, she won numerous prizes, including at the Luciano Pavarotti and Villa de Colmenar Viejo international singing competitions. She has sung at renowned festivals such as the Salzburger Festspiele, Tenerife Opera Festival, the Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro and the Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival, and regularly appears at major international opera houses including the Bayerische Staatsoper, the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, and Tokyo Opera City. From 2012 to 2020 she was part of the ensemble of the Wiener Staatsoper. Gritskova has appeared in all the principal mezzo-soprano roles in the Mozart and Rossini repertoires, and after appearing as Masha in Eötvös's *Three Sisters*, the composer dedicated his romance *Bitterness* to her, based on the poem by Marina Tsvetaeva. Recent highlights include her celebrated debut as Eboli in *Don Carlos* at the 2023 Operklosterneuburg, and the same role at the Finnish National Opera Helsinki in 2025. She returned to the Operklosterneuburg in 2024 as Eboli, where she also appeared as Adalgisa in *Norma*. Her discography includes three critically acclaimed albums of songs by Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Rachmaninov, Prokofiev and Shostakovich together with the pianist Maria Prinz for Naxos.

[www.margarita-gritskova.com](http://www.margarita-gritskova.com)

## Maria Prinz

Pianist Maria Prinz is widely in demand as a soloist, recitalist and chamber musician. Career highlights include concerts with the Wiener Philharmoniker under Riccardo Muti at the Salzburger Festspiele; performances under Seiji Ozawa in Vienna; and a long-standing collaboration both on stage and in the recording studio with Neville Marriner. As a recitalist, Prinz has performed across the United States, Europe, Japan, Australia and New Zealand, appearing in prestigious concert halls such as the Musikverein and Konzerthaus in Vienna, the Großes Festspielhaus in Salzburg, Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, Royal Festival Hall in London and Tokyo Bunka Kaikan. She is a chamber music partner of members of the Wiener Philharmoniker, as well as renowned international soloists such as Andrew Marriner, Patrick Gallois and Paul Meyer, and distinguished vocalists including Ludovic Tézier, Krassimira Stoyanova, Matthias Goerne and Boris Pinkhasovich. Her discography includes recordings of piano concertos by Haydn and Mozart, Brahms' *Clarinet Sonatas, Op. 120* with Alfred Prinz and the acclaimed album *The 20th Century Concerto Grosso* with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields under Neville Marriner, as well as numerous Naxos releases featuring flautist Patrick Gallois, soprano Krassimira Stoyanova, mezzo-soprano Margarita Gritskova and Wiener Philharmoniker principal flautist Karl-Heinz Schütz.

[www.mariaprinz.com](http://www.mariaprinz.com)



Photo: Michael Pöhn

Known primarily as a prolific opera composer, Gaetano Donizetti also wrote nearly 300 songs, which were destined for intimate gatherings of friends, professionals and wealthy amateurs. Though Donizetti was seemingly blasé about his songs, they contain much of interest. Their melodic beauty and structural surety are invariably captivating, whether in ballades or canzonettas, theatrical ariettas, or poignant love laments. Setting poets from Pietro Metastasio to his contemporaries allowed Donizetti full rein to explore a wide variety of subject matter with wit, sentiment, long vocal lines, and quasi-orchestral piano accompaniment. A digital-only single of *Lamento per la morte di V. Bellini* is also available to stream and download (9.70399).

Gaetano  
**DONIZETTI**  
(1797–1848)

<b>1</b>	<b>Su l'onda tremola</b>	<b>3:51</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>Questo mio figlio è un</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Tu mi chiedi s'io t'adoro</b>	<b>4:04</b>		<b>fiorellin d'amore</b>	<b>5:06</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>La ninna-nanna</b>	<b>10:22</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>Au tic-tac des castagnettes</b>	<b>2:55</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Le petit montagnard</b>	<b>5:50</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>La lontananza</b>	<b>2:27</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>A mezzanotte</b>	<b>4:30</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>Leonora</b>	<b>2:54</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>La zingara</b>	<b>4:07</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>Il barcaiolo</b>	<b>3:14</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>La mère et l'enfant</b>	<b>5:24</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>Lu trademiento</b>	<b>2:54</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>L'amante spagnuolo</b>	<b>2:18</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>La sultana</b>	<b>6:11</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Una lacrima</b>	<b>4:45</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>Ah, rammenta, o bella Irene</b>	<b>5:57</b>

**Margarita Gritskova, Mezzo-soprano**  
**Maria Prinz, Piano**

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet.

Sung texts in Italian and French are included in the booklet, and may also be accessed at [www.naxos.com/libretti/574485.htm](http://www.naxos.com/libretti/574485.htm)

English translations of tracks **1 3 7 9 12 16 17** are available at [www.naxos.com/libretti/557780.htm](http://www.naxos.com/libretti/557780.htm)

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