An unpublished Donizetti letter.

(Not in Zavadini or Studi Donizettiani).

An apparently unpublished letter written by Donizetti to Sig. G. Peluti, Ingegnere, Venezia, from Naples, post-marked 24 February 1838. (Although Donizetti has used the spelling Peluti in the address, he uses Pelluti in the text of the letter).

In January 1838 Donizetti had been in Venice for the premier (on the 30th) of his new opera, Maria de Rudenz; it was performed twice unsuccessfully and then hastily replaced by a revival of Parisina.

The present letter, written from Naples where he had gone immediately afterwards for the production of an opera for May, begins by referring to the fate in Venice of Maria de Rudenz and Parisina. He then sends his correspondent on a long list of errands. '[Make] my excuses to Mercadante, since I did not say goodbye to him; but he knows that between ourselves we live informally...' He sends greetings to 'all those who do not speak ill of me (you can see very well that there will not be very many for you to greet...' After several other messages he says he has heard from Unger and Ronconi (the singers, who had taken part in the production of Maria de Rudenz). To Alessandro Lanari, the impresario at Florence, he says that 'in Rome the Argentina and Tordinona arrangements have gone up in smoke and that Padin, in order to keep Capranica happy, no longer gives us the monopoly...'

'My Roberto [Devereux], still done by Reina [Domenico, the tenor], is popular. When the king saw me in the street for the first time he buried me in 'confetti' showered from above; the horses could not move for the crowd, the glass window? fell down in front of me; and then, if you can imagine it, there was my head bare among the bullets - for the 'confetti' are enormous... Farewell. Let the Venetians be patient, and let them be kinder with other rivals than they have been to your poor Donizetti.'

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