



Gaetano Donizetti was born in Italy in 1797. He studied in Bergamo and Bologna.

During his students days he wrote three unproduced operas. His parents were very opposed to a musical career so he was forced to enlist in the Austrian Army, but he continued to find time for composition. His first opera, which was produced in Venice, was ***Enrico di Borgogna*** in 1818 .

His next opera ***T.S.L. Zoraide di Granata*** was so successful that it resulted in his exemption from any further service in the army.

The operas of the 1830's became more mature and are the operas that are in the standard operatic repertoire today.

The most famous of Donizetti's works is ***Lucia di Lammermoor*** written in 1835. ***The Elixir of Love*** was written just prior to this in 1832. Other famous operas include ***The Daughter of the Regiment***, a showpiece for Dame Joan Sutherland, and ***Don Pasquale***.

Donizetti was a prolific writer having composed 70 operas. He wrote a large variety of operas, from Romantic tragedies to comic operas.

Although he wrote a lot of very original music, he often wrote operas that conformed to the conventions of the time. The heroine often sang arias that included slow cavatina and then fast cabalettas. There are often a lot of notes, runs, cadenzas, and high notes, which demonstrate the emotions of the singer, either sad or ecstatically happy.

The formula for a successful Donizetti opera often includes an introductory chorus, a slow aria from the heroine, the meetings and partings of would-be lovers, the confrontation of rivals, mistaken identities, mad scenes or death scenes, or in the case of the comedies, a final madcap resolution.

The conclusion to any study of Donizetti's music is that the music is beautiful, sparkling, very melodic, florid, lyrical, and accessible.