

Gaetano Donizetti – Maria Padilla (1998)



Act I:

01. *Di Queste Ridente*
02. *Al Vostro Puro Omaggio*
03. *Elan Già Create In Cielo*
04. *Soridi, Oh Sposo Amato*
05. *Ad Affrettar Vo Il Sacro Riti*
06. *Diletta Suora*
07. *Il Più Tenero Suon D'Arpa*
08. *Ah! Non Sai Qual Prestigio* [play](#)
09. *Don Alfonso Di Pardo*
10. *Lieto Fra Voi Ritorno*
11. *Oh Coppia Diletta*
12. *Diletta Suora ... Ella E Felica*
13. *Ecco! Lanciar Le Corde*
14. *Core Innocente E Giovane*
15. *Oh. Mio Padre*
16. *A Te Oh Caro M'abandonò*

Act II:

01. *Nella Regia Dell'Amore*
02. *Quale Doppo Tant'anni*
03. *Il sentiero Di Mia Vita*
04. *Una Gioja Ancor Mi Resta*
05. *Ines. Mia Dolce Suora* [play](#)
06. *A Figlia Incauta*
07. *Ah Sì! Suora*
08. *Alla Regina Madre*
09. *Io Ti Vedo Alla Fin Quest'Augusto*
10. *Sovra Il VilChe M'ha Insultato*
11. *Vada, Soffra Quel Protervo*
12. *Mio Padre*

Act III:

01. *E Quiete Profonda*

- 02. *Oh Figlia*
- 03. *Su Quelle Fronte Dal Dolore*
- 04. *Padre Oh Rio Dolore*
- 05. *Attemdi! E Quola ... senti*
- 06. *Provo Si Tenti Estrema*
- 07. *Uno Sguardo, Un Detto* [play](#)
- 08. *Come Rosa Que S'apre*
- 09. *Ora Fatal*
- 10. *Ah! Quello Fu Per Me*
- 11. *Vedi La Regina S'avanza!*
- 12. *Lasciar Maria*
- 13. *Qualo'astro Novello*
- 14. *Don Pedro Alto Sovrano*
- 15. *Giurata Innanzi A Dio*
- 16. *Sento Ad Ognor Estinguersi*
- 17. *Il Silenzio In Che T'ostini*
- 18. *O Padre Tu L'odi*

Maria - Lois McDonall Ines - Della Jones Ruiz - Graham Clark Pedro - Christian Du Plessis
Ramiro - Roderick Earle Francisca - Joan Davies Luigi - Ian Caley Alfonso - Roderick
Kennedy Geoffrey Mitchell Choir London Symphony Orchestra Alun Francis - conductor

Maria Padilla is a melodramma, or opera, in three acts by Gaetano Donizetti. Gaetano Rossi and the composer wrote the Italian libretto after François Ancelot's play. It premiered on December 26, 1841 at La Scala, Milan. The plot is loosely based on the historical figure María de Padilla, the mistress of Pedro the Cruel, King of Castile.

Donizetti is known for being a great melodist, but not for infusing his operas with unique musical atmosphere. Maria Padilla is a surprise for those who think Donizetti predictable. Written in 1841 near the end of his career, it is clear evidence of the composer's search for dramatic realism. From the first notes played by the orchestra to the last, we could never believe the action was taking place anywhere but in Spain. There are the usual 2-part arias with florid cabalettas, but Donizetti also experiments with musical forms and part allocation. He expands a baritone aria into a sextet, and assigns the part of Maria's old father to a tenor (who steals the right of a mad scene from the soprano!). The music is thrilling from beginning to end. In particular, a soprano-mezzo duet is on a par with its more famous counterpart in Norma, and the duet for Maria and her father is intensely dramatic. The final aria completely makes up for a

dramatically unsatisfying happy ending, giving the soprano ample opportunity to completely bring down the house. A thick booklet contains an English-Italian libretto, a well-researched and interesting scholarly article by Jeremy Commons, and a plot synopsis. A great opportunity to explore some of the forgotten byways of Italian Opera, and a thoroughly enjoyable recording. ---Dwadefoley

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Maria Padilla deserves to be better known. It is fairly late Donizetti in which the composer has developed his own distinctive elements and furthermore is showing a good deal of affinity to Bellini. He was not breaking out in new ways or generating promising extensions to the bel canto approach, as Mercadante was doing at that period and as Verdi, in a different way, soon would be doing. The music is never less than engaging, and at times reaches outstanding levels, particularly in the second act soprano duet but also at many other points. The opera is probably almost never performed because of a weak libretto and the fact that there are enough good Donizetti operas that few companies need to venture off the beaten track even for strong works -- and this is at least as strong as Roberto Devereaux, for example. The recorded sound is more than adequate, enhancing rather detracting from the performance. One does wonder how much more this operatic jewel would glitter if it had some really great singers and interpreters involved. In their absence, this is a highly worthwhile set. ... ---John Cragg

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