

Michael Walter

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*Abstract*

Throughout the 1830s, Donizetti pursued plans to progress his career in Paris. Vienna played only a secondary role in his considerations, offering him less favourable conditions. When in 1842 he received a contract from the Vienna Court Opera, observers quickly recognised political potential behind the offer. Donizetti's main supporter in Vienna was Leo Herz, a leading Viennese music journalist, known to be loyal to the emperor and to Metternich. Donizetti's new role in Vienna was meant to mirror Meyerbeer's role in Berlin. In the ensuing debates, Herz pointed out that Donizetti was both Italian and Austrian, a native from the Austrian Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia. When rumours began to circulate that Donizetti considered the option of succeeding Meyerbeer in Berlin, Herz vehemently refuted these reports. According to Herz, Donizetti held such a prestigious position at the Viennese court that any consideration of moving to Berlin was out of question.