

BENVENUTO CELLINI

Music by Hector Berlioz

Libretto by Léon de Wailly & August Barbier

First Performance: Opéra, Paris, September 10, 1838

Act I. Hall in the Palazzo Balducci. Cellini wishes to elope with Teresa Balducci, but their conversation is overheard by Fieramosca. As Balducci appears, Cellini manages to escape, while Fieramosca is treated as an intruder.

Act II A tavern. Cellini receives a sum of money from the Pope to finish his statue of Perseus. as the sum is too small, however, the pupils of Cellini plan revenge against Balducci, the treasurer of the Pope. Cellini has arranged with Teresa to escape in the guise of masqueraders, which Fieramosca, who has again listened, and who hates the goldsmith, determines to prevent.

Act III. Before the foundry of Cellini. Cellini appears in a procession of monks, and Balducci tries to force Teresa to marry Fieramosca. A cardinal endeavours to arrest Cellini on the charge of murder, particularly as the statue of Perseus has not been finished. Cellini thereupon orders that all his works of art shall be melted to form part of the statue. He breaks the plaster cast, and all stand enthralled with the masterpiece. The master is pardoned.