


TEBALDI sings



Renata Tebaldi

Complete recording: A4314 3-12"
Highlight recording: 5344

"Her pitch is near-perfect, and almost never does she depart from the dead center of a note; the timbre of the voice is velvety, sweet and intensely feminine; she produces her tones with clarity and purity, without the tremolo, or wobble, that afflicts some otherwise great singers."

—New York Times

LONDON RECORDS

339 WEST 25TH STREET, NEW YORK 1, N. Y.

Relentless Strangers

10 Biblical Episodes
by Edward W. Warner

A series of "person to person" meetings between the reader and ten Biblical personalities—Joseph, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, Peter and others.

Offers a unique adventure in faith.

\$2.50 at all book stores

MUHLNBERG PRESS
PHILADELPHIA

MEMO TO WRITERS:

The priceless ingredient in every book is the integrity of the publisher. If we are convinced of the quality and sales potential of your manuscript, we will offer you a fair cooperative contract. Publication will be handled by men of vision and experience. Submit your manuscript to:

THE AMERICAN PRESS
Attn: Mr. Saunders, 489 Fifth Ave., N.Y., N. Y.

Free to WRITERS seeking a book publisher

Two fact-filled, illustrated brochures tell how to publish your book, get 40% royalties, national advertising, publicity and promotion. Free editorial appraisal. Write Dept. SR-12

Exposition Press / 386 4th Ave., N.Y. 16



MUSIC TO MY EARS

Leinsdorf's "Figaro," Labo in "Tosca"

FOR those to whom the "Marriage of Figaro" Erich Leinsdorf conducted at the Metropolitan during a wartime season (he was between army duty and a return to the Cleveland Orchestra) has long been a matter of curiosity as well as hearsay, the current restoration in his charge has past as well as present interest. Available information about that happening in 1944 dwelt on the clarity, power, and design Leinsdorf imparted to the score. They are still present in ample measure, plus a finesse which is doubtless more highly developed now than it was then. A rousing performance of the overture was the key that unlocked an evening of particularly fine orchestral playing.

Provided with a cast that was practically from the top layer of the Metropolitan's top drawer of Mozartian talent—such expert Figarones as Cesare Siepi and George London, Lisa della Casa, Mildred Miller, and Laurel Hurley—Leinsdorf made an uncommonly earfilling sound of the big ensembles in Acts II and III. What was lacking from time to time in surrounding pages, and especially from the friskier first act, was a real sense of participation in the pleasures as well as the profundities of the score. "Figaro" has both, but the support of Hans Busch's good-humored staging came primarily from the vocalists rather than their Mozartian counterparts in the orchestra. "Figaro," however, is the kind of operatic experience which can be all things to all men; let us be grateful it is the kind of vibrantly alive thing it is to Leinsdorf.

In addition to the familiar personnel (all in excellent voice, especially Miss Miller, who is sounding again as she did when her Cherubino earned such praise several years ago), the cast provided Norman Kelley for the first time as Don Basilio, and Regina Resnik as Marcellina. Kelley is an able, intelligent artist who should do well in such buffo tenor parts, especially if he learns to talk more on the tone and produce less vocal "quality." Miss Resnik has much more artistry than the average performer of such character parts, and her new sound as a mezzo is altogether agreeable. Justice should include commendation for Fernando Corena's well rounded Bartolo, as well as for Lorenzo Alvar's Antonio, the noblest gardener of them all.

When the readiest reason for praise at the Metropolitan Opera House is dancing, one of two things must have happened: either the Royal Ballet has returned for an unscheduled engagement, or the singing is pariously below par. As the Royal Ballet was opening in Chicago when "Orfeo" was being given at the Metropolitan, it is a regretful intrusion on the season of good will to note that Alicia Markova's participation redeemed an occasion marked by the tremulous performance of the leading role by Rise Stevens and an undistinguished Amore by Emilia Cundari. Only Hilde Gueden as Eurydice approached the standard of voice expected in Gluck, or the standard of artistry provided by Miss Markova in the scene of the Elysian Fields (well-choreographed by Zachary Solov).

Here, too, Max Rudolf's direction of the orchestral score proceeded with a surety and mood it had lacked

Matins

By Barriss Mills

THE German women in the corner cabin

are so in love with their own voices they unleash them each morning for a five o'clock ramble in the corridor.

What they find to talk about so loud and long when the rest of us would like

to go on sleeping, I don't know.

I haven't enough conversational

Deutsch

and anyway it would be difficult to unravel dialog filtered through doors,

the ship's noises, and the feet of their children running in the hallway

(whom they love, too, and unleash to trample the remnants of sleep in the rest of us). Whatever it is, it can't wait till we're out of bed and there's some prospect of breakfast

within a decent interval. No, it must be said now, vociferously and publicly, and our ears pressed willy-nilly into service to provide the audience women with such voices and the urge to use them at such hours feel they have the right to command.

previously. Much of Act I was not so much slow in pace as it was lacking in rhythmic tension and breadth of feeling. Miss Stevens's conception of the grieving Orfeo is sound enough, her presence, as ever, convincing. But the labor she expends on getting her tones out leaves little leeway for legato, well-formed sound, or the other prerequisites of a suitable classic style. Such uncertainty can hardly fail to affect the whole spirit of a venture in which dignity, repose, and technical command are of the essence. For reasons known best to himself, Rudolf provided, in place of the usual "Ombra Felice" (Happy Shade), "Ombri Felici" sung by Mildred Allen and Helen Vanni. Dividing the music doubled shadiness rather than felicity.

The indifferent quality of vocalism being tendered New Yorkers at this point of the Metropolitan season was further emphasized by a "Tosca" in which Flaviano Labo sang Cavara-dossi, Zinka Milanov Tosca. Labo has the power to ring non-extant rafters in Act II, but not much of the suavity or lyric sound wanted in Acts I and III. An earnest performer, he is also cruder than a Metropolitan "Tosca" connotes. Milanov has the notes more securely in her voice than when she started singing the part two seasons ago, but her flopping and flailing border on caricature. Altogether, it was Leonard Warren's powerfully sonorous Scarpia that gave the performance artistic stability. Dimitri Mitropoulos had a good night with the orchestra.

—IRVING KOLODIN.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT NO. 758

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 758 will be found in the next issue.

QRIY GRRVQ FSY KR

GY KFQKYE, RKWYSQ

KR GY QOFUROYE,

FTE QRIY XYO KR GY

ZWYOYE FTE ECDYQKYE.

—GFZRT.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 757

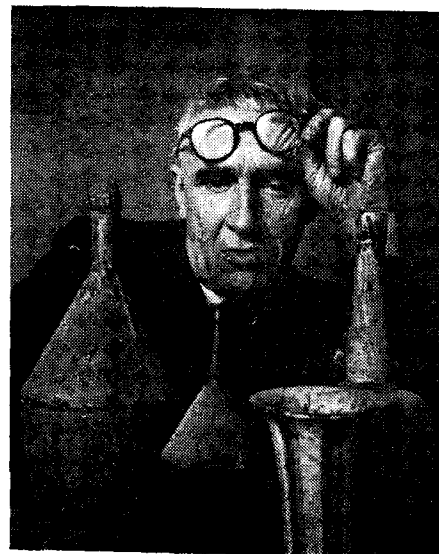
Good conscience is sometimes sold for money, but never bought with it.

—AUGHEY.



THE FINE ARTS

Giorgio Morandi



—Herbert List—Magnum.

Morandi—"... a dedicated artist."

to comprehend the transcendental compulsions of Piet Mondrian, his non-representational counterpart in steady devotion to solving the most delicate problems of order and form, though not, in Mondrian's case, of light.

IN THE spring of 1948, when my colleague Alfred Barr and I went to Italy to assemble the Museum of Modern Art's exhibition, "Twentieth-Century Italian Art," we left New York with long lists of the contemporary Italian painters and sculptors most esteemed by critics, collectors, and museum curators here and abroad. There was an inescapable discrepancy between the lists sent us from Italy and those prepared elsewhere: on the former, the name of Giorgio Morandi was invariably given a leading place; on the latter, he was not mentioned often and then with qualified approval.

I remember that at the time Barr and I thought the Italians far too enthusiastic about the virtues of Morandi's art, which consisted almost exclusively of still lifes of bottles, with an occasional landscape providing the sole variety. Morandi's painting seemed to us repetitious, provincial, and minor by comparison with that of such international figures as Modigliani, Boccioni, and de Chirico. But each evening in Italy, and especially in Milan, where most of the outstanding collections of modern Italian art are concentrated, Barr and I would compare notes on what we had seen during the day. On these notes, pictures by Morandi soon began to turn up with astonishing frequency. Within a week we had to admit that the Italians were more nearly right in their estimate of Morandi's worth than we had been, and in the end our exhibition included a sizable group of his works.

Morandi was and remains fanatically limited in subject matter (but so to much lesser degree were Chardin and even Cézanne). He was and is a mild artist, who throughout his life has seldom left his native Bologna and then only to journey to nearby Italian cities. He is a true painter nonetheless, and if I've long since given up trying to explain his hypnotic charm to those exposed to his art for the first or second time, I think he deserves the two honors that have come to him lately: the first prize for Italian painting at the 1948 *Biennale* in Venice; and the top award for international painting at São Paulo's fourth *Biennial* this past autumn. It takes a long time to appreciate the purity of Morandi's achievement—about as long, I would say, as it takes

Morandi was born in Bologna in 1890, and today lives with his sisters in an old and rather homely apartment on the Via Fondazza near the center of that city. He was trained as an artist in Bologna's Academy of Fine Arts, where he later returned to teach for a living. In youth he developed a profound admiration for Cézanne, probably through reproductions, since pictures by the great Frenchman seldom reached Italy. And then he came very briefly under the influence of the Futurists, whose clamor was unavoidable in the larger Italian cities. Afterwards (1918-20) he took an oblique and isolated part in the *scuola metafisica*, founded by de Chirico and Carlo Carrà at Ferrara during the First World War. But by temperament Morandi was not suited to revolution, whether of the aggressive (Futurist) or the incantational ("metaphysical") kind. In 1920 he returned to his earlier preoccupations with simple but profoundly considered arrangements of commonplace objects.

To realize fully the dedication of Morandi's career, it is perhaps most of all helpful to see the room in which he works at Bologna. The bottles and other containers which engross him