



Great Opera Recordings

ADD

8.110240-41



VERDI

Il Trovatore

Jussi Björling

Zinka Milanov

Leonard Warren

Fedora Barbieri

RCA Victor Orchestra

Renato Cellini

(Recorded in 1952)

2 CDs

GREAT OPERA RECORDINGS

Verdi Il Trovatore

Opera in Four Acts

Libretto by Salvatore Cammarano

after a play by Antonio Garcia Gutiérrez

Manrico	Jussi Björling, tenor
Leonora	Zinka Milanov, soprano
Count di Luna	Leonard Warren, baritone
Azucena	Fedora Barbieri, mezzo-soprano
Ferrando	Nicola Moscona, bass
Inez	Margaret Roggero, mezzo-soprano
Ruiz	Paul Franke, tenor
An Old Gypsy	George Cehanovsky, baritone
A Messenger	Nathaniel Sprinzena, tenor

RCA Victor Orchestra
Robert Shaw Chorale (Director: Robert Shaw)
Renato Cellini, conductor

Recorded from 21st February to 16th March 1952 in Manhattan Center, New York

Matrices: E2-RC-0170 through 0191

First issued on RCA Victor LM-6008 (LP) and WDM-6008 (45 rpm)

Bonus Tracks:
Zinka Milanov sings "Song Gems of Yugoslavia"
(Recorded 1944)

Producer and Audio Restoration Engineer: Mark Obert-Thorn

Special thanks to Maynard F. Bertolet, Jerry Miller and Don Tait for providing source material for this release

Act I: The Duel

25:51

Scene 1

- 1** *All'erta, all'erta!* 2:53
2 *Di due figli vivea* 5:46
3 *Sull'orlo dei tetti alcun l'ha veduta!* 1:08
 (Ferrando, Retainers, Soldiers)

Scene 2

16:03

- 4** *Che più t'arresti?* 2:34
5 *Tacea la notte placida* 4:09
6 *Di tale amor che dirsi* 1:33
 (Inez, Leonora)

Scene 3

- 7** *Tace la notte!* 2:04
 (Count)
8 *Deserto sulla terra* 3:21
9 *Di geloso amor sprezzato* 2:22
 (Manrico, Count, Leonora)

Act II: The Gypsy

36:16

Scene 1

20:58

- 10** *Vedi! Le fosche notturne spoglie* 2:40
 (Anvil Chorus)
 (Gypsies)
11 *Stride la vampa!* 4:37
 (Azucena, Gypsies, Manrico, an old Gypsy)
12 *Soli or siamo* 0:54
13 *Condotto ell'era in ceppi* 4:26
14 *Non son tuo figlio?* 2:27
 (Manrico, Azucena)
15 *Mal reggendo* 4:06
 (Manrico, Azucena, Messenger)
16 *Perigliarti ancor languente* 1:48
 (Azucena, Manrico)

Scene 2

15:18

- 17** *Tutto è deserto* 1:26
 (Count, Ferrando)
18 *Il balen del suo sorriso* 3:14
 (Count)
19 *Quel suono! Oh, ciel! . . . Per me ora fatale* 2:38
 (Count, Ferrando, Retainers)
20 *Ah! Se l'error t'ingombra* 1:56
 (Nuns, Count, Ferrando, Retainers)
21 *Perchè piangete?* 2:14
 (Leonora, Inez, Count, Nuns)
22 *E deggio e posso crederlo?* 3:49
 (Leonora, Manrico, Count, Inez, Nuns, Ferrando,
 Retainers, Ruiz, Soldiers)

Act III: The Gypsy's Son

19:29

Scene 1

10:55

- 1 *Or co' dadi* 1:55
(Soldiers, Ferrando)
- 2 *Squilli, echeggi la tromba guerriera* 2:22
(Soldiers)
- 3 *In braccio al mio rival!* 1:58
- 4 *Giorni poveri vivea* 4:40
(Count, Ferrando, Soldiers, Azucena)

Scene 2

8:33

- 5 *Quale d'armi fragor poc'anzi intesi?* 2:06
(Leonora, Manrico)
- 6 *Ah, sì, ben mio* 4:23
(Manrico, Leonora, Ruiz)
- 7 *Di quella pira* 2:04
(Manrico, Ruiz, Soldiers)

Act IV: The Ordeal

34:57

Scene 1

18:04

- 8 *Siam giunti* 2:57
(Ruiz, Leonora)
- 9 *D'amor sull'ali rosee* 3:39
(Leonora)
- 10 *Miserere d'un alma già vicina* 4:24
(Monks, Leonora, Manrico)
- 11 *Udiste?* 1:39
- 12 *Mira, di acerbe lagrime* 3:16
- 13 *Vivrà! Contende il giubilo* 2:09
(Count, Leonora)

Scene 2

16:53

- 14 *Madre, non dormi* 6:18
- 15 *Ai nostri monti* 2:02
(Manrico, Azucena)
- 16 *Che! Non m'inganno!* 4:03
(Manrico, Leonora, Azucena)
- 17 *Ti scosta* 4:29
(Manrico, Leonora, Count, Azucena)

Appendix: Zinka Milanov in
"Song Gems of Yugoslavia"

18:09

Traditional:

- 18 *Na Bembaši* 3:02
(By Bembasha Waters)

Radicević/Jenko:

- 19 *Ukor* 2:59
(Maiden's Reproach)

Tijardović:

- 20 *Daleko m'e moj Split* 3:04
(Split, my hometown, so far away)

Okrugić/Zajec:

- 21 *Domovini I Ljubavi* 2:54
(To my homeland and to my love)

Traditional:

- 22 *Gor' čez jezero* (By the lake) 3:05

Traditional:

- 23 *Traditional: Ko lani sem* 3:04
(When last year I passed by)

Zinka Milanov, soprano with piano and violin
Director: Dr Lujo Goranin
Recorded 1944 in New York
Matrices: M-169, M-172, M-173, M-174,
M-170 and M-171. First issued as Sonart
M-201 through 203 in album M-6

Giuseppe VERDI (1813-1901)

Il Trovatore

Il trovatore was the middle opera of the three masterpieces that consolidated Giuseppe Verdi's fame. Composed mainly in 1852, it came two years after *Rigoletto* and was finished only months before the much more quickly written *La traviata*. Its brilliant music gave Verdi perhaps the greatest success of his career, as *Trovatore* ignited public enthusiasm even more wholeheartedly than *Rigoletto* had done. By comparison *La traviata*, which had a rather downbeat première and had to be revised, was a slow starter in the popularity stakes.

As he would later do with *La forza del destino*, Verdi went to an elaborate Spanish tragedy for his inspiration – in this case *El trovador* by Antonio García Gutiérrez. In the spring of 1851, soon after the première of *Rigoletto*, he began work on shaping a libretto in collaboration with the Neapolitan poet Salvatore Cammarano. Everything went reasonably well until Cammarano's death in July 1852, which was a personal as well as a professional setback for Verdi. The final work on the libretto was done by the young poet Leone Emanuele Bardare, who provided some crucial verses. *Il trovatore* had its triumphant première at the Teatro Apollo in Rome on 19th January 1853 and swept through the major Italian opera houses over the next two years. In May 1855 it was heard in both New York and London and since then it has been a fixture in the repertoire.

Much ink has been spilt on the convoluted nature of the story, the subject of many parodies, and for today's sensibilities it is difficult to see any meaning in the deaths at the end of the opera. Perhaps it is best to view the tragedy as Verdi probably saw it, as a vehicle for strong, stirring stage situations. In the theatre (or even listening to a good recording such as this one) it is impossible not to be swept away by the passion of the trio in Part I, Scene 2, the duet of Azucena and Manrico in Part II, Scene 1, the confrontation between

the gypsy and Luna in Part III, Scene 1, the Miserere and the duet of Leonora and the Count di Luna in Part IV, Scene 1, or the moving ensembles in the final scene. Then there are the arias, all of which are among the strongest written by Verdi. One of his main gifts to Italian opera was his creation of the balanced cast, in which soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor, baritone and bass all took an equal share in the action. This magnificent variety came to its first full fruition in *Il trovatore*, which requires five singers of the highest calibre – the bass rôle is not as extensive as the others but Ferrando opens the opera with a superb scene (shared with the chorus, another vital ingredient in Verdi's brew) which establishes the atmosphere for what follows. The most exceptional creation is the mezzo-soprano rôle of the crazed gypsy Azucena, whose agitated narration '*Condotta ell'era in ceppi*' foreshadows Verdi's later style. From the beginning she dominated the composer's feelings about the opera and he originally envisaged hers as the major female rôle; only at a fairly late stage did he decide that Leonora should have equal prominence. The other outstanding innovation is the tenor rôle of Manrico, the most brilliant that Verdi ever wrote – and it became even more brilliant some years after the première when, with the composer's reluctant approval, the tenor Enrico Tamberlick began throwing high Cs into the stretta '*Di quella pira*' which ends Part III.

Despite the perennial problem of casting, *Il trovatore* has been lucky on record. Two excellent versions circulated on 78rpm discs – the Manrico of Aureliano Pertile being particularly memorable – and the early LP era brought the present recording, the most consistently cast of all. It introduced a whole generation to the opera and in many collectors' affections it still reigns supreme. Much of its success must be put down to the conductor Renato Cellini, who curiously enough is the one participant whose

contribution has often come in for criticism. True, his is not the most dramatic account of the score, although with his string-playing background he draws beautiful playing from the orchestra, but Cellini was renowned in the profession as a coach and it is surely due to his careful preparation that a cast consisting of a Croatian, an Italian, a Swede, an American and a Greek sounds so convincing. In particular it is worth noting that of the various complete opera sets in which the tenor Jussi Björling took part, those with Cellini in charge are rivalled only by the famous *La bohème* with Beecham.

Renato Cellini (1912-67) came from a theatrical family and as a boy in Turin became a prodigy on the cello, giving his first recital when he was ten. He also learnt the piano and later the organ. After attending the Conservatory in his native city, where he studied composition with Alfano and Ghedini, he worked as a coach and conductor in various Italian opera houses. After the war he was at Glyndebourne and from 1948 to 1954 he was at the Metropolitan Opera in New York, where he conducted six operas and prepared many others. He also worked in Mexico, Cincinnati, New Orleans and Caracas and was a valued house conductor for RCA Victor.

Zinka Milanov (1906-89) was from Zagreb, where she studied with Milka Termina and Mila Kostrencic (also a teacher of Sena Jurinac). Her other mentors were Fernando Carpi in Milan, Jacques Stüeckgold in Berlin and in particular her brother, the composer Borislaw Kunc, who often acted as her accompanist. Having made her début at Ljubljana in 1927 in the rôle she sings on this recording, she spent eight years in Zagreb, making guest forays to Dresden, Hamburg and Prague. For the first decade of her career she sang under her original name Zinka Kunc. For the 1936-37 season she was in Prague; then Toscanini engaged her for the Verdi *Requiem* at the 1937 Salzburg Festival and she had a guest engagement in Vienna. She finished the

year 1937 with her Metropolitan début (again as Leonora in *Il trovatore*) and from then on she was mainly associated with the New York house, also singing in other North and South American centres and visiting Covent Garden in 1956-57. Until her retirement in 1966 she was regarded as the Met's leading exponent of the dramatic Verdi parts and such other rôles as Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*), Norma, Gioconda, Tosca, Santuzza (*Cavalleria rusticana*) and Maddalena (*Andrea Chénier*). She left many magnificent recordings, including a famous final act of *Rigoletto* under Toscanini and several complete operas.

Fedora Barbieri (b.1920-2003) studied in her native Trieste, where she first appeared in concert, and in Milan. She made her operatic début in Florence in 1940 as Fidalma in *Il matrimonio segreto* and soon was regarded as one of the leading mezzo-sopranos in Italy, especially popular in Florence, Rome, where she first sang in 1941-42, and Milan, where she made her La Scala début in 1942. After the war her career burgeoned, taking her to South America and all the major European houses. She sang eleven rôles at the Metropolitan in nine seasons from 1950 to 1977 and in the early 1990s was still appearing in Florence in character parts. She was still giving masterclasses until shortly before her death. She made a large number of recordings, beginning in 1943 with her Ulrica in *Un ballo in maschera* with Gigli and Caniglia.

Johan Jonatan 'Jussi' Björling (1911-60) was the best-known member of a family of singers. Born in Stora Tuna in the Swedish province of Dalarna, as a boy he toured and recorded with the family quartet, visiting the United States. As an adult he was taught by his father, John Forsell and Caruso's former coach Tullio Voghera. Like Caruso and Gigli he initially had difficulty with the top register and the Scottish tenor Joseph Hislop helped him to achieve his ringing high C. From 1930 he was a member of the Royal Opera in

Stockholm, where he established himself as the leading tenor in Italian and French rôles. From 1932 he made guest appearances in Germany and from 1936 in Vienna. His adult United States début came at Chicago in 1937 and he sang at the Met from 1938 and Covent Garden from 1939. His unexpected early death was mourned world-wide. He is generally regarded as the best 'Italian' tenor between Gigli and Bergonzi, and although he did not match their intonation – he tended to pitch sharp and his control declined in later years, probably because of his chronic alcoholism – he shone in the major Verdi, Puccini and Gounod rôles. Caruso's wife felt he sounded more like her husband than any other tenor, and the similarity can be heard especially in the one recording on which Björling consciously imitates Caruso, Tosti's '*L'alba separa dalla luce l'ombra*'.

Björling's exact contemporary **Leonard Warren** (1911-60) was a New Yorker, born of immigrant parents. He began his career in the Radio City Music Hall chorus, studying with Sidney Dietsch. In 1938 he won the Met Auditions and went to Milan for study with Giuseppe Pais and Riccardo Picozzi, making his Met début in January 1939. Giuseppe de Luca gave him further help as he progressed to being recognised as America's best Verdi baritone, one of the two natural successors to Lawrence Tibbett – Warren tended to take

the heavier, more dramatic roles, Robert Merrill the more lyrical parts. Apart from the Met, Warren appeared in many North and South American houses but made only brief visits to Europe – he was at La Scala in 1948 and 1953. In 1958 he toured the USSR. A marvellous interpreter of Macbeth and Simon Boccanegra as well as the more central Verdi characters, Warren died suddenly on stage at the Met in the midst of a performance of *La forza del destino*. His big voice was captured on a number of complete opera sets and recital discs.

Nicola Moscona (1907-75) studied with Elena Theodorini in his home city of Athens and made his début there in 1929. Under the name Nicolai Mosconas he gained valuable experience in Greece and Egypt before a government award in 1937 brought study in Italy. He made his début at the Met at the end of that year and from then on, apart from the occasional guest appearance, he was devoted to that house, staying for 25 seasons. His firm, smooth, Italianate bass was appreciated by many conductors from Toscanini downward and he took part in a number of recordings. After his retirement he taught singing in Philadelphia, where he died.

Tully Potter

Synopsis

CD 1

Act I: The Duel

Scene 1. Courtyard in the palace of Aliaferia. There is a door to one side, leading to the apartments of the Count di Luna.

No. 1 Introduction

① Ferrando, a captain of the guard in the service of the Count di Luna, tells his companions to be alert (*All'erta! All'erta!*), since the Count is jealously watching for his unknown rival in the love of Leonora, the mysterious troubadour.

② Ferrando goes on to explain how the old Count had two sons (*Di due figli vivea padre beato*) and how the younger, Garcia, had been kidnapped. One day a swarthy gypsy woman had been found near the child's cradle (*Abbietta zingara, fosca vegliarda!*) and had bewitched the boy, who fell ill. The old gypsy woman was seized and burned to death, but the woman's daughter survived and seems to have stolen the child, whose charred body was found where the witch had been burned. The ghost of the gypsy still haunts the place, it is said, during the night.

③ The bystanders agree, claiming that others have seen the apparition, in one form or another (*Sull'orto dei teti alcun l'ha veduta*). Midnight strikes and they disperse in fear.

Scene 2. The palace gardens. To the right is a marble staircase leading to the apartments. Thick clouds cover the moon.

No. 2 Scena & Cavatina

④ Ines, Leonora's companion, urges her to come in

and wait no longer (*Che più t'arresti?*), but Leonora remembers the unknown knight whom once she had crowned champion of the tournament, but who had disappeared when civil war broke out.

⑤ Once, Leonora tells her, in the silence of the night, the sound of a lute was heard from her garden and the sad song of a troubadour (*Tacea la notte placida e bella in ciel sereno*). This is the one she loves.

⑥ In spite of the misgivings of Ines, Leonora goes on to tell how she will live and, if she must, die for this love (*Di tale amor, che dirsi*). They go together into the palace.

No. 3 Scena, Romanza & Terzetto

⑦ The Count comes into the garden, observing the silence of the night (*Tace la notte*) and telling of his love for Leonora, who still watches.

⑧ As he turns towards the steps, he hears the sound of the troubadour's song, *Deserto sulla terra* (Nothing is left me on earth).

⑨ The Count shudders in jealousy and wraps his cloak around him, as he hears Leonora approaching. She, thinking him the troubadour, seeks to embrace him, while Manrico, the troubadour, exclaims on her apparent perfidy. The moon emerges from behind the clouds and the troubadour, his face covered by a visor, comes forward. Leonora realises her mistake (*Qual voce!*) and throws herself at the feet of Manrico, declaring her love for him, to the Count's jealous rage. At the Count's urging, Manrico reveals himself, known as a follower of the rebel Urgel, and is challenged to a duel. The Count rages in jealousy (*Di geloso amor sprezzato*). Leonora tries to deflect his anger, turning it towards herself, while Manrico bravely declares his intention of killing his enemy. Leonora swoons, as the two rivals rush out, with drawn swords.

Act II: The Gypsy

Scene 1. A poor dwelling in the foothills of a mountain in Biscay. In the background there burns a great fire. It is dawn. The old gypsy Azucena sits near the fire, while Manrico lies nearby on a mattress, wrapped in his cloak. His helmet is at his feet, his sword at his hand. The gypsies are all around.

No. 4 Gypsy Chorus & Canzone

[10] The gypsies welcome the break of day (*Vedi! le fosche notturne spoglie*), as they start work, with their anvils, praising the beauty of their women.

[11] They break off, however, as Azucena begins to recount the story of her mother's death (*Stride la vampa!*), the sound of the flames and her mother's cries, as she was burned. The gypsies find this a sad song (*Mesta è la tua canzone!*), but Azucena seeks from Manrico one thing, vengeance (*Mi vendica!*). The gypsies prepare to leave to seek food, and their song is heard as they move away into the distance, leaving Manrico and Azucena alone.

No. 5 Scena & Racconto

[12] Now they are alone, Manrico seeks to hear Azucena's story (*Soli or siamo!*).

[13] Azucena tells him how her mother was led in chains to her fate, followed by Azucena holding her son in her arms (*Condotta ell'era in ceppi*). In vain she tried to stop and bless her daughter and her last words urged her to vengeance. In reply to Manrico's question she goes on to tell how she seized the Count's son, but in her frenzy threw her own child into the flames. Azucena falls back in anguish, and Manrico is silent, struck with horror and surprise at what he has heard.

No. 6 Scena & Duetto

[14] Manrico now asks who he is, if he is not Azucena's son (*Non son tuo figlio?*), but she tells him that he is her son: did she not nurse him back to life when the Count di Luna left him for dead on the field of battle.

[15] Manrico goes on to recall how he was about to kill the fallen Count, when a cry from heaven bade him hold (*Mal reggendo all'aspro assalto*). Azucena finds no such mercy in the Count (*Ma nell'alma dell'ingrato / Non parlò del cielo un detto!*) and Manrico swears that another time he will take his revenge. The sound of a horn is heard and Azucena again bids him avenge her. Manrico turns to a messenger, who has appeared with written orders for him to lead the defence of Castellor (*Inoltra il più*) urging haste, while telling him that Leonora, thinking him dead, is to take the veil that evening at the Convent of the Cross nearby. Azucena asks what troubles him and tries to hold him back, but he insists on leaving at once.

[16] She again bids Manrico stay (*Ferma . . . Son io che parlo a te!*), but he tells her that a moment's delay may cost him his beloved. She still insists that his blood is her blood, but he must away.

No. 7 Scena & Aria

Scene 2. The cloister of a convent near Castellor. There are trees in the background. It is night. The Count, Ferrando and some followers enter cautiously, wrapped in their cloaks.

[17] The Count finds all deserted (*Tutto è deserto*), as he and his men make their way into the convent, intent on abducting Leonora, who must be his alone.

[18] The Count sings of the light of her smile (*Il balen del suo sorriso*), which conquers reason, of his love and of the tempest that rages in his heart.

19 He hears the bell that announces the coming ceremony (*Qual suono! . . . Oh ciel! . . . La squilla vicino il rito annunzia!*), and tells his followers to hide themselves, while he himself observes secretly the approach of Leonora. Ferrando and the Count's followers conceal themselves, while the Count anticipates his joy in seizing Leonora, away from God, his rival. They hide among the trees.

No. 8 Second Finale

20 The voices of the nuns are heard, preparing the daughter of Eve, Leonora, for her vows (*Ah! se l'error t'ingombra, o figlia d'Eva*). The Count exclaims that no God can take Leonora from him, while the ceremony continues.

21 Leonora and Ines come in, the former asking her confidante why she is crying (*Perchè piangete?*). Leonora tells her that life now has nothing for her; she has turned her thoughts to a life of penitence. At this the Count rushes forward, vowing that it must be only the altar of marriage that holds her. At this moment Manrico appears.

22 Leonora is overjoyed (*E deggio e posso crederlo?*) and can hardly believe her eyes, thinking that this must be a dream. The Count is horrified, since he thought Manrico dead in battle. Ruiz and his men appear, proclaiming the rebel Urgel, and Manrico, accompanied by Leonora, leaves in their company, once the Count, who has drawn his sword, is disarmed, furious as he is.

CD 2

Act III: The Gypsy's Son

Scene 1. An encampment. On the right is the pavilion of the Count di Luna, carrying the commander's standard. The towers of Castellor are seen above. Soldiers are gambling, while some polish their weapons and others pass to and fro. Ferrando comes out of the Count's pavilion.

No. 9 Introductory Chorus

1 Some of the soldiers call for another game (*Or co'dadi, ma fra poco / Giocherem ben altro gioco*), while others see the banner of the Balestrieri, the reinforcements they had awaited. Ferrando assures them of certain victory, when the new day dawns.

2 The men await the call to arms (*Tu c'inviti a danza!*), eager for the spoils of battle.

No. 10 Scena & Terzetto

3 The Count is tormented by the thought of Leonora in the arms of his rival (*In braccio al mio rival!*). A tumult is heard and Ferrando comes in, telling him that a gypsy woman has been caught by their men. The noise comes nearer and Azucena, her hands bound, is dragged in, protesting at her treatment. The Count interrogates her, asking where she was going, and she tells him that gypsies wander aimlessly; she comes, however, from Biscay, information that disturbs the Count and Ferrando.

4 Azucena tells them of her poverty and contentment and how now she seeks her son (*Giorni poveri vivea / Pur contento del mio stato*). The Count asks her if she remembers a son of the family, kidnapped some fifteen years before. She asks him who he is, and he tells her that he is that boy's brother. Ferrando observes her reaction and now accuses her of stealing the child. She

tries to quieten him, but he declares that this is the woman that burned the child. She denies it, but the Count orders the men to tighten her bonds. In pain she calls on her son Manrico, and the Count now realises he has the mother of his hated rival in his power. Azucena bids them desist, warning them of the anger of God, who will punish the Count (*Ah! Deh! rallentate, o barbari*). He reproaches her, a base gypsy, with that traitor. Now he can strike his enemy through her suffering and avenge his dead brother. At a sign from the Count his men, threatening her with the fires of hell, drag her away, while he withdraws into his tent, followed by Ferrando.

Scene 2. A room adjacent to the chapel of Castellor, with an open gallery in the background.

No. 11 Scena & Aria

⑤ Leonora seeks to know the meaning of the warlike preparations (*Quale d'armi fragor / Poc'anzi intesi?*). Manrico tells her of their imminent danger and the assault expected at dawn: he, however, is certain of victory, since his men are as brave as the enemy. Leonora thinks this bodes ill for their marriage.

⑥ Manrico sings of the strength his love gives him (*Amor, sublime amor*). He is hers, and she his and this will make him the stronger. If it is his fate to be killed, yet his thoughts will turn to her, for death will only mean that he will be in heaven before her. The organ is heard from the nearby chapel. Now they must go there together, as the mystic sounds touch their hearts (*L'onda de' suoni mistici / Pura discende al cor!*). Ruiz calls to Manrico, telling him of the capture and imminent death by burning of Azucena, and he now reveals to Leonora that he is the gypsy's son.

⑦ Manrico can already see the flames in which Azucena must die (*Di quella pira l'orrendo foco*) and feel them: he must save her. The men are called to

arms, to fight or die with Manrico, who rushes out, followed by Ruiz and his soldiers. The sound of battle is heard.

Act IV: The Ordeal

Scene 1. A wing of the palace of Alaferia. At the corner is a tower with barred windows. It is deepest night. Two people come forward, cloaked, Ruiz and Leonora.

No. 12 Scena, Aria & Miserere

⑧ Ruiz shows Leonora the cell where the prisoners are kept (*Siam giunti, ecco la torre*). She tells him to leave her, since she may be able to save Manrico. She looks at a jewel she holds in her hand. Now she is near her lover, although he does not know it.

⑨ Love, she says, will bring comfort to the mind of the prisoner, like a breath of hope (*D'amor sull'ali rosee / Vanne*).

⑩ The sound of the death knell is heard. Voices within sing the Miserere (*Miserere d'un alma già vicina / Alla partenza che non ha ritorno!*), praying for mercy on those about to die. Leonora exclaims on the sound of these prayers. The voice of Manrico is heard from the tower, bidding his Leonora farewell, as the chant goes on. Leonora declares that she will never forget him (*Di te! Di te! Scordarmi di te!*).

No. 13 Scena & Duetto

⑪ A door opens and the Count and some of his followers come out. Leonora steps aside. The Count now gives orders for the execution of the son and his mother (*Udiste? Come albeggi, / La scure al figlio ed alla madre il rogo!*), lamenting that he cannot find Leonora. At this she comes forward, telling him she has come, at the last moment, to ask for mercy, but he refuses her.

12 The Count starts, as he hears Leonora's voice. She throws herself in desperation at his feet, pleading with him to have mercy on her tears (*Mira, di acerbe lagrime*), but this only increases his thirst for revenge. Now she offers him herself, if he will only release Manrico. He swears that he will do so, and she pledges herself to him. The Count now calls to a guard in the tower and speaks in his ear, while Leonora takes the poison secreted in her ring: the Count will have her, but she will be cold, not living.

13 Leonora is now happy (*Vivrà . . . Contende il giubilo / i detti a me, Signore*): she will die, but Manrico will live. The Count seeks her assurance that she is his and she pledges her faith.

Scene 2. A wretched dungeon. There is a barred window and a door in the background. A dim lamp hanging from a wall-ring sheds a pale light on the scene. Azucena is lying on a rough mattress and Manrico sits near her.

No. 14 Last Finale

14 Manrico asks Azucena why she does not sleep (*Madre, non dormi?*), and wonders if the cold troubles her, but she tells him that the air chokes her: soon, though, she will be free, for the mark of death is upon her. She sees in her mind the burning fire, and Manrico tries to comfort her, as she falls back in his arms, and he lays her gently down on her mattress. Weariness comes

upon her (*Si, la stanchezza m'opprime*).

15 Now she dreams of her home, the hills and the ancient peace. She falls asleep, Manrico kneeling by her side. The door opens and Leonora comes in.

16 Manrico thinks that the light deceives him (*Che! . . . Non m'inganna quel fioco lume?*), but Leonora assures him that now he will be safe: he can escape, but she must stay. Manrico has no desire for life without her and asks her what price she has paid for his freedom. She dare not answer and he reproaches her (*Parlar non vuoi?*), understanding what she must have done. She finds his reproach unjustified, urging him to escape, while Azucena is heard again in her sleep recalling her own country. Leonora falls at Manrico's feet.

17 Manrico tells her to go (*Ti scosta!*), but she begs him not to blame her, falling to the ground and telling him at last that she is dying, the force of the poison quicker than she had supposed. Manrico is now remorseful. At this moment the Count comes in, as Leonora dies, seeking the grace of heaven, and he realises he has been deceived. He now orders Manrico to be taken to his death, and the latter bids his mother farewell. The Count drags her to the window to see her son die, but Azucena tells him that Manrico was his brother (*Egli era il tuo fratello!*), as she falls to the ground, her revenge achieved.

Keith Anderson

Producer's Note

The *Trovatore* was transferred from the best portions of several sets of the original LP issue (RCA Victor LM-6008). The original master tape contains some instances of overloading (particularly during Barbieri's loud passages) found on all pressings. Unlike the brilliant early hi-fi sound of the *Trovatore*, the Yugoslavian songs, transferred here from the original Sonart 78s, were not very well recorded for their time. As Milanov's earliest commercially issued recordings, however, they have a historical importance that justifies their reappearance here as bonus tracks.

Mark Obert-Thorn

ADD

Playing
Time
2:14:41

Giuseppe
VERDI
(1813-1901)

Il Trovatore

8.110240-41

2 CDs



ALL RIGHTS IN THIS SOUND RECORDING, ARTWORK, TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS RESERVED. UNAUTHORIZED PUBLIC PERFORMANCE, BROADCASTING AND COPYING OF THIS COMPACT DISC PROHIBITED. © 2003 HNH International Ltd. © 2003 HNH International Ltd.

Manrico Jussi Björling
Leonora Zinka Milanov
Count di Luna Leonard Warren
Azucena Fedora Barbieri
Ferrando Nicola Moscona
Inez Margaret Roggero
Ruiz Paul Franke
An Old Gypsy George Cehanovsky
A Messenger Nathaniel Sprinzena, tenor

RCA Victor Orchestra • Renato Cellini

Robert Shaw Chorale (Director: Robert Shaw)

Recorded 21st February through 16th March, 1952 in
Manhattan Center, New York

Matrices: E2-RC-0170 through 0191 • First issued on
RCA Victor LM-6008 (LP) and WDM-6008 (45 rpm)

Il trovatore was the middle opera of the three masterpieces that consolidated Giuseppe Verdi's fame. It has been lucky on record: two excellent versions circulated on 78rpm discs and the early LP era brought the present recording, the most consistently cast of all. It introduced a whole generation to the opera and in many collectors' affections it still reigns supreme. Much of its success must be put down to the conductor Renato Cellini who draws beautiful playing from the orchestra. Cellini was also renowned in the profession as a coach and it is surely due to his careful preparation that a cast consisting of a Croatian, an Italian, a Swede, an American and a Greek sounds so convincing.

CD 1	62:07	CD 2	72:34
1-9 Act I	9:47	1-7 Act III	19:29
10-22 Act II	36:16	8-17 Act IV	34:57
		18-23 Appendix: Zinka Milanov 'Song Gems of Yugoslavia' (1944)	18:09

MADE IN
CANADA



Archivist & Restoration Producer: Mark Obert-Thorn
Special thanks to Maynard F. Bertolet, Jerry Miller and Don Tait

www.naxos.com



A complete track list can be found in the booklet
Cover Image: Jussi Bjorling (Lebrecht Collection)

