

COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO
PACO 097

MARIA CALLAS

in Leoncavallo's "Pagliacci"

PRISTINE
AUDIO
XR

COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO
PACO 097

Di Stefano is perhaps a somewhat less dignified or subtle Canio than either Tucker or Björling, but perhaps the role is not one where subtlety counts for much, nor style either. Di Stefano is in the best sense "Italian" in his singing of the part and at the same time less ruthless than del Monaco on Decca. His words are beautifully clear, far more so than the non-Italians', and the menace he puts into such episodes as "Un tal gioco" ("Such a jest, believe me friends") and the yell of rage with which he springs on his spouse and her lover near the end of Act 1 are most exciting. Heartbreak and passion are not sparingly suggested in the great solo "Vesti la giubba" and the terrible climax to the play-within-a-play. I find di Stefano a realistic and exciting Canio.

Other advantages of this set are not so clear. Mme Callas is surely not very suitably cast as Nedda, often more effectively taken by a contrastingly light, womanly and sensuously pleasing type of voice. Mme Callas — it goes without saying — acts the role excitingly enough. Her taunting of Tonio is úgerish. She, in a rough way of speaking, "spits out" her words with tremendous effect. In the love duet she is one of the few Neddas I can recall who actually sings clearly the third syllable of "Non mi tentar", which Victoria de Los Angeles, for instance, lets slip, and in the play scene she admirably suggests the mounting horror behind Columbine's playful ripostes. But though the ballatella is sung with a proud swing, I think it is conceived on far too robust a scale. Too many of Mme Callas's high notes turn into perilous and wobbly shrieks.

The Silvio of this set is a good baritone of the standard sort, but he gets less poetry into the love duet than Robert Merrill on H.M.V. The Beppe is exceptionally good, Tonio gives Tito Gobbi some chances for vivid vocal acting which he takes very well (i.e. just before leaving the stage to Canio for "Vesti la giubba", Tonio's word of advice could hardly be better or more sinister). In the prologue he is a little less opulent than one would have expected, but he sings with meaning and sincerity and fine style, taking the lower version where it is suggested at the climax, but finishing on a "Ring up the curtain!" which is all that the most exigent top-note-fan could ask for.

Review by P. H.-W., The Gramophone, September 1955 - *excerpt*

Producer's Note

Having cast around for recording venues, here we find Callas and EMI at La Scala, which would be the favoured stage from then on for her studio operatic recordings. Many of the sonic problems that had plagued earlier studio recordings had by now been overcome, and thus in remastering this recording my main aims in using 32-bit XR remastering to inject life, clarity and depth into the overall sound was considerably less tricky than previously with Callas. Happily the results do indeed bring significant improvements over the original sound, with Ambient Stereo processing adding a great sense of space and air around the performers - this is my recommended format.

Andrew Rose

FULL PROGRAMME NOTES CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM
SARL Pristine Audio, 144 Rue de l'Eglise, 24610 St. Méard de Gurçon, France

PAGLIACCI

Leoncavallo

PRISTINE
AUDIO
XR

Maria Callas
Giuseppe di Stefano
Tito Gobbi
Nicola Monti
Rolando Panerai

Orchestra and Chorus of La Scala, Milan
Chorus Master: Vittore Veneziani
Conductor: Tullio Serafin

STUDIO RECORDING, 1954



LEONCAVALLO *Pagliacci*

- 1 Prologue - Si può? Si può? (7:49)
- 2 Act 1, Scene 1 - Son qua! (3:13)
- 3 Un grande spettacolo (2:47)
- 4 Un tal gioco, credetemi (2:49)
- 5 I zampognari! (3:58)
- 6 Scene 2 - Qual fiamma avea nel guardo (4:40)
- 7 Sei là! (0:53)
- 8 So be che lo scemo (4:08)
- 9 Nedda! ... Silvio! (1:25)
- 10 E fra quest'ansie (2:38)
- 11 Non mi tentar! (1:23)
- 12 E allor perché, di' (5:23)
- 13 Derisione e schermo! (2:57)
- 14 Recitar! (0:46)
- 15 Vesti la giubba (2:45)
- 16 Intermezzo (3:13)
- 17 Act 2 - Presto, affrettiamoci (4:10)
- 18 Commedia - Pagliaccio, mio marito (1:53)
- 19 Ah! Colombina (1:39)
- 20 Di fare il segno (4:16)
- 21 Arlecchin! (2:30)
- 22 Coraggio! (2:00)
- 23 No, Pagliaccio non son (3:11)
- 24 Suvvia, così terribile (2:46)

Nedda *Maria Callas*

Canio *Giuseppe di Stefano*

Tonio *Tito Gobbi*

Beppe *Nicola Monti*

Silvio *Rolando Panerai*

Chorus & Orchestra of Teatro alla Scala, Milan

Chorus Master *Vittore Veneziani*

Conductor *Tullio Serafin*

XR remastering by
Andrew Rose

Cover artwork based on a
photograph of **Maria Callas**

LEONCAVALLO *Pagliacci*

Recorded 12 -17 June 1954

Teatro alla Scala, Milan

Producer: Walter Legge

Engineer: Robert Beckett

First issued as UK Columbia
33.CXS.1211 and 33.CX.1212

Total duration: **73:12**

For a full catalogue visit
www.pristineclassical.com
or call : (00) 33 979 622713

© 2013 **Pristine Audio**