



Rossini

Il Turco in Italia



"*Il Turco in Italia* was the sixth opera recorded by Callas under her contract with Columbia/Angel. For other works either side of it Walter Legge seemed more concerned with his diva filling holes in his company's catalogue. It was, after all, being eclipsed by Decca with their diva Renata Tebaldi, recording her in roles of which she had stage experience. This recording was the exception. It was also unusual in that Rossini operas on record were few and far between. Apart from the *Il Barbiere*, EMI's *Il Comte d'Ory* under Gui, and a 1958 recording by Philips of *Mosé*, with Nicola Rossi-Lemeni in the title role, the catalogue lacked recordings by the composer well into the LP era. Even the present one is a very abbreviated version at around 113 minutes compared with the 146 minutes on the CBS recording with Montserrat Caballé as Fiorilla."

Robert J Farr, *MusicWeb International*, 2006

"Fiorilla was one of two comic roles in Maria Callas' repertoire, the other being Rossini's Rosina. *Il Turco* is a strange work, witty and wry rather than zany, and very literary. Most of the score's highlights are ensembles, and you might imagine that Callas could overpower her co-stars in such a situation. But the opposite is true despite her unique timbre that always shines through. She's in great voice in this 1954 recording, absolutely secure throughout her range, and her impeccable rhythmic sense makes her work in the tricky, sometimes off-the-beat ensembles ideal. She turns out to be a team player par excellence. The role is of a headstrong, sassy woman who loves the attention men give her, and she loves playing one off against the other. Callas uses a girlish tone when being seductive but puts some iron into it when she has to make a point. Bass Nicola Rossi-Lemeni plays the Turk Callas plays games with, and he's as expressive and fluid as she is. The rest of the cast is equally good. There have been better (and more complete) recordings since, but Callas is in a class by herself, and this is utterly charming."

Robert Levine, *Classics Today*, undated

"Calabrese is, in fact, at his best when he is joined by Callas in the duet "Per piacere alia signora". The husband and wife exchanging "Perdonate" and "Mi lasciate" is quintessential Rossini and grand vocal acting. All through, Mme. Callas acts vividly, chiding, boasting, melting; one can "see" the performance, and when in typical Rossinian style she is given a "key" figure, each repetition of it carries, so one thinks, a slightly different meaning. I found myself teased by memories of these little phrases for hours afterwards, though neither of her big arias contains anything quite up to the best in the *Barber*. On her own and when in lighter voice, Mme. Callas is admirably the Rossinian heroine, and she has such go and gusto in the ensembles, one forgives the crowing and the occasional bagpipe skirl. Spontaneous? Never—in the Galli-Gurci blythe, canary style. But an artist! She reminds me very much of Columbia's Mercedes Capsir, a singer too easily written off in the old days."

P.H.-W., *The Gramophone*, October 1955



rossini il turco in italia

disc one

1. Sinfonia (8:42)

ACT ONE, SCENE ONE

2. Nostra patria è il mondo intero (2:20)
3. Ho da fare un dramma buffo (3:03)
4. Ah! Se di questi zingari l'arrivo (0:47)
5. Vado in traccia di una Zingara (3:44)
6. Ah mia moglie (1:13)
7. Non si dà follia maggiore (3:39)
8. Voga, voga, a terra, a terra (1:46)
9. Bella Italia, alfin ti miro (2:40)
10. Serva... Servo (3:37)
11. Amici... soccorretevi (0:54)
12. Un marito scimunito! (5:31)

ACT ONE, SCENE TWO

13. Ola tosto il caffè (1:39)
14. Siete Turchi (3:16)
15. Io stupisco, mi sorprende (2:50)
16. Come! si grave scomo (3:17)
17. Un vecchio far non può maggior follia (2:24)
18. Per piacere alla signora (2:30)
19. No, mia vita, mio tesoro (3:34)

ACT ONE, SCENE THREE

20. Gran meraviglie (1:20)
21. Per la fuga è tutto lesto (4:31)
22. Perché mai se non tradito (2:34)
23. Evviva d'amore (0:55)
24. Chi servir non brama Amor (1:57)
25. Qui mia moglie ha da venire (0:57)
26. Ah! che il cor non m'ingannava (2:42)
27. Vada via si guardi bene (1:47)
28. Quanto il vento (3:06)

Recorded at Teatro Alla Scala, Milan. 31 August - 8 September 1954

Cover artwork based on a photograph of Maria Callas and Nicola Rossi-Lemeni as Fiorilla and Selim in the 1955 La Scala production of *Il Turco in Italia*

Total duration: 1hr 52:57 CD1: 77:15 CD2: 35:42

disc two

ACT TWO, SCENE ONE

1. A proposito, amico (1:14)
2. D'un bell'uso in Turchia (3:16)
3. Se Fiorilla di vender bramate (1:49)
4. Ed invece di pagarla (1:34)
5. Non v'è piacer perfetto (2:17)
6. Che Turca impertinente! (2:28)
7. Credete alle femmine (1:52)
8. In Italia certamente (3:15)
9. Fermate... Cosa c'è? (1:26)

ACT TWO, SCENE TWO

10. E Selim non si vede! (2:13)
11. Oh! guardate che accidente (3:20)
12. Dunque seguitemi (1:23)
13. Questo vecchio maledetto (2:46)

ACT TWO, SCENE THREE

14. Sì, mi è forza partir (1:18)
15. Son la vite sul campo appassita (2:25)
16. Rida a voi sereno il cielo (3:05)

CAST

Fiorilla	Maria Callas
Selim	Nicola Rossi-Lemeni
Narciso	Nicolai Gedda
Geronio	Franco Calabrese
Zaida	Jolanda Gardino
Albazar	Piero de Palma
Il poeta	Mariano Stabile

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

conducted by Gianandrea Gavazzeni

XR remastered by Andrew Rose