

"[H]ere are some of the finest voices from the 30's, conveying the drama and immediacy of a live performance without the attendant disadvantages of a live recording. The sound is particularly striking for its age – and you can hear a quartet of unparalleled splendour. I had never heard of Maria Carena, but she is a proper singer of the old school, who occasionally reminds me of Muzio without quite the beauty of that greatest of sopranos. Both vocal registers are fully developed and she knows exactly what she is doing; her technique is excellent. The other singers are better known: Pertile (a Toscanini favourite) occasionally allows his vibrato to get away from him and produce the effect of singing sharp, and Granforte makes wonderfully impressive sounds without much subtlety, but they are nonetheless mighty impressive. Minghini-Cattaneo is a paragon among Azucenas; as good as any I have ever heard. There are numerous cuts, of course, and Pertile transposes "Di quella pira" down [...] which is a bit naughty and robs it of some excitement – but that is hardly unprecedented. Sabajno's conducting fairly rattles along but that's what this warhorse needs – and he is by no means insensitive."

From "A selective survey of Verdi's *Il Trovatore*" by Ralph Moore, *MusicWeb International*, July 2021

Along with the 1928 set of *Aida* (reissued on Pristine *PACO 196*), this was one of the most strongly cast complete operas in HMV's prewar series. Maria Carena (1891-1966) made her debut as Leonora, and studied the role under Toscanini. Critic Herman Klein compared Aureliano Pertile (1885-1952) to Tamagno and Caruso when he appeared as Manrico in London in 1927. Apollo Granforte (1886-1975) was not a regular at La Scala, but makes a splendid villain here, and Irene Minghini-Cattaneo (1892-1944) was considered one of the best Azucenas in Italy.

While Carlo Sabajno was credited as the conductor on the original set (and all "official" EMI LP reissues), research done by John W. N. Francis established that all but two sides (here, CD 1, Tracks 9-10 and 13-14) were actually "ghost-conducted" by his assistant, Gino Nastrucci, who also led various remake sides for Sabajno's HMV sets of *Tosca*, *La Traviata*, *Carmen* and *Otello*.

Mark Obert-Thorn



disc one
(61:32)

ACT ONE, SCENE ONE

1. All'erta, all'erta (3:01)
2. Di due figli (4:00)
3. E il padre? (3:08)

ACT ONE, SCENE TWO

4. Che più t'arresti (1:21)
5. Come d'aurato sogno (0:34)
6. Tacea la notte placida (3:19)
7. Quanto narrasti (0:50)
8. Di tale amor (1:28)
9. Tace la notte! (1:48)
10. Deserto sulla terra (1:32)
11. Non m'inganno (1:59)
12. Di geloso amor sprezzato (2:28)

ACT TWO, SCENE ONE

13. Vedi! Le fosche notturne spoglie (2:58)
14. Stride la vampa! (part 1) (1:22)
15. Stride la vampa! (part 2) (2:53)
16. Soli or siamo (0:57)
17. Condotta ell'era in ceppi (4:18)
18. Non son tuo figlio? (2:02)
19. Mal reggendo all'aspro assalto (2:52)
20. L'usato messo, Ruiz invia (1:17)
21. Perigliarti ancor languente (1:56)

ACT TWO, SCENE TWO

22. Tutto è deserto (1:26)
23. Il balen del suo sorriso (3:11)
24. Qual suono! (0:30)
25. Ardir! Andiam! . . . Per me ora fatale (2:13)
26. Ah! se l'error t'ingombra (2:07)
27. Perché piangete? (2:08)
28. E deggio e posso crederlo? (3:57)

Recorded 24 October - 26 November 1930, Conservatorio, Milan
Full discographic details can be found online at [Pristine Classical](https://www.pristineclassical.com)

Producer and Audio Restoration Engineer: **Mark Obert-Thorn**
Cover artwork: Aureliano Pertile as Manrico
Special thanks to Gregor Benko for providing source material
and to Tully Potter for information on the singers

Total duration: 1hr 54:09

disc two
(56:36)

ACT THREE, SCENE ONE

1. Or co' dadi, ma fra poco (2:00)
2. Squilli, echeggi la tromba guerriera (2:16)
3. In braccio al mio rival! (2:05)
4. Giorni poveri vivea (4:17)

ACT THREE, SCENE TWO

5. Quale d'armi fragor poc'anzi intesi? (1:55)
6. Ah, si ben mio (2:50)
7. Manrico (0:50)
8. Di quella pira (2:12)

ACT FOUR, SCENE ONE

9. Siam giunti (2:40)
10. D'amor sull'ali rosee (3:28)
11. Miserere (4:49)
12. Udiste? (1:43)
13. Mira, di acerbe lagrime (1:52)
14. Conte! (1:11)
15. Vivrà ! Contende il giubilo (2:07)

ACT FOUR, SCENE TWO

16. Madre, non dormi? (4:31)
17. Sì, la stanchezza m'opprime (1:19)
18. Ai nostri monti (2:05)
19. Che! Non m'inganno! (4:01)
20. Ti scosta (4:27)

Chorus and Orchestra of Teatro alla Scala, Milan
conducted by Gino Nastrucci

CAST

Manrico - Aureliano Pertile (tenor)
Leonora - Maria Carena (soprano)
Conte di Luna - Apollo Granforte (baritone)
Azucena - Irene Minghini-Cattaneo (mezzo-soprano)
Ferrando - Bruno Carmassi (bass)
Ines - Olga de Franco (soprano)
Ruiz - Giordano Callegari (tenor)
Un vecchio zingaro - Antonio Gelli (bass)
Un messo - Giordano Callegari (tenor)

PRISTINE
AUDIO

PACO 220