

Donizetti L'elisir d'amore

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Bidú Sayão (May 11, 1902 – March 12, 1999) was a Brazilian opera soprano. One of Brazil's most famous musicians, Sayão was a leading artist of the Metropolitan Opera in New York City from 1937 to 1952.

Bidú Sayão made her U.S. debut in a recital at Town Hall in New York City on December 30, 1935. Her U.S. operatic debut followed not long thereafter, on January 21, 1936, when she and Danise sang in the penultimate production of the Washington National Opera, a semi-professional company not associated with its modern namesake; the performance, of Leo Delibes's *Lakmé*, was marred by a fractious dispute in which the orchestra musicians declined to play without payment in cash, and ultimately the performance was accompanied by a portable organ, with some singers appearing in costume and some in street clothes owing to a similar demand by the stage hands and costume man. Altogether more dignified was her performance a few months later with the New York Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall singing *La damoiseille élue* by Debussy. Her performance was under the baton of Arturo Toscanini, who would become her greatest supporter and lifelong friend. She sang her first performance at the Metropolitan Opera as Manon on February 13, 1937, replacing the Spanish soprano Lacerza Bort. The critics, including Olin Downes of the New York Times, raved about her performance and within a few weeks she was given the lead in *La traviata*, followed soon thereafter by Mimi in *La bohème*. She also contributed to the Mozart revival at the Metropolitan Opera, becoming the pre-eminent Zelina (*Don Giovanni*) and Susanna (*The Marriage of Figaro*) of her generation.

As the favorite singer of Brazilian composer Heitor Villa-Lobos, she had an artistic partnership with him that lasted many years and made a number of recordings of his compositions, including a famous recording of the *Beethoven Brazilian* No. 5.

Bidú Sayão and her husband Giuseppe Danise purchased an oceanfront property in Litchfield, Maine. After fifteen years with the Metropolitan Opera, she gave her last performance in 1952, choosing to retire from opera while still at the top of her form. For the next two years she was a guest performer throughout the U.S., but in 1957 she decided to retire completely from public performance; two years after that she made her final recording as the soprano soloist on Villa-Lobos's world premiere stereo recording of his cantata *Fantasy of the Amazon* with the composer conducting the Symphony of the Air.

Following the death of her husband in 1963, Bidú Sayão lived a quiet life at her home in Maine. She returned to visit Brazil a last time in 1995, for a tribute to her during the Carnival in Rio de Janeiro, and died a few years later at the Penobscot Bay Medical Center in Rockport, Maine. Her ashes were scattered across the bay in front of her home.

Although Brazilians have always been strong patrons of the opera, at the time Bidú Sayão was struggling to launch her career there was little in the way of government assistance for aspiring singers; throughout her life she spoke about this lack of support. Following her last visit to her homeland, the government prepared plans to honor her memory. In 2000 the Bidú Sayão International Vocal Competition was established to promote Brazilian operatic talent through a world-class competition.

Bidú Sayão's portrait hangs in the lobby at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City.

Notes from Wikipedia

FULL PROGRAMME NOTES CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM
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Bidú Sayão Adina
Bruno Landi Nemorino
Francesco Valentino Belcore
Salvatore Baccaloni Dulcamara
Mona Paulee Giannetta

Ettore Panizza
Metropolitan Opera
Chorus & Orchestra

Live broadcast recording
January 3, 1942
Transfers by Ward Marston

Donizetti L'elisire d'amore

Disc One

- 1 Introduction by Milton Cross (0:41)

Act 1

- 2 Prelude (2:50)
3 Bel conforto al mietitore (1:49)
4 Quanto è bella, quanto è cara! (2:42)
5 Chi la mente mi rischiara (0:54)
6 Benedette queste carte! (4:43)
7 Come Paride vezzoso! (4:21)
8 Or se m'ami come io t'amo (3:15)
9 Intanto o mia ragazza (2:34)
10 Chiedi all'aura lusinghiera (7:22)

Act 2

- 11 Che vuol dire cotesta suonata (1:25)
12 Udite, udite, o rustici (7:43)
13 Ardir! Ha forse il cielo (7:15)
14 Caro Elisir! sei mio! (3:39)
15 Esulti pur la barbara (2:41)
16 Lallarala la la la la (2:14)
17 Ebben gentil sargente (2:16)
18 Signor Sargente, signor sargente (2:23)
19 Adina credimi, te ne scongiuro (4:44)
20 Andiam Belcore (0:56)
21 Fra lieti contenti, gioconda brigata (2:12)

Disc Two

- 1 Introduction by Milton Cross (1:09)

Act 3 Scene 1

- 2 Cantiamo, cantiam, cantiam (2:13)
3 Poichè cantar vi alletta (1:00)
4 Io son ricco e tu sei bella (2:09)
5 Silenzio! E cua il Natario (1:40)
6 Le feste nuziali son piacevoli assai (2:08)
7 La donna è un animale (1:17)
8 Venti scudi! E ben sonanti (4:20)
9 Qua la mano giovinotto (2:15)

Scene 2

- 10 Saria possibile?? (4:05)
11 Dell'elisir mirabile (2:01)
12 Come sen va contento! (1:29)
13 Quanto amore! Ed io spietata (7:31)
14 Una furtiva lagrima (6:15)
15 Eccola, Oh! Qual le accresce beltà (1:10)
16 Prendi; prendi per me sei libero (3:41)
17 Addio! Che! Mi lasciate? (3:33)
18 Alto! Fronte! Che vedo? (3:46)

Metropolitan Opera Orchestra & Chorus
Ettore Panizza

January 3, 1942

COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO
PACO 072

Transfers by
Ward Marston

Cover artwork based
on a photograph of
Bidú Sayão

Total duration:
2hr 00:23

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