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# Gallas Norma

## THE CAST

Maria Callas - Norma  
Mario Del Monaco - Pollione  
Giulietta Simionato - Adalgisa  
Nicola Zaccaria - Oroveso  
Gabriella Carturan - Clotilde  
Giuseppe Zampieri - Flavio

Chorus and Orchestra of Teatro alla Scala, Milan  
conducted by **Antonino Votto** on 7 December 1955

### Transfer notes

In the e-mails which followed our remastering and release earlier this year of Maria Callas's iconic 1953 Tosca was one which simply asked me to look at her Norma. Not knowing to which of the several live and studio recordings she made of Bellini's opera my correspondent was referring I decided to do some research of my own. Time and time again I read that this, the December 1955 live recording at La Scala, was *the* performance to hear - despite the terribly poor sound quality. It seemed clear to me that therein lay a challenge.

And a challenge it proved to be. The original recording suffers multiple problems, most of which are clearly audible on previous issues on other labels. Audibly wobbly at times, wow and flutter afflicts particularly the orchestral sections (happily vocal vibrato tends to mask this for the singer); a limited frequency range was exacerbated by a weak bass and lower midrange, all of which merged into quite heavy background noise; radio interference and cross-talk frequently distracted the listener from the performance; hiss levels were uncomfortably high; and the vocals themselves were frequently uncomfortable to listen to as a result of an over-egged upper-midrange in attempts to bring clarity to the words.

This new 32-bit XR remastering attempts to address all of these shortcomings. Whilst I have to acknowledge the limits of what can be achieved with material like this (one cannot magic up lost frequencies from nowhere), I've been able to address the pitch issues using the revolutionary Capstan pitch stabilisation system (as well as set the final pitch to just a hint under  $A4=435\text{Hz}$ , in line with all measurements of the source material's residual electrical signals), brought out the richness of the lower end whilst separating it from the noise in which it was buried, preserved what upper frequencies were there whilst taming a harshness which could at times be painful at higher volumes, and reduced or entirely eliminated thousands of extraneous noises, interference and so forth. As with other releases it has been necessary to fill some gaps where material was missing - I've used Callas/Del Monaco's RAI broadcast of 29 June 1955 for this, and re-equalised the earlier material to match as well as possible the La Scala sound. **AR**

**FULL PROGRAMME NOTES CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT [WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM](http://WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM)**  
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# Bellini Norma

Maria Callas  
Mario Del Monaco  
Giulietta Simionato  
Nicola Zaccaria

Gabriella Carturan  
Giuseppe Zampieri

Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala, Milan  
Chorus Master Norberto Mola

Conductor **Antonino Votto**

Live recording, La Scala, 7 December 1955

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## Bellini Norma

### Disc 1

- 1 Sinfonia (5:44)
- 2 Act 1 Scene 1 - *Ite sul colle* (9:11)
- 3 Scene 2 - *Svanir le voci!* (8:15)
- 4 Scene 3 - *Norma viene* (4:32)
- 5 Scene 4 - *Sediziose voci* (16:24)
- 6 Scene 5 - *Sgombra è la sacra selva* (5:21)
- 7 Scene 6 - *Eccola! va mi lascia* (10:09)
- 8 Scene 7 - *Vanne, e li cal entrambi* (4:17)
- 9 Scene 8 - *Adalgisa! Alma, constanza* (11:20)
- 10 Scene 9 - *Ma di', l'amato giovane* (3:02)

### Disc 2

- 1 Scene 9 - *Oh, di qual sei tu vittima* (7:11)
- 2 Act 2 Scene 1 - *Introduction* (4:12)
- 3 Scene 1 - *Dormono entrambi* (5:02)
- 4 Scene 2 - *Vola - Adalgisa a me guida* (0:41)
- 5 Scene 3 - *Me chiami - o Norma?* (14:19)
- 6 Scene 4 - *Non parti?* (5:21)
- 7 Scene 5 - *Guerrieri, a voi venirne* (5:14)
- 8 Scene 6 - *Ei tornerà. Sì!* (4:34)
- 9 Scene 7 - *Norma, che fu?* (2:42)
- 10 Scene 8 - *Nè compì il rito, o Norma?* (0:30)
- 11 Scene 9 - *E' Pollion!* (3:02)
- 12 Scene 10 - *In mia man alfin tu sei* (8:09)
- 13 Scene 11 - *All'ira vostra* (15:28)

### Chorus & Orchestra of La Scala, Milan Antonino Votto

NB. Track markers follow Bellini's scenes in the original score. A bookmarked PDF copy of the score is included with all downloads. We have deliberately not added fades to the disc join point during Act 1, Scene 9. This is to permit the recording to be reassembled in an uninterrupted form by the listener.

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XR remastering by  
**Andrew Rose**

Cover artwork based on a  
photograph of Maria Callas  
as Norma

**Vincenzo Bellini NORMA**  
Text: **Felice Romani**  
after Norma, ossia L'infanticidio  
(Norma, or The Infanticide) by  
**Alexandre Soumet**

Recorded 7 December 1955  
Teatro alla Scala, Milan

Total duration: **2 hr 34:37**

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BELLINI NORMA (LA SCALA, 1955)  
CALLAS, DEL MONACO, LA SCALA, VOTTO

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