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SUPER AUDIO CD

LEONTYNE PRICE

"One of the most beautiful voices in the world today"



Arias from

IL TROVATORE • MADAMA BUTTERFLY • LA RONDINE • TOSCA • TURANDOT

GIUSEPPE VERDI (1813–1901)

Aida

- 1 Ritorna vincitor! 6:55
- 2 Qui Radamès verrà! 1:32
- 3 O patria mia 5:14
(Recorded June 27, 1960)

Il trovatore

- 4 Che più t'arresti?* 2:28
- 5 Tacea la notte placida* 4:31
- 6 Di tale amor che dirsi* 1:25

Laura Londi, soprano

- 7 Timor di me?; D'amor sull'ali rosee 5:19
(Recorded July 15 & 22, 1959)



3

GIACOMO PUCCINI (1858–1924)

Madama Butterfly

- 8 Un bel dì vedremo 4:48
- 9 Tu? tu? piccolo Iddio! (Morte di Butterfly) 2:50
(Recorded June 29, 1960)

La rondine

- 10 Chi il bel sogno di Doretta 2:48

Tosca

- 11 Vissi d'arte 3:15
(Recorded June 28, 1960)

Turandot

- 12 Signore, ascolta! 2:33
- 13 Tu che di gel sei cinta 2:34
(Recorded June 28 & 29, 1960)

Leontyne Price, soprano
Rome Opera Orchestra ■ **Oliviero de Fabritiis**, conductor
Arturo Basile, conductor [4–7] ■ (*Recorded Rome Opera House*)

Produced by Richard Mohr	Editorial Supervision:
Recording Engineer: Lewis Layton	Elizabeth A. Wright
Mastering Engineer: Mark Donahue	Design: Red Herring Design
DSD Engineer: Philipp Nedel	Photography: Sara Foldenauer
Remastering Supervisor: John Newton	
Reissue Producer: Daniel Guss	
Series Coordination: Tim Schumacher	

These were original *two-track and three-track stereo recordings; in SACD surround mode, the music will be heard only from the front left and right channels (two-track) and front left, center and right channels (three-track).

***Most of this program was recorded in 1960, but the two segments from *Il trovatore* were taken from the 1959 recording of the complete opera. When we prepared this hybrid SACD release, the original three-track tape for the Act I scena (*Che più t'arresti . . . Tacea la notte placida . . . Di tale amor che dirsi*) could not be located. Two-track tapes had to be used for this segment; therefore, in surround mode, tracks 4–6 will be heard from the front left and right speakers only.**

For more information about Living Stereo and other Living Stereo SACDs, please visit www.livingstereo-sacd.com

NOTES BY RICHARD SCHICKEL

AUTHOR OF THE WORLD OF CARNEGIE HALL (1961)

For Leontyne Price, 1960 was probably the most important year of her life. In that year she signed her first contract with the Metropolitan Opera, made her debut at La Scala ("our great Verdi would have found her the ideal Aida," wrote one critic), then triumphantly swept through a crowded schedule of European summer festival appearances and recording sessions. But it is probably safe to say that no appearance in this year of her arrival as one of the great sopranos of our time equaled the one she made in Laurel, Mississippi, on March 18.

Laurel is Leontyne Price's home town and when she sang there she did a great deal more than disprove the adage that you can't go home again. She proved that you must go home if you wish to taste to the fullest the joys of success. "It was the sweetest thing that ever happened to me," Leontyne said afterwards. "It wasn't the best I've ever

sung—I was too choked up emotionally to do my very best. But I think that concert represented a great deal of progress for a little town in the deep South. For an hour and a half we weren't white or black. We were just human beings together."

One national magazine has written that "for Leontyne Price the climb to La Scala's stage seemed remarkably easy." That is a matter of opinion. The sacrifices made for a career are known only to the artist, but Leontyne discovered early the one important thing that every artist must know: "that you're not really a person until you've fulfilled yourself as an artist; you can't live until you've said what you have to say." On the road to her fulfillment, Leontyne has had help from her "two families." Her father is a carpenter in Laurel, her mother a midwife who "delivered more babies than necessary so I could have piano lessons." At college Leontyne discovered that her voice, not her pianistic skill, was her

greatest musical asset. Now her second family—the Alexander Chisholms, leading citizens of Laurel—stepped into the picture. To study at the Juilliard School of Music in New York required more money than the Prices could raise. The Chisholms helped out, not just with money but with advice, encouragement, confidence. At Juilliard Leontyne was heard by composer Virgil Thomson, who asked her to appear in the revival of his *Four Saints in Three Acts*. Then came the role of Bess in the now-famous revival of *Porgy and Bess*. Three years later she starred in the NBC TV production of *Tosca*, and in 1957–58 she made her first appearances on operatic stages in San Francisco and in Vienna. Her role on both occasions was Aida. Then followed the international string of concert, recording and operatic triumphs, culminating at the Metropolitan in January 1961—"It's the blue ribbon tied around my career."

In the first row that night in Laurel sat two ladies to whom Leontyne Price feels the most gratitude—her mother and her mentor, Mrs. Chisholm. Says Mrs. Chisholm: "I feel God has favored us more than most by allowing us to participate—even a little bit—in Leontyne's career. I think someone with a talent like hers is one of God's chosen creatures."

This is a judgment with which most of the world's critics now agree. As Paul Hume of the *Washington Post & Times Herald* wrote, "they come no greater, few anywhere near so great."

In this recording there is ample evidence of that greatness. From the Italian masters of operatic melody, Verdi and Puccini, the soprano has selected arias which give full range to the warm expressive qualities of her voice. There is the dramatic "Ritorna vincitor" and the moving "O patria mia"; then Leonora's two contrasting arias of love "Tacea la notte," a declaration of awakening love,

and "D'amor sull'ali rosee," a poignant expression of hope that her now matured love can penetrate even the dungeon where her lover is held prisoner.

"Un bel dì," the most popular of all operatic expressions of love's undying hope, and the tragic "Morte di Butterfly" follow. From the rarely performed *La rondine* there is the lovely "Chi il bel sogno di Doretta" followed by Tosca's passionate apostrophizing of love and art, "Vissi d'arte." Finally, from Puccini's *Turandot*, Miss Price sings the arias of the slave girl, Liù—"Signore, ascolta," her plea to Calaf not to attempt Turandot's deadly riddles, and her declaration, under torture, of love for him, "Tu che di gel sei cinta," perhaps the greatest melodic flight of that magnificently lyrical opera.

Superlatives have long since become meaningless when applied to the art of Leontyne Price, and yet there is still a temptation, almost a necessity, to use them. She was born Mary Leontyne Violet Price in Laurel, Mississippi. Her mother, who also had a beautiful soprano voice, worked as a midwife to meet the installments on the piano. Her father, a sawmill worker, was a man of unassailable dignity and pride. Her aunt worked in the home of the Alexander Chisholms, a prominent family in Laurel. The Chisholms made it possible for Leontyne to accept a scholarship offered by the Juilliard School. While there, she heard an electrifying *Salome* at the Metropolitan Opera and in her mind made the leap from standing room to the greatest stage in the world.

As an aspiring young artist she first appeared in Paris in 1952 at the International Arts Festival in a perform-

ance of Thomson's *Four Saints in Three Acts*. A year later she took on the role of Bess in Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, touring Vienna, Berlin and Paris. In 1954 she gave her debut recital at New York's Town Hall and appeared for the first time with Munch and the Boston Symphony and Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra. In 1955 she sang the title role in Puccini's *Tosca* on television for the NBC Opera Company.

Performances with the American Opera Society, the San Francisco Symphony and her debut with the San Francisco Opera in the American premiere of Poulenc's *Dialogues des carmélites* brought her increasing public attention. Europe hailed her as a diva in 1958 when she sang *Aida* at the Vienna Staatsoper with Karajan, followed that with a Covent Garden debut with Kubelik and then, with Serafin, roused Verona audiences to a frenzy of enthusiasm. The Salzburg

Festival, the Chicago Lyric Opera and the Vienna Philharmonic with Karajan followed in 1959. Milan's La Scala and the Berlin Festival welcomed her in 1960. Finally, in 1961, she made her long-awaited debut at the Metropolitan Opera in Verdi's *Il trovatore*. She received a forty-two-minute ovation at the final curtain, a record in the history of the house. Since then Leontyne Price has kept on making history as a *prima donna assoluta*.

Her honors are many and great: doctorates from universities, unique awards and medals from around the world and, on April 20, 1965, her own country's Medal of Freedom. "Her singing," President Johnson said, "has brought light to her land." Few artists have been hailed as a national treasure. Leontyne Price is a gift and a treasure to the world.

On October 6, 1953, RCA Victor made its first experimental "binaural" recordings. At New York's Manhattan Center, Leopold Stokowski conducted a pick-up orchestra in Enesco's *Roumanian Rhapsody No. 1* and Tchaikovsky's *Waltz from Eugene Onegin*. In December RCA continued stereo tests in Manhattan Center with Pierre Monteux and members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Then, in February 1954, RCA took equipment to Boston's Symphony Hall, where Charles Munch and the Boston Symphony were recording Berlioz's *The Damnation of Faust*. For the first time, RCA engineers captured the performance on both mono and two-track tape. These experiments, combined with further technological refinements employed in Chicago's Orchestra Hall in March 1954, were the first forays into the world of stereo.

At the time that RCA initiated multi-track sessions, disc mastering and consumer playback technology were monaural. RCA Victor proceeded to use two- and three-track equipment to record the world's greatest artists—Heifetz, Piatigorsky, Reiner, Munch, Rubinstein, Fiedler—in anticipation that home technology would catch up to stereo sound. Finally, in 1955, 1/4" 7 1/2ips stereophonic tape players arrived on the consumer market, and RCA released its first Stereo Orthophonic tapes.

Stereo Orthophonic tapes redefined high fidelity. In 1958, the Western Electric Company produced the breakthrough Westrex stereo disc cutter, thereby revolutionizing master disc production. Stereo playback equipment was developed to coincide with the new disc cutting technology. The same year, Living Stereo LP records were launched, ushering in the golden age of stereo high fidelity.

RCA Victor's first two-track sessions in late 1953 and early 1954 were captured on proprietary RCA RT-21 1/4" 30ips tape machines, wired to a pair of mono mixers, each dedicated to one tape track. Neumann U-47 cardioid and M-49/50 omnidirectional microphones were favored, as were RCA-designed LC-1A 15" duo-cone speakers in the control room. Three track recordings were realized on tube amplifier Ampex 300-3 1/2" machines running at 15ips and in later years at 30ips, and were mixed down to 1/4" two-track masters. No equalization was used in the original tracking process; the microphone signals were summed through passive electronics and printed straight to tape. In addition, no equalization was used to alter playback takes for artist approval.

TECHNICAL NOTES

JOHN NEWTON, SOUNDMIRROR INC.

Since the earliest days of recording, engineers have strived to make recorded sound as immediate and thrilling as natural sound. The earliest electrical recordings were made with a single microphone positioned in the hall for optimum balance. The signal was fed to a cutting lathe, and with the advent of magnetic recording, to a monaural tape recorder; a copy of that tape was used to produce the LPs which consumers listened to at home.

With stereo, two microphones were placed in the hall. Signals were fed to a stereo tape recorder and consumers, listening back on two speakers, heard a new "depth" of sound. By placing microphones in the left, center, and right of the hall, engineers progressed to 3-channel recordings, which afforded them greater control over the musical balances that ended up in the stereo

mix. Even as CDs replaced LPs, this same process was often followed.

Today, with the advent of SACD and multi-channel playback, the listener can hear the left, center, and right channels exactly as the engineers heard them at the original recording sessions. In this series of Living Stereo reissues on hybrid SACDs, we have used the 3-channel original tapes whenever they existed; when the material was recorded only in stereo, we used that tape. Some of the SACDs will therefore contain 2-channel, or a combination of 2- and 3-channel material. We used only two or three of the available six channels on the SACD disc because that was the vision of the original producers.

In remastering these tapes, we kept the signal path as short as possible. A Studer-Aria analog tape recorder was connected with premium Siltech cabling

directly to specifically chosen dCS converters. This DSD data is directly encoded on the SACD. Thus the listener is able to hear the output of these converters exactly as we heard it in the studio. The DSD program is essentially identical to the analog tape. What you hear are faithful copies of each historic recording—the pure performance, presented in its original splendor. No signal processing was necessary to "improve" these extraordinary tapes.

Throughout this very exciting project, history came alive as we heard the voices of legendary engineers verbally slating the tapes with the location and date of each session. We were greatly impressed not only with how little the original tapes were edited, but how skillfully engineers edited with their high-tech tool of the day, namely, a razor blade! Applying the best in 21st-

century remastering technology, we believe we have done justice to the best in 20th-century recording technology for a new generation of listeners.

TECHNISCHE ANMERKUNGEN

JOHN NEWTON, SOUNDMIRROR INC.

Seit Beginn der Aufnahmetechnologie streben Tontechniker danach, den Klang der Aufnahme so unmittelbar und ergreifend zu erzeugen, wie der natürliche Klang selbst. Die frühesten elektronischen Aufnahmen wurden mit einem einzigen Mikrophon durchgeführt, das in der Mitte des Aufnahmesaals positioniert war, um eine optimal ausgewogene Balance zu erzeugen. Das Signal wurde zu einer Schnittmaschine, und nach der Einführung von magnetischen Aufnahmen zu einer Bandmaschine geleitet. Eine Kopie dieses Bandes wurde dann für die Produktion der LPs verwendet, welche die Käufer zuhause abspielten.

Seit dem Stereozeitalter wurden zwei Mikrophone im Aufnahmesaal platziert. Die Signale wurden zu einer Stereo-Bandmaschine geleitet, und die Konsumenten, die die LP auf zwei Lautsprechern abspielten, bekamen einen neuen

Eindruck der „Tiefe“ des Klanges. Durch eine Anordnung der Mikrophone links, mittig und rechts im Aufnahmesaal, gelangten die Tontechniker zu 3-Kanal Aufnahmen. Diese erlaubten ihnen eine größere Kontrolle über die musikalische Balance, was im Stereo Mix aufging. Noch als CDs die LPs ersetzten, wurde dieses Verfahren oft verwendet.

Heute, seit der Einführung der SACD und Multi-Kanal Wiedergabe, kann der Konsument den linken, mittleren und rechten Kanal exakt so wahrnehmen und hören, wie der Tontechniker sie während der ursprünglichen Aufnahmesitzung gehört hat. Für diese Serie von Living Stereo Wiederveröffentlichungen auf hybrid SACDs haben wir die originalen 3-Kanal Bänder verwendet, wann immer diese existent waren. Sofern nur in Stereo aufgenommen wurde, haben wir diese Bänder verwendet. Deshalb enthalten einige dieser SACDs nur 2-Kanal oder

eine Kombination aus 2-Kanal und 3-Kanal Aufnahmen. Wir haben darum auch nur zwei oder drei der sechs auf einer SACD verfügbaren Kanäle benutzt, da dies die Vision der ursprünglichen Produzenten war.

Während des Remastering Prozesses dieser Bänder haben wir den Weg des Signals so kurz wie möglich gehalten. Eine analoge Studer-Aria Bandmaschine wurde durch hochwertige Siltech Kabel direkt mit speziell ausgewählten dCS Konvertern verbunden. Dieses DSD Datenmaterial wurde direkt auf die SACD kodiert. Dadurch ist der Konsument in der Lage, das Ergebnis dieser Konverter exakt so zu hören, wie wir es im Studio gehört haben. Das DSD Programm ist im Wesentlichen identisch mit den analogen Originalbändern. Was Sie hören sind genaue Kopien von jeder der historischen Aufnahmen—die pure Aufführung, präsentiert in ihrem ursprüng-

lichen Glanz. Keine Aufbereitung der Signale war erforderlich, um diese herausragenden Bänder zu „verbessern“.

Im Verlauf dieses außerordentlich reizvollen Projekts wurde Geschichte lebendig, während wir die Stimmen legendärer Tontechniker gehört haben, wie sie den Ort und das Datum der jeweiligen Aufnahmesitzung auf die Bänder gesprochen haben. Wir waren höchst beeindruckt, nicht nur darüber wie wenig die Originalbänder bearbeitet worden waren, sondern auch wie gekonnt die Tontechniker mit dem High-Tech Gerät ihrer Tage gearbeitet haben: einer Rasierklinge! Für eine neue Generation von Hörern glauben wir der Aufnahmetechnologie des 20. Jahrhunderts gerecht geworden zu sein, unter Verwendung der besten Remastering Technologie des 21. Jahrhunderts.

NOTE TECHNIQUE

JOHN NEWTON, SOUNDMIRROR INC.

Depuis les tout débuts de l'enregistrement discographique, les ingénieurs rivalisent d'efforts pour que le son enregistré soit aussi immédiat et électrisant que le son naturel. Les premiers enregistrements électriques étaient réalisés avec un seul micro placé dans la salle pour une balance optimale. Le signal était transmis à un graveur, et, avec l'avènement de l'enregistrement magnétique, à un magnétophone monophonique ; une copie de cette bande magnétique était utilisée pour produire les microsillons que le consommateur écoutait chez lui.

Pour la stéréophonie, on a installé deux microphones dans la salle. Les signaux étaient transmis à un magnétophone stéréophonique, ce qui conférait un nouveau « relief » sonore à l'enregistrement écouté par le consommateur sur ses deux haut-parleurs. En positionnant des micros à gauche, au milieu et à droite

de la salle, les ingénieurs ont évolué vers un enregistrement à trois canaux leur assurant un meilleur contrôle de l'équilibre musical du mixage stéréophonique final. Ce procédé a souvent continué à être utilisé alors même que le CD remplaçait progressivement le disque noir.

Aujourd'hui, avec l'avènement du SACD et de la restitution multicanaux, l'auditeur entend les canaux gauche, central et droite exactement comme les entendaient les ingénieurs lors des séances d'enregistrement originales. Dans cette collection de rééditions « Living Stereo » sur SACD hybrides, nous avons utilisé les bandes originales à trois canaux chaque fois qu'elles existaient ; lorsque le matériau n'était enregistré qu'en stéréophonie, c'est cette bande que nous avons utilisée. Certains de ces SACD contiennent donc des enregistrements à deux canaux, ou une combinaison

de matériau à deux et trois canaux. Nous n'avons utilisé que deux ou trois des six canaux disponibles sur les SACD, car telle était la conception des producteurs de l'époque.

Lors du rematriçage des ces enregistrements, nous avons veillé à ce que le parcours du signal soit aussi court que possible. Nous avons directement connecté un magnétophone analogique Studer-Aria à des convertisseurs dCS spécifiquement choisis, au moyen de câbles Siltech haut de gamme. Ce matériau DSD est encodé directement sur le SACD. L'auditeur peut ainsi entendre la sortie de ces convertisseurs exactement telle que nous l'avons entendue en studio. Le flux DSD est essentiellement identique à la bande analogique. Ce que vous entendez est une copie fidèle de chacun des enregistrements historiques : l'interprétation à l'état pur, présentée dans sa splendeur

originelle. Aucun traitement du signal n'a été nécessaire pour « améliorer » ces bandes extraordinaires.

Tout au long de ce projet enthousiasmant, l'histoire est redevenue vivante pour nous grâce à la voix de ces ingénieurs de légende repérant verbalement les bandes en indiquant le lieu et la date de chaque séance d'enregistrement. Nous avons été très impressionnés non seulement par le petit nombre d'interventions sur les bandes originales, mais aussi par le talent avec lequel ces ingénieurs réalisaient le montage nécessaire à l'aide de l'outil de pointe de l'époque : la lame de rasoir ! Utilisant le meilleur de la technologie de mixage numérique du XXI^e siècle, nous pensons avoir rendu justice au meilleur de la technologie d'enregistrement du XX^e siècle pour une nouvelle génération d'auditeurs.

LIVING STEREO ON SACD

82876-61387-2 **SAINT-SAËNS:**
Symphony No. 3 ■ **DEBUSSY:**
La Mer ■ **Ibert: Escales** / Charles
 Munch, Boston Symphony Orchestra

82876-61388-2 **RAVEL: Daphnis et**
Chloé (Complete Ballet) / Charles
 Munch, Boston Symphony Orchestra

82876-61389-2 **STRAUSS:**
Also sprach Zarathustra; Ein
Heldenleben / Fritz Reiner, Chicago
 Symphony Orchestra

82876-61390-2 **BARTÓK: Concerto**
for Orchestra; Music for Strings,
Percussion and Celesta;
Hungarian Sketches / Fritz Reiner,
 Chicago Symphony Orchestra

82876-61391-2 **BEETHOVEN** ■
MENDELSSOHN: Violin Concertos
 Jascha Heifetz

82876-61392-2 **TCHAIKOVSKY:**
Piano Concerto No. 1 ■
RACHMANINOFF: Piano
Concerto No. 2 / Van Cliburn

82876-61394-2 **MUSSORGSKY:**
Pictures at an Exhibition; Night
on Bald Mountain ■
TCHAIKOVSKY: Marche Slave;
more / Fritz Reiner, Chicago
 Symphony Orchestra

82876-61395-2 **VERDI** ■ **PUCCINI:**
Arias / Leontyne Price

82876-61396-2 **CHOPIN: Ballades**
& Scherzos / Arthur Rubinstein

82876-61397-2 **TCHAIKOVSKY:**
Symphony No. 6 "Pathétique" /
 Pierre Monteux, Boston Symphony
 Orchestra