

Music for Opera Lovers

Classic Arias

The greatest operatic arias from historic performances of the twentieth century. Tetrizzini, Caruso and Björling are just a few of the incomparable artists that can be heard in music ranging from 'Your tiny hand is frozen' from Puccini's *La Bohème* to Bizet's unforgettable 'Pearl Fishers' duet.

- Au fond du temple saint**
– Jussi Björling & Robert Merrill
Bizet: *The Pearl Fishers*
- Vesti la giubba** – Enrico Caruso
Leoncavallo: *Pagliacci*
- Nessum dorma** – Jussi Björling
Puccini: *Turandot*
- O my beloved Father** – Joan Hammond
Puccini: *Gianni Schichi*
- The Toreador's Song** – Lawrence Tibbet
Bizet: *Carmen*
- The Bell Song** – Lily Pons
Delibes: *Lakme*
- E lucevan le stelle** – Enrico Caruso
Puccini: *Tosca*
- Softly awakes my heart** – Marian Anderson
Saint-Saëns: *Samson & Delilah*
- Una voce poco fa** – Louisa Tetrizzini
Rossini: *The Barber of Seville*
- Serenade** – Heddle Nash
Bizet: *The Fair Maid of Perth*
- One fine day** – Joan Hammond
Puccini: *Madame Butterfly*
- Che gelida manina** – Beniamino Gigli
Puccini: *La Bohème*
- O paradiso** – Jussi Björling
Meyerbeer: *L'Africaine*
- Largo al factotum** – Titta Ruffo
Rossini: *The Barber of Seville*
- The Flower Song** – Jussi Björling
Bizet: *Carmen*
- Recondita armonia** – Enrico Caruso
Puccini: *Tosca*

Original recordings

The *Gift*
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Music & Arts

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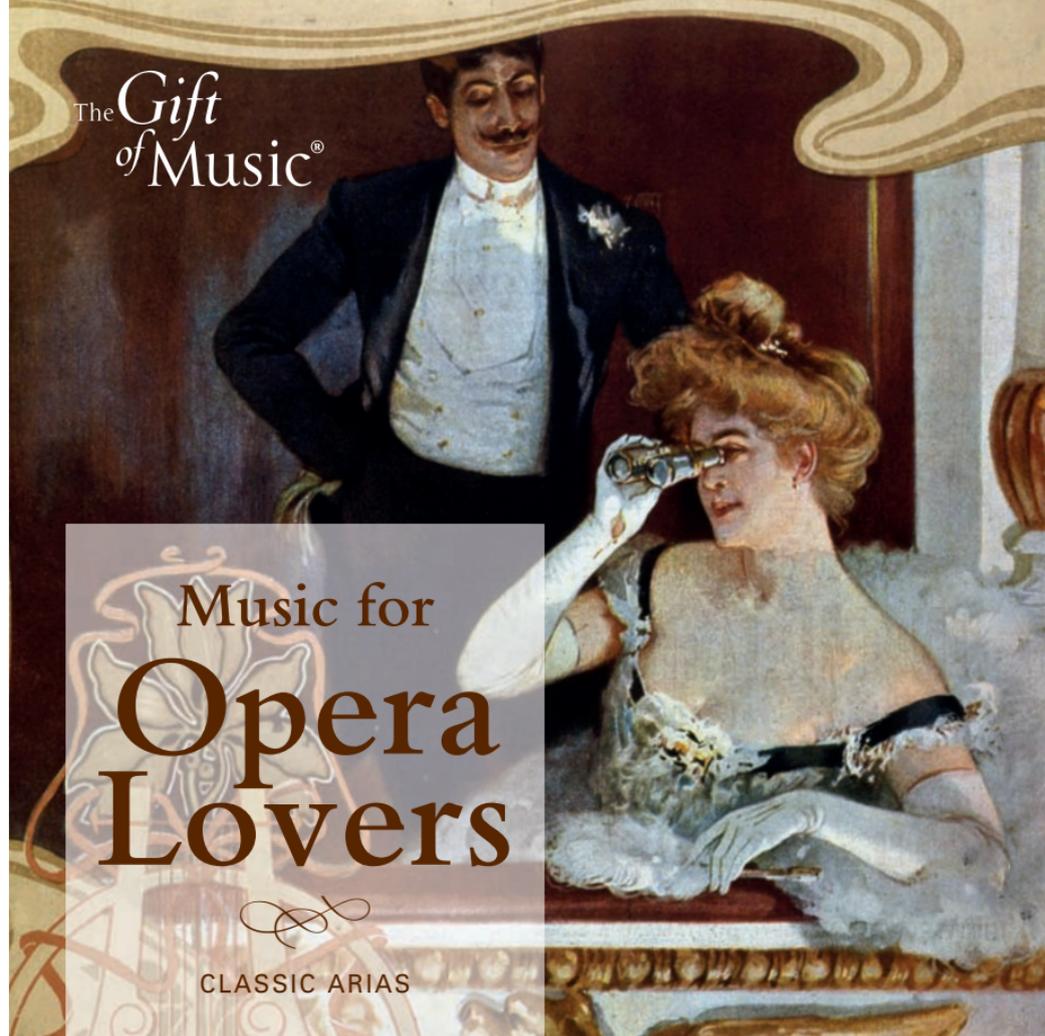
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of Music®

Music for
**Opera
Lovers**



CLASSIC ARIAS



Imagine a world of dashing heroes and black-hearted villains, romantic artists and lovely maidens, a world of love, betrayal, vengeance, camaraderie, set in the most exotic or, equally, the most mundane of settings. A world that will transport you to Sri Lankan temples, Spanish bullfights, Chinese palaces, Biblical Israel, African landscapes and a bustling India: colourful lands of thrilling tales and enchanting spectacle, where glorious singing is continually heard to bring the characters and their stories to stunning life.

That is the promise of Music for Opera Lovers, a collection that celebrates the romance, charm and drama of some of the greatest operas ever staged – from Mozart's age of elegance to Puccini's nineteenth century Italy.

To ensure your maximum enjoyment, we have matched these classic operas and their best-loved arias and duets with the greatest voices of the last century. These are performances which these golden stars have made their own and the recordings that are included here are justly treasured as jewels in the crown of the history of the gramophone.

What more appropriate way to start than with one of the most famous of all operatic recordings? Bizet's 'The Pearl Fishers' is set in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and is notable for its colourful and exotic orchestration and for the great friendship duet 'Au fond du Temple Saint' (In the depths of the temple). Our featured recording is the one that Jussi Björling and Robert Merrill made in 1951 and, such is its enduring

popularity, that for many years it was voted the No.1 favourite recording by listeners to Alan Keith's programme 'Your Hundred Best Tunes'.

A collection such as this would be incomplete without the heroic and magisterial voice of Enrico Caruso. For many of us, his is still the most sublime of tenor voices and his renowned recording of 'Vesti La Giubba' (On With the Motley) from Leoncavallo's 'I Pagliacci' was the first to sell over a million copies. We also hear him in two of the loveliest and most heartfelt of all arias, both from Puccini's 'Tosca': 'E Lucevan le Stelle' (The Stars Were Brightly Shining) and 'Recondita Armonia' (Strange Harmony). Staying with Puccini but highlighting the soprano voice, we have two more famous recordings but this time from the inimitable voice of New Zealand born Joan Hammond, firstly as the tragic heroine Cio-Cio-San whose anguish is yearningly conveyed in 'Un Bel Di' (One Fine Day) from 'Madame Butterfly' and secondly in the beautiful 'O My Beloved Father' from the one-act opera 'Gianni Schicchi'.

There is so much for you to enjoy and cherish. Jussi Björling is resplendent in 'Nessun Dorma' (None Shall Sleep) and 'O Paradiso'. Beniamino Gigli is touching in 'Che Gelida Manina' (Your Tiny Hand Is Frozen) and there are superb performances from Lily Pons, Marian Anderson, Titta Ruffo, Hedde Nash, Luisa Tetrazzini and Lawrence Tibbett. Your front row centre seats await you for an evening of magic and delight.