

Born: May 19, 1914 - Barletta, near Bari, Italy

Died: June 14, 2005 - Brescia, Italy

The eminent Italian conductor, Carlo Maria Giulini, studied viola and composition at the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome and played under the guidance of Otto Klemperer and Bruno Walter. Later he decided to become a conductor and studied under Bernadino Molinari.

From 1946 Carlo Maria Giulini conducted for the RAI, and he took over its Symphony Orchestra in Milan when it was founded in 1950. In 1948 he conducted his first opera, *La Traviata* by Verdi. In 1951 he got to know Arturo Toscanini; a year later he made his debut at the Scala with *La vida breve* by de Falla. He worked at Covent Garden in London with Lucchino Visconti *Don Carlos* and with Franco Zeffirelli *Falstaff* (both by Verdi). In 1955 he conducted in the USA (Chicago) for the first time, and in 1960 he went on a major tour of Japan. In 1963 he returned to the Scala and conducted *Don Giovanni* by Mozart. In 1969, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra appointed him as its principal guest conductor; in 1973 he became the director of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra (until 1976). From 1978 to 1984 he was the successor to Zubin Mehta as the musical director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, and he made several tours of Europe with this orchestra.

As a specialist for the Italian opera, Carlo Maria Giulini spent at least six months in each year in his home in spite of his international career. For the last few years he has limited himself to concerts and worked with just a few orchestras (Orchestre de Paris, Orchestra Filarmonica della Scala, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Berliner Philharmoniker and Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra).

Carlo Maria Giulini was responsible for the first performance of works by the following composers: Boris Blacher's *Poème* (1976), Gottfried von Einem's *An die Nachgeborenen* (1975), Giorgio Federico Ghedini's *Concerto dea'albatro* (1945), Ezra Ladermann's *Symphony No. 4* (1981), Goffredo Petrassi's *Ottavo concerto* (1972), Mario Zafred's *Symphony No. 3* (1950).



# Giuseppe Verdi Quattro pezzi sacri

**Dame Janet Baker** (Mezzo Soprano)

**Carlo Maria Giulini conducts the  
Philharmonia Orchestra, Philharmonia Chorus**



VERDI'S TWILIGHT MASTERPIECE, the Four Sacred Pieces, was published in 1898; the composer was the wealthy, venerated grand-oldman of Italian music, past his eighty-fifth birthday and was to live less than three years more. It was one of Verdi's last wishes to have a copy of the score of the Te Deum buried with him, and he was to be laid beside his wife Giuseppina, who had died in 1897.

The Ave Maria and Laudi alla Vergine Maria had been composed after Othello but before Falstaff. Verdi encountered in the *Gazetta musicale* in 1889 a *scala enigmata* (puzzle scale) posed as a challenge for musical setting. He used it as *cantus firmus* for his Ave Maria for unaccompanied four-part chorus. The Praise to the Virgin Mary uses as text part of the hymn Dante placed in the mouth of St. Bernard in the last canto of the *Paradiso* (xxxiii, 1-21). It is for four-part women's chorus (or a quartet), also a *cappella*.

Two years after his last opera, *Falstaff*, was performed, Verdi began the other two works, both with orchestra: the grandiose *Te Deum*, for double chorus, and the *Stabat Mater*. As in his last operas, Verdi here demonstrated his continuing development and unflinching strength; the *Stabat Mater* contains virtually no repetitions of text (compare the *Manzoni Requiem* of more than twenty years before) and the *Te Deum*, the most frequently performed of these pieces, shows Verdi in a white heat of inspiration.

Verdi's Shakespearean librettist and fellow-composer Arrigo Boito

arranged for and conducted the first performance, at the Paris Opera, during Holy Week, 1898. (The Ave Maria was not included; Verdi disparaged this austere meditation as "an exercise" and actually would have preferred that it not be included in the publication.) The thirty-one-year old Arturo Toscanini conducted the second performance, at Turin, in May. Within a year the work had been heard in Milan, London, Gloucester, Norwich, Berlin, Dresden, Munich, Hamburg and Vienna.

THE PHILHARMONIA CHORUS was founded in 1957 by Walter Legge, founder and manager of the Philharmonia Orchestra. Wilhelm Pitz, Chorus Master of the Bayreuth Festival, is its trainer. Average age of the singers is about thirty, and the chorus' professional standing in the London musical scene is proven by the fact that about fifteen applicants are rejected for every new singer accepted. At full strength, as in this recording, the chorus numbers 240 voices.

For the Verdi Four Sacred Pieces, forty special rehearsals were spaced over more than fifteen months. Reviewing one of the concerts at Royal Festival Hall on which they were performed, *Music and Musicians* commented: "Since Toscanini's death there has been no finer interpreter of Verdi's music than Giulini the performance he drew from orchestra and chorus (the latter, as ever, magnificently prepared by Wilhelm Pitz) was beyond praise and quite unforgettable."

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1. Ave Maria
2. Stabat Mater
3. Laudi Alla Vergine Maria
4. Te Deum

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