

Joan Sutherland – Command Performance (1963)

Written by bluesever

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LP1 01. Weber - *Ocean! Thou mighty monster (Oberon)* 02. Massenet - *Pleurez mes yeux (Le Cid)* 03. Meyerbeer - *Shadow Song (Dinorah)* 04. Leoncavallo - *Recit and Ballatella (I Pagliacci)* 05. Verdi - *Recit and Aria 'Tu del mio Carlo' (I Masnadieri)* 06. Verdi - *Aria 'Tu puniscimi o signora' (Luisa Miller)* [play](#) 07. Rossini - *Recit and Aria 'Vorrei Spiegarvi' (La Cambiale di Matrimonio)* 08. Bellini - *Aria 'Deh! Se un urna' (Beatrice di Tenda)*

LP2

01. Benedict - *The gipsy and the bird* 02. Arditi - *Parla!* 03. Ricci - *Io non sono piu l'Annetta (Crispino e la Comare)* 04. Tosti - *Ideale* 05. Arditi - *Il Bacio* 06. Tosti - *La Serenata* 07. Leoncavallo - *Mattinata* 08. Bishop - *Lo here the gentle lark* 09. Flotow - *The last rose of summer (Martha)*

[play](#)

10. Wallace - *Scenes that are brightest (Maritane)* 11. Balfe - *I dreamt I dwelt (Bohemian Girl)* 12. Bishop - *Home sweet home*

Joan Sutherland - soprano London Symphony Richard Bonyngue - conductor

This 1991 CD extracts 50 minutes from the 1962 double LP album *Command Performance*. Also included is a 12-minute excerpt from Sutherland's 1969 studio recording of Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots*. All of this album shows Dame Joan singing excellently. The only snag is that most of this repertoire doesn't really show off her strengths. The excerpts from *Oberon*, *Le Cid*, *I Pagliacci*, *I masnadieri*, and *Luisa Miller*, while engaging, give only glimmers of the magic Sutherland could bring to music. The *Shadow Song* from Meyerbeer's *Dinorah* is rather nice though. The best arias are "Come tacer... Vorri spiegarvi il giubilo" from Rossini's *La cambiale di matrimonio* and "Eccomi pronta... Deh, se un'urna," the finale of Bellini's *Beatrice di Tenda*. The latter was excellent enough to be included on Decca's 2001 2CD tribute to Sutherland's work: *La Stupenda ~ The Supreme Voice of Joan Sutherland*. The concluding scene from *Les Huguenots* is pleasant, particularly the lovely quartet portion. Overall, I would say that all but Sutherland's most dedicated admirers can safely pass this album by. The best track, the *Beatrice* excerpt available on "*La Stupenda*," should be enough to satisfy the general collector. ---Aronne

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