

Puccini - Manon Lescaut (Levine) [1993]

Written by bluesever

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CD1 1. Ave, Sera Gentile - Ramon Vargas 2. L'amor?...l'amor? - Luciano Pavarotti 3. Tra Voi, Belle, Brune E Bionde - Luciano Pavarotti 4. Ma Bravo! - Ramon Vargas 5. Discendono, Vediam! - Metropolitan Opera Orchestra And Chorus 6. Cortese Damigella - Luciano Pavarotti 7. Donna Non Vidi Mai - Luciano Pavarotti 8. La Tua Ventura Ci Rassicura - Ramon Vargas/Met Opr Chor 9. La tua Proserpina - Ramon Vargas 10. Vedete? Lo Son Fedele - Mirella Freni 11. Non C' E Piu Vino? - Dwayne Croft 12. Di Sedur La Sorellina E Il Momento - Giuseppe Taddei 13. Dispettosetto Questo Riccio! - Mirella Freni 14. In Quelle Trine Morbide - Mirella Freni 15. Poiche Tu Vuoi Saper - Dwayne Croft 16. Che Ceffi Son Costor?...Sulla Vetta Tu Del Monte - Dwayne Croft 17. Paga Costor! - Mirella Freni 18. Minuetto - James Levine 19. Oh, Saro La Piu Bella! - Mirella Freni 20. Ah!...Affe, Madamigella - Mirella Freni 21. Senti, Di Qui Partiamo...Ah! Manon, Mi Tradisce - Luciano Pavarotti 22. Lescaut?!...Tu Qui?! - Luciano Pavarotti

CD2 1. Intermezzo - James Levine 2. Ansia Eterna, Crudel - Luciano Pavarotti 3. ...E Kate Rispose Al Re - Paul Groves 4. All'armi! All'armi! - Metropolitan Opera Orchestra And Chorus 5. Rosetta! - James Courtney 6. Presto! In Fila! - James Courtney 7. Tutta Su Me Ti Posa - Luciano Pavarotti 8. Manon, Senti, Amor Mio - Luciano Pavarotti 9. Sei Tu Che Piangi? - Mirella Freni 10. Sola, Perduta, Abbandonata - Mirella Freni 11. Fra Le Tue Braccia Amore - Mirella Freni

Mirella Freni (soprano) Manon Lescaut
Luciano Pavarotti (tenor) Des Grieux Dwayne Croft (baritone) Lescaut Giuseppe Taddei (baritone) Geronte Ramon Vargas (tenor) Edmondo Cecilia Bartoli (mezzosoprano) Singer Federico Davia (bass) Innkeeper Captain Anthony Laciura (tenor) Dancing Master Paul Groves (tenor) Lamplighter James Courtney (bass) Sergeant Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera James Levine – conductor

With Luciano Pavarotti a powerful Des Grieux, James Levine conducts a comparably big-boned performance of Manon Lescaut, bringing out the red-blooded drama of Puccini's first big success while not ignoring its warmth and tender poetry in exceptionally full, vivid sound, with the voices well in front of the orchestra. In the title-role, Freni's performance culminates in an account of the big Act 4 aria, more involving and passionate than any of the others on rival versions, with the voice showing no signs of wear, and with her sudden change of face at the words 'terra di pace' ('a land of peace') bringing a magical lightening of tone. That aria makes a

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thrilling climax, when too often this act can seem a let-down. In this, as in so much else, Levine conveys the tensions and atmosphere of a stage performance in a way that owes much to his experience at the Met.

More completely than other versions, it avoids the feeling of a studio performance. Reactions to Pavarotti as Des Grieux will differ widely. The closeness of balance means that in volume his singing rarely drops below mezzo-forte, but there's little harm in having so passionate a portrait of Des Grieux as Pavarotti's. Needless to say, the hero's big emotional climaxes in each of the first three acts come over at full force. The rest of the cast is strong too, with Dwayne Croft a magnificent Lescaut. ---gramophone.co.uk

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