

Casta Diva from Norma by Vincenzo Bellini

Written by bluesever

Saturday, 30 July 2011 19:20 - Last Updated Thursday, 19 March 2015 16:30

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Fromental Halévy, French composer of the opera *La Juive*, claimed he would have given away all his works if he could have composed just one aria,

'Casta diva'.

The aria has been a signature piece for famous sopranos such as Maria Callas, Joan Sutherland, Renee Fleming, Anna Netrebko and Angela Gheorgiu. It is one of the most exquisite gems in the

bel canto
repertoire.

Casta Diva

Norma is a tragedia lirica or opera in two acts by **Vincenzo Bellini** with libretto by Felice Romani after *Norma, ossia L'infanticidio (Norma, or The Infanticide)* by Alexandre Soumet.



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Bellini insisted on spending a few months on the composition of his works. At the time of his sudden death in 1835, Bellini had composed a mere ten operas. Nonetheless, the last of Bellini's operas, *La Sonnambula*, *Norma*, and *I Puritani* are undisputed masterpieces, with *Norma* being more renowned due to its famous aria '**Casta Diva.**'



Casta Diva

Synopsis

Place: Gaul.

Time: Early times of Roman conquest of Gaul.

Act 1

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The grove.

A secret love unites the seeress Norma with Pollione, the Roman proconsul, by whom she has borne two children. But Pollione has grown tired of the aging druidess and has fallen in love with Adalgisa, a young temple virgin. Despite Adalgisa's piety and virtue, she agrees to flee to Rome with Pollione. Adalgisa innocently tells Norma of her love, and Norma curses Pollione for his treachery.

Act 2

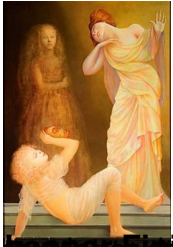
Norma's apartment.

Norma is about to kill her children, but her love for her children finally confides them to the care of Adalgisa. When Pollione comes to take Adalgisa from the temple, Norma denounces him and he is seized by the Druids, after having refused to give up Adalgisa. Norma proclaims herself equally guilty with him. The pyre is lighted, and ascending it, Norma dies with her lover.

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