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It was a pleasure to read the Bellini commemorative issue of *The Opera Quarterly* [vol. 17, no. 3 (summer 2001)]. Bellini has been a favorite composer since I started listening to opera. It was somewhat disappointing, however, to find so many recordings of his operas omitted from the CD surveys. It's understandable that obscure recordings would not be considered, but quite a few easily obtainable issues of important performances were missing. Perhaps the most significant omission is the recording of the revised *Puritani* that Bellini prepared for Maria Malibran. The Fonit Cetra set may be out of print, but it's unfortunate that it wasn't part of the review. Other missing interpretations that I would have enjoyed reading about include the Romeos of Simionato and Cossotto, Scotto's Giulietta and Amina, and the Normas of Pedrini, Cerquetti, Gencer, and Deutekom.

One other bit of information that may be helpful to know is that the *Norma* video from the Orange Festival that is reviewed in the Bellini issue has been rereleased "officially" by Dreamlife Video in all three video formats. Catalog numbers are DMVB-29 (VHS), DMLD-21 (LD), and DLVC-1023 (DVD).

Bill DePeter
Brooklyn, N.Y.

A belcantist from way back, I found your Bellini commemorative issue filled with fascinating information and historical facts that are rarely found in other, much larger references. These facts kept me reading into the wee hours of the morning on many an occa-

sion. Needless to say, I am *never* surrendering my copy to anyone!

I realize that such an immense undertaking as the Bellini issue could not cover *every* facet of the topic; however, I thought readers might be interested to know of an additional *Puritani* recording not mentioned in the CD reviews section: it stars Joan Sutherland and Nicolai Gedda and was recorded in Philadelphia's Academy of Music, 18 April 1963 (issued on SRO/Legato Classics). Thank you again for such an informative issue.

Dr. Alan-Clarke Hudson
Mount Laurel, N.J.

Niel Rishoi's most perceptive and entertaining survey of *Norma* recordings [in the Bellini commemorative issue] is another good reason why I remain a subscriber to *The Opera Quarterly*. It brought back many fond memories of Maria Callas and Joan Sutherland, who, if not bosom buddies of mine, were always most considerate colleagues when I worked with them at the Met, first as a vocal student moonlighting at the house as a super with the former, and then as a chorister for ten years with the latter. However, there are two odd omissions in Mr. Rishoi's article, namely, the two *Norma* recordings that I believe show Callas and Sutherland in their very finest performances of this fearsome title role. Callas's extraordinary 1952 Covent Garden performance has never been surpassed in awesome vocal authority (surely even Lilli Lehmann and Rosa Ponselle couldn't have sung it better), matched by titanic dramatic commitment. Unfortunately, none of the

many pirate and non-pirate issues of this document rise above pre–World War II sound. Far better sound is offered on the dirt-cheap Gala label’s recent issue of Sutherland’s 1972 San Francisco performance, Dame Joan’s best Norma ever (and I was there to review it).

Postscript: There is a fascinating recording of *Norma* excerpts among the mysteriously aborted series of recordings planned by Columbia in association with the Met during the late 1940s, when LPs were just coming in. About a half-hour of excerpts from *Norma* oddly appeared on Eddie Smith’s Golden Age of Opera series. These studio scenes do not sound bad for their time, and they consist of Norma’s entire first scene, Adalgisa’s entrance, and a strange version of “Deh! con te.” Stella Roman sings a most interesting Norma, Jennie Tourel is a star Adalgisa, and Norman Cordon is able in Oroveso’s few interjections. The nameless conductor, though, makes even Gui sound good.

Bill Zakariasen
New York, N.Y.

For some time I have wondered about the origin of the abbreviating of the opera billing of *Cavalleria rusticana* and *Pagliacci* as CAV and PAG. How long has the shortened form

been in existence and how did it happen? I have one clue: a small item from the “Talk of the Town” section of the 2 January 1937 issue of *The New Yorker*: “What with ‘20th Century Sporting Club’ and professional basketball every Sunday night ‘New York Whirlwind vs. America’s Leading Teams,’ there was barely room on the Hippodrome marquee one cold, bright day last week for an announcement of the evening’s double bill of opera. It was reduced to ‘CAV and PAG Tonight.’” Does anyone know of an earlier use of the CAV and PAG abbreviations?

Louis Phillips
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E R R A T U M

On page 401 of our Bellini commemorative issue (vol. 17, no. 3 [summer 2001]), the 1829 Milan production of Zingarelli’s *Giulietta e Romeo* with Giuditta Pasta is incorrectly assigned to the Teatro alla Scala. It actually occurred at the Teatro Carcano.