

2002 Was a Very Good Year for Jussi-Appreciation: A Summary of Successes during the year.

First, we can assure you that our JBS Conference in New York City was a big success: Read a summary in the separate *Conference Report* enclosed with this *Newsletter*. More complete reports, with photographs, will follow in the next issue of our *Journal*. And the **videotape** will soon be available: see an announcement in the *Conference Report*.

Our best advertisement for the Conference came in *Opera News's* issue of October 2002, where the "Opera Watch" column announced in bold caps:

"The **JUSSI BJÖRLING SOCIETY** will host a four-day conference, celebrating the life and work of the Swedish tenor and many of his Met contemporaries, at Manhattan's New Yorker Hotel, October 24-27." Readers were urged to consult the Society's website, and a photo of Jussi as Don Carlo was captioned: "MANHATTAN TRIBUTE SET FOR PRINCE OF TENORS."

Mickey Dove noted that the JBS website attracted over 2000 "hits" in the days immediately following publication of this issue of *Opera News*.

A new CD from RCA Classics Coming in 2003

The Conference continues to help generate exciting consequences: our favorite is the news, announced during the Conference by Daniel Guss of RCA/BMG, that RCA's "reDiscover" series of classical CD-releases would feature a new CD of Jussi's complete September 1955 Carnegie Hall recital. This **new CD** will include **eight items never before heard**, including an especially brilliant version of "Come un bel dì di maggio" from *Andrea Chénier*, three Sibelius songs and three others by Grieg and Sjöberg. Mr. Guss played the *Chénier* aria and Sibelius's "Svarta rosor" for our conference audience, who agreed that the sound was significantly warmer and more representative of Jussi's voice, than what comes across on the old RCA LP of excerpts from this concert. Look for this to hit the stores by September 2003.

And 2002 turns out to be another year of **many new releases** of CDs devoted to Jussi's always-popular recordings!

1. Let's begin with a truly **NEW** release, an absolutely first-class performance of *Il Trovatore* from **1957**, recorded at the theater by "a member of the chorus," and released during December '02 by the Swedish label **Caprice**, #22051, as Vol.1 in a new series from the "Swedish Royal Opera Archives." The sense of occasion is palpable, the sound is quite good indeed, and the four main soloists are in superb form. This release also includes highlights of a December 1959 performance of *Manon Lescaut* – again in good sound and with Jussi in spectacular form, in the last months of his life.

2. **Bluebell** adds to its "Jussi Björling Series" with #ABCD 092, "Fram för Framgång" (the title of Jussi's 1937 film – think of this as a Swedish version of the USA musical show called "Fame"). This is a much-needed collection of the vocal excerpts contributed by Jussi to three films and four radio broadcasts, and transcribed here in **excellent sound** for Bluebell. Aficionados will especially prize the two complete broadcasts of 1944 and '45 conducted by Tor Mann, with the slowest/longest versions of "Che gelida manina"