

## Jussi in *Gramophone* Hall of Fame



Joseph Calleja

“The Swede Björling made his operatic debut in 1930 and within a decade was performing regularly at the Met where he often sang during the 1940s and ‘50s. He sang often with Toscanini and was selected by Beecham to record *La bohème*. One of the loveliest of tenor voices, he recorded extensively, mainly for RCA and EMI.

*Björling: a tribute by Joseph Calleja*

“When anyone asks me to give an example of a perfectly controlled tenor voice I always mention Luciano Pavarotti and Jussi Björling. It is not a surprise that Pavarotti himself wrote that he modelled his career on the great Swedish tenor.

“Numerous recordings and live testimony seem to agree that his basic sound was sweet but at the same time full, with a sort of constant ‘tear’ in the sound. There has always been some controversy as to exactly how big the voice sounded in the theatre, but critics from the time all seemed to agree that his voice had a ‘laser-beam quality’ that allowed him to cut through even the most dense of orchestras.

“Björling has frequently been voted ‘the world’s greatest tenor’ and Dorothy Caruso has gone on record to say that he was the only singer that reminded her of the great Enrico Caruso in live performance.” ■

From *Gramophone* Newsletter, <https://www.gramophone.co.uk/musicians/artist/jussi-bj%C3%B6rling-58356>.

## Messages From Enrique Gilardoni and Javier Camarena



Javier Camarena

Dear friends,  
On September 22nd. I shared with you the reply of Karla Sarmiento, executive assistant to **Javier Camarena**, acknowledging with thanks the receipt of a message I sent them after the earthquake.

Four days later, I received through Karla a direct message from Javier Camarena which you can see below. Sorry that it took too long for me to translate and resend this message.

The translation is as follows

“Dear Enrique:

*Thank you for your solidarity message. It is true that these last few weeks have been very difficult for Mexico, with hurricanes and earthquakes that have hit the country.*

*Despite the misfortune, it is beautiful to see the human, solidary and altruistic spirit of our people, as well as all the countries that have joined to support Mexico in its misfortune.*

*We will have to spend much time before that these wounds will heal and the hearts are recovered; substracts [sic] us continue supporting with faith and love to all those who need us.*

*A big hug to The Jussi Björling Society and all the Chilean brothers.*

*Blessings,*

*Javier Camarena”*

## The Jussi Björling Recording Survey— “Aria” Results



By Walter B. Rudolph

**T**he biggest surprise revealed in the tally of votes for favorite arias by you the members of the Jussi Björling Society-USA is that there were no votes for what is arguably one of the

most famous of all tenor arias, “Vesti la giubba” from *Pagliacci* by Ruggero Leoncavallo.

“Non piangere Liu” from *Turandot* was likewise missing. Perhaps if we invited submissions for favorite ensembles it would prompt ideas. For me, there are few scenes as memorable as the end of Act 1 *Turandot*, specifically in the Leinsdorf recording. Tebaldi, Björling and Tozzi deliver one of the most haunting, poignant and extraordinary moments in recorded opera.

Another of my favored arias is “The Song of the Indian Guest” from *Sadko* by Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov. Jussi’s recording is always welcome, but no recognition came its way here.

