

The Jussi Björling Society - USA

"...To hear him was a joy for body and soul. As the voice of the thrush rejoices in the summer night, so our singer rejoiced - the voice of the Swedish landscape itself..."
Johannes Norrby

**The Jussi Björling Society - USA,
Inc.**

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Richard Tucker Music Foundation
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To the Tucker Family and Members of the Richard Tucker Music Foundation:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Jussi Björling Society, I am honored to acknowledge the beginning of the 100th year of the birth of one of the world's most gifted and giving singers, the late Richard Tucker.

Looking back, everyone knows the period of the late 40's, 50's 60's and early 70's as a golden age of memorable opera performances. Most opera lovers remember them because of the Metropolitan Saturday Opera Matinee radio broadcasts (and their rebroadcast via historic performances), but they were hardly limited to the Met; they were happening in all the major opera houses of the world. Looking back, there are many contributors to this magical period. Perhaps it begins with the intense level of artistic merit that came to America because of World War II. Young people today have no concept of the "bullpen" of tenors that were singing in those decades. One could have a new favorite after every Saturday broadcast - they were that good, that consistent, and all with distinctive vocal sound and artistry.

But even among a group that would include many more names than del Monaco, Björling, Peerce, Bergonzi, di Stefano, and Gedda, few could stand out like Richard Tucker. For Americans, he was one of us, but for the world, he was a man of vocal and moral integrity originating in his heart and soul. Whether it was in the house, the Ed Sullivan Show, the Telephone or Firestone Hours, or a matinee broadcast, hearing the name Richard Tucker always pricked our ears and drew us in.

Personally, I heard him live only once. But once was sufficient to permanently implant the memory. It was during the June Verdi Festival 1972 and the opera was *Aida*. The Met had a glorious production in those days - perhaps not equaled since then? Nor has the tenorizing of that performance been surpassed since then. Richard Tucker cut his Radames teeth with Arturo Toscanini - the video exists to this very day. His keen attention to detail while pouring out his clarion warrior tones and those of the trapped lover were unforgettable.

His service to God and the many worthy causes he supported only add to the tremendous heritage of Richard Tucker. And like too many of our greatest singers, he left too soon. Yet we rejoice in his legacy, represented so well by his recordings.

Sir Rudolf Bing told the world that "he was a decent, friendly, helpful man—full of good humor—his was one of the great tenor voices. Irreplaceable."

We joyously echo the compliments and congratulate The Richard Tucker Music Foundation for its legion accomplishments in encouraging and building opera singers for the future.

Our fondest greetings,
Walter B. Rudolph, President

Richard Tucker

