

Jussi in private: I can't say that I knew him very well. We would meet in the street or in Dr Bertil Kågen's rooms as we waited to have our vocal chords checked. He was always friendly—a nice, decent chap. The admiring words I always felt a pleasure in being able to say to him in appreciation of the most recent performance were received with modest gratitude: "Really, do you think so—well, it wasn't so bad. I felt in good form." No self-dissection, no boasting. In his simple, good-hearted manner he had authority, and one felt that one had met a real personality. There would sometimes be something searching in his look, an appeal in a tone of voice which hinted that he was not the uncomplicated man which first impressions indicated. It is not the tangible things alone that create a great artist.

And this evening, the 9th October 1960, I have heard that warm, brilliant voice again on the radio. But sadly, cruelly, above the singer's name in the newspaper were printed the words "Memorial programme."

## Jussi Björling and the Royal Theatre, Copenhagen

H. A. Bronsted

There were all too few occasions on which we at the Royal Theatre enjoyed the good fortune of being able to persuade Jussi Björling to sing on our stage. In return, though, these guest appearances became memorable events in our theatre's little history. During the Royal Swedish Opera's guest performances in Copenhagen in 1933 he sang the roles of Vladimir in *Prince Igor* and Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*. In 1942 he brightened the dark period of occupation as the Duke in *Rigoletto* and Rodolfo in *La bohème*. And he was with us in our joy at the liberation when, in

September 1945, he sang Gustav III in *Un ballo in maschera*. Many remember these performances, and all his stage colleagues recall a wonderful and inspiring collaboration, as well as a pleasant spirit of comradeship.

Jussi Björling was greatly loved by the Danish public and a significant reason for this was undoubtedly his unrivalled ability to give—although with his voice alone—full life to the characters he portrayed on stage. In this respect he was supreme and we are fortunate that this ability has been preserved on countless gramophone records.

Jussi Björling will stand, for all time, as an example of the best in Swedish art and as a distinguished representative of Sweden's rich operatic culture.

## The Singer and the Actor

Edvin Adolphson

It would not be overstating the case to say that Jussi Björling was extremely popular with artists of the spoken theatre too. He was always very eager to learn all about the problems of the theatre and of the actor's art, and when he met actors he never failed to ask us about our experiences in the theatre. He wanted to know as much as possible about the stage and its techniques.

When his busy schedule allowed, he willingly gave his services for the benefit of actors, including a number of recitals at The Djurgården Festival. The Swedish Theatre Union awarded him its Gold Medal as a small token of appreciation.

As a person he was what I would call 'a nice friend'. He was affable, with

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Here the very discerning Enzo Bruzzi meets a certain soprano at the Met Opera's bookshop. No, Enzo hasn't written his book yet, but Renée Fleming's is doing fairly well if not quite a best-seller. Enzo is the grandson of Dorian Bruzzi, and son of Rafael and Kathy.

