

Faust. In addition, he sang Alfredo and Dick Johnson in Swedish at guest performances on the continent in 1936 and 1937. He would also eventually sing excerpts from Florestan's role in English at a festival performance in Cincinnati in May 1948. It should also be mentioned that in 1935 Jussi celebrated 20 years as a concert singer, having made his debut as a four-year-old in Trinity Church in Örebro on 12 December 1915.

Many of John Forsell's pupils were pushed very hard; in certain cases it is not going to far to say that the voice was abused. Among the singers to whom this applied are two previously mentioned in this article, the baritone Einar Larson and the tenor Einar Beyron. The former had, in his glory days, a very beautiful lyric-dramatic baritone, but in the mid 1930s his vocal powers began to decline considerably, partly as the result of an inadequate technique. Einar Beyron's career as a tenor had a very successful start, but he too was burdened with too many roles too early, many of which, moreover, were far too dramatic for his lyric tenor voice. The result was that his voice, too, was irreparably damaged. Jussi Björling's voice was also worked hard from his earliest years at the Royal Opera. But in contrast to Einar Larson and Einar Beyron, Jussi was equipped with a very solid technique, the foundations of which were laid in his childhood years, and this allowed him to undertake 53 roles, both lyric and dramatic, during the first eight seasons of his operatic career without causing any damage to his voice. Quite the contrary, in fact. To judge from the reviews, his voice continued to grow in size, richness, power and security as season followed season. The 1934-1935 season can be seen as

something of a breakthrough in Jussi's career. In earlier seasons both public and critics alike had obviously understood that Jussi was an exceptional talent, especially following his interpretation of Gounod's *Roméo* in late summer 1933, but it was not until the 1934-1935 season that the various elements of his voice began to consolidate into that indivisible unit of technique, power, brilliance and beauty which, allied to a unique interpretative ability, came to be the unmistakable characteristics of the legend that is Jussi Björling.

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Bertil Bengtsson was born 29 June, 1962 (fortuitously he addressed the Gustavus conference on the 39th anniversary of that event, which did not go uncelebrated). His academic degrees are in arts administration, and he has held positions at the museums in Sweden devoted to the work of Anders Zorn and J.B. Bertil helped found the Swedish Jussi Björling Sällskapet (Society) and is a valued member of the Advisory Board of JBS-USA. He is preparing an English-language version of his program "A gala evening with Jussi Björling, the legendary tenor—a presentation in sound, words and pictures" for a prospective lecture tour.

[We thank Gail Campain for her translation of this article, another in a series that eventually will include, in particular, the entire text of the 1960 "Memory Book" dedicated to Jussi—the ninth installment of which can be found in this issue. —Ed.]

More on Bertil's Smithsonian Lecture in Washington D.C.

Here is a portion of Don Pruitt's report on Bertil's talk of June 26 at the Hirshhorn Gallery: "Alla and I have just returned from Bertil's outstanding lecture at the Smithsonian. The talk was fascinating, with several new (to me) photos and sound tracks, including a wonderful *Carmen* Flower Song from the Firestone Hour and a 'La donna è mobile' from, of all places, the Ed Sullivan Show. The latter used a seductive Maddalena mime who clung to JB throughout, apparently affecting his performance toward greater feats of verisimilitude that the usual partaker of this role could ever hope for.

"There was a lovely photo of JB and Anna-Lisa in costume for *Roméo et Juliette*; a backstage shot at the Met of the same opera with Anders and Lars standing before a beaming Sayão (Bertil told of how they remember her embraces!); JB, Kirsten, Baccaloni and Valdengo at *Manon Lescaut*; a backstage shot from *Don Carlo*; two lovely candid of Jussi with Anna-Lisa, one in Bermuda and one in Hawaii, complete with ukelele; and lots more. "Bertil thoughtfully dedicated Jussi's 'Che gelida manina' to Bea Bobotek, who did a splendid and much-appreciated job in organizing the lecture with the Smithsonian and Embassy officials."