

Jussi Björling on the Opera Stage

*A statistic survey**

The statistics comprise his complete opera and operetta performances. They include two (in Stockholm and New York), where he had to be replaced during the performance. A gala performance of *Die Fledermaus* at the Met, where he did not sing music from the operetta, is not included.

Jussi Björling's opera and operetta repertoire

The roles are listed chronologically according to Björling's first performance of them. Opera titles are those of the original score, role names have been translated when that is common usage. The second column shows the years between which the role was sung, the third column the number of performances. Only one number in that column shows that Björling sang the role only with the Royal Opera in Stockholm. If there are two numbers, connected by a plus sign, the first number indicates his performances with the Stockholm Opera, the second his performances with other opera companies.



In front of La Scala

Manon Lescaut (Puccini): A Lamplighter	1930-32	6
Bellman (Ziedner): Näktergal	1930	1
Don Giovanni (Mozart): Don Ottavio	1930-37	10
Louise (Charpentier): A Song-Writer	1930-31	8
Guillaume Tell (Rossini): Arnold	1930-32	11
Saul og David (Nielsen): Jonathan	1931-32	14
Engelbrekt (N. Berg): Bishop Sigge	1931	3
I cavalieri di Ekebù (Zandonai): Ruster	1931-36	11
Tannhäuser (Wagner): Walther von der Vogelweide	1931-32	12
Roméo et Juliette (Gounod): Tybalt	1931-32	3
Der fliegende Holländer (Wagner): Erik	1931-33	4
La notte di Zoraima (Montemezzi): A Voice	1931-32	5
Il barbiere di Siviglia (Rossini): Count Almaviva	1931-37	26
Salome (R. Strauss): Narraboth	1931-32	5
L'illustre Fregona (Laparra): Tomas	1932-37	22
Tristan und Isolde (Wagner): A Young Sailor	1932-35	4
Rigoletto (Verdi): The Duke of Mantua	1932-58	24+32=56
Das Herz (Pfitzner): A Cavalier	1932	3
Mignon (Thomas): Wilhelm Meister	1932-37	10
L'elisir d'amore (Donizetti): Nemorino	1932-33	6
Resa till Amerika (Rosenberg): The Bargeman	1932-33	5
La traviata (Verdi): Alfredo Germont	1933-39	13+1=14
Evgeny Onegin (Tchaikovsky): Lensky	1933-35	8
Das Rheingold (Wagner): Froh	1933	1
Knyaz' Igor (Borodin): Vladimir Igorevich	1933-37	36
Kronbruden (Rangström): Mats	1933-34	3
Roméo et Juliette (Gounod): Roméo	1933-51	38+6=44
Djamileh (Bizet): Haroun	1933	6
Martha (Flotow): Lyonel	1933	3
Tosca (Puccini): Mario Cavaradossi	1933-59	23+28=51
Die Zauberflöte (Mozart): Tamino	1933-36	5
Arabella (R. Strauss): Count Elemer	1933-34	5
Fanal (Atterberg): Martin Skarp	1934-39	23
Un ballo in maschera (Verdi): Riccardo / Gustavus	1934-57	9+29=38
Faust (Gounod): Faust	1934-60	48+23=71
La bohème (Puccini): Rodolfo	1934-60	60+54=114
Il tabarro (Puccini): Luigi	1934	4

Sadko (Rimsky-Korsakov): The Indian Guest	1934-36	11
La fanciulla del West (Puccini): Dick Johnson	1934-37	8+1=9
Die Entführung aus dem Serail (Mozart): Belmonte	1935	4
Cavalleria rusticana (Mascagni): Turiddu	1935-59	25+6=31
Fidelio (Beethoven): Florestan	1935	4
Il trovatore (Verdi): Manrico	1935-60	19+48=67
Die Fledermaus (J.Strauss): Alfred	1935-36	10
Aïda (Verdi): Radamès	1935-58	24+7=31
Pagliacci (Leoncavallo): Canio	1936-55	17+3=20
La damnation de Faust (Berlioz): Faust	1936	10
Madama Butterfly (Puccini): B. F. Pinkerton	1936	11+1=12
La fille du régiment (Donizetti): Tonio	1936-37	9
Rossini in Neapel (Paumgartner): Gioacchino Rossini	1936	6
Mefistofele (Boito): Faust	1937	2
Der Zigeunerbaron (J. Strauss): Sándor Barinkay	1938	7
L'africane (Meyerbeer): Vasco da Gama	1938	6
Manon Lescaut (Puccini): Chevalier Des Grieux	1949-59	8+17=25
Don Carlo (Verdi): Don Carlo	1950-58	0+16=16
		Total: 659+272=931

Besides these complete performances, on special occasions Björling sang in Stockholm single acts or scenes of the operas, at the Opera House or — also in stage costume — at the Concert Hall. At the Opera House, he performed complete acts of the following operas: *L'illustre Fregona* (acts 1+3 once), *Roméo et Juliette* (act 2 three times), *Aïda* (act 3 two times) and *Madama Butterfly* (act 1 once). In Paris, he once sang Act 1 of *La bohème*.

Opera companies with which Björling sang

Arranged according to the number of complete opera or operetta performances with each company in the second column. Three numbers there indicate: performances on the home stage + performances on tour = total number. In the third column: first and last year of performing with the company.

Kungliga Teatern / Operan (Royal Opera), Stockholm (11 of the 40 tour performances were given abroad)	619+40=659	1930-60
Metropolitan Opera, New York	90+29=119	1938-59
San Francisco Opera	26+18=44	1940-58
Chicago City Opera, Chicago Opera Company, Lyric Theater of Chicago, Lyric Opera of Chicago	36	1937-58
Wiener Staatsoper (Vienna State Opera)	15	1936-37
Teatro alla Scala (La Scala Opera), Milan	9	1946-51
Royal Opera (Covent Garden), London	6	1939-60
Suomalaisen Ooppera (Finnish Opera), Helsinki	5	1943-55
Národní Divadlo (National Theater), Prague	4	1936
Det Kongelige Teater (Royal Theater), Copenhagen	4	1942-45
Teatro Comunale (Municipal Theater), Florence	4	1943
Magyar Királyi Állami Operaház (Hungarian Royal State Opera House), Budapest	3	1937-42
Sächsische Staatsoper (Saxonian State Opera), Dresden	2	1937
New Orleans Opera	2	1950
Connecticut Opera, Hartford	2	1951-53
Malmö Stadsteater (Municipal Theater)	2	1957
Tulsa Opera	2	1959
Cosmopolitan Opera, San Francisco	2	1960
Zemské Divadlo (County Theater), Brno	1	1936
Nürnberg Opernhaus (Nuremberg Opera House)	1	1937
Deutsches Opernhaus (German Opera House), Berlin	1	1937
Neues Deutsches Theater (New German Theater), Prague	1	1937

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San Antonio Grand Opera	1	1949
Opera Guild of Greater Miami	1	1954
Württembergische Staatsoper (Wurttemberg State Opera), Stuttgart	1	1954
Narodno Pozorište (National Theater), Belgrade	1	1954
Hrvatsko Narodno Kazaliste (Croatian National Theater), Zagreb	1	1954
New York City Opera (on tour)	0+1=1	1956
Stadttheater (Municipal Theater), Zurich	1	1957
		Total: 931

Countries in which Björling appeared on the opera stage

Number of performances followed by first and last year.

Sweden	650	1930-60
United States	210	1937-60
Austria	15	1936-37
Italy	13	1943-51
Finland	9	1931-55
Denmark	6	1933-45
Czechoslovakia	6	1936-37
United Kingdom	6	1939-60
Germany	5	1937-54
Latvia	3	1935
Hungary	3	1937-42
Norway	2	1934
Yugoslavia	2	1954
Switzerland	1	1957
		Total: 931

—Harald Henrysson

**A previous version of this list, printed in the JBS-USA August 2020 Newsletter #36, contained an arithmetic error, herewith corrected.
A table divided by country has also been added.*



Royal Opera House, Stockholm