

Anna Moffo - Arias Verdianas - Recital (1960)

Written by bluesever

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1) *I vespri siciliani*: Merce, dilette amiche 2) *Ernani*: Ernani, involami 3) *Il trovatore*: D'amor sull'ali rosse 4) *Aida*: O patria 5) *Giovanna d'Arco*: O ben s'addice questo torbido cielo 6) *Otello*: Willow Song and Ave Maria 7) *Un ballo in maschera*: Morro, ma prima in grazia 8) *Simon Boccanegra*: Come in quest'ora bruna Orquestra de la RCA Franco Ferrara - conductor

Anna Moffo was born on June 27, 1932, in Wayne, Pennsylvania, the daughter of Nicolas Moffo and his Regina (Cinti) Moffo. She made her public debut at the age of 7 before a school assembly in a rendition of "Mighty Lak' a Rose." Later on she performed at school recitals, weddings, funerals, and in choirs. After graduating from high school, Anna Moffo was offered the chance to appear in Hollywood films, but turned it down because of her intentions to become a nun.

After deciding to devote herself to music, Miss Moffo won a four-year scholarship to the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia after performing the one operatic selection she knew: Un Bel Dì from Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*. She studied voice and piano at the institute and graduated with honors. Soon after, in 1955, she won the Young Artists Auditions and a Fulbright grant to study at the Accademia di Santa Cecilia in Rome. Some little-known facts about Anna Moffo are that while studying in Italy, she worked as an X-ray technician and also learned to type ninety-seven words a minute.

Anna Moffo made her stage debut in 1955 as Norina in Donizetti's *Don Pasquale* in Spoleto, Italy. The following year, she appeared in a television production of *Madama Butterfly*, staged by Mario Lanfranchi, whom she married on December 8, 1957. In 1957, she made her La Scala debut in *Falstaff* and her American debut as Mimi in Puccini's *La Bohème* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago.

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Anna Moffo made her Metropolitan Opera debut on November 14, 1959, as Violetta in Verdi's *La Traviata*. She returned to the Met in the 1960-61 season to sing three new roles, Gilda in Verdi's *Rigoletto*, Adina in Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore*, and Liù in *Turandot* with Birgit Nilsson and Franco Corelli. Around this time, Miss Moffo became especially popular in Italy. Not only was she voted one of the ten most beautiful women in Italy, she also hosted "The Anna Moffo Show" from 1960 to 1973.

Miss Moffo divorced Lanfranchi in 1972 and married former RCA chairman Robert Sarnoff in 1974 (unfortunately, Sarnoff died of cancer in February 1997). In the late-seventies, Miss Moffo began singing, along with her signature roles (*La Traviata* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*), the heavier Verdi roles, such as Leonora in *Il Trovatore* and Lina in *Stiffelio*. Recently, in 1991, she added a new role to her repertoire, that of the title role in Bellini's *Norma*.

Fortunately for her fans, Anna Moffo has recorded several albums (opera and otherwise), including *La Traviata*, *La Bohème* (with Maria Callas), *La Rondine*, and *Madama Butterfly*. She has also enjoyed successful film career, not only of operas, but also of strictly dramatic films, including *Una storia d'amore*, which won the prestigious Griffo d'Argento award. She is as well known for her beauty as for her singing, but it shouldn't be overlooked that she has performed *La Traviata* more than 900 times, and *Lucia di Lammermoor* around 500 times. ---

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