

Verdi - Simon Boccanegra (Abbado) [1977]

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CD1 1. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Prologue - *Che dicesti?* (Paolo, Pietro, Simone, Coro) Romano Gandolfi 7:08 2. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Prologue - *L'altra magion vedete?* (Paolo, Pietro, Coro) Romano Gandolfi 3:01 3. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Prologue - *"A te l'estremo addio" - "Il lacerato spirito"* Romano Gandolfi 5:38 4. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act 2 - *Tu qui? ... Amelia!* (Amelia, Gabriele) Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala di Milano 4:31 5. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Prologue - *Oh, de'Fieschi implacata, orrida razza* (Simone, Fiesco, Paolo, Pietro, Coro) Romano Gandolfi 3:51 6. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act 1 - (Preludio) Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala di Milano 2:13 7. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act 1 - *Come in quest'ora bruna* (Amelia) Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala di Milano 4:08 8. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act 1 - *Cielo di stelle orbato* (Gabriele, Amalia, Ancella, Pietro) Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala di Milano 7:27 9. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act 1 - *Propizio ei giunge!* (GAbriele, Fiesco) Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala di Milano 4:37 10. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act 1 - *Il Doge vien* (Gabriele, Fiesco, Doge, Paolo, Amelia) Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala di Milano 3:50 11. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act 1 - *"Orfanelle il tetto umile" "Figlia! ... a tal nome io palpito"* (Amelia) Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala di Milano 9:39 12. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act 1 - *Che rispose?* (Paolo, Doge, Pietro) Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala di Milano 1:11 13. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act 1 - *Messeri, il re di Tartaria* (Doge, Paolo, Pietro, Gabriele, AMelia, Fiesco, Coro) Romano Gandolfi 7:00 14. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act 1 - *Ferischi!* (Amelia, Doge, Coro) Romano Gandolfi 0:56 15. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act 1 - *Amelia, di come fosti rapita* (Doge, Amelia, Gabriele, Paolo, Pietro, Fiesco, Coro) Romano Gandolfi 2:33 16. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act 1 - *Plebe! Patrizi!* (Doge, Amelia, Fiesco, Gabriele, Paolo, Pietro, Coro) Romano Gandolfi 5:02 17. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act 1 - *Ecco la spada* (Gabriele, Doge, Paolo, Amelia, Fiesco, Pietro, Coro) Romano Gandolfi 4:31 CD2 1. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act 2 - *Quei due vedesti?* (Paolo, Pietro) Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala di Milano 2:38 2. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act 2 - *Prigioniero in qual loco m'adduci?* (Fiesco, Paolo) Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala di Milano 1:51 3. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act 2 - *Udisti? ... Vil disegno!* (Paolo, Gabriele) Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala di Milano 5:48 4. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act 2 - *Tu qui? ... Amelia!* (Amelia, Gabriele) Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala di Milano 4:31 5. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act 2 - *Figlia? ... Si afflitto, o padre mio?* (Doge, Amelia) Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala di Milano 5:57 6. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act 2 - *Oh! Amelia ... ami ... un nemico* (Doge, Gabriele, Amelia) Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala di Milano 6:56 7. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act 2 - *All'armi, all'armi, o Liguri* (Coro, Amelia, Gabriele, Doge) Romano Gandolfi 1:19 8. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act

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3 - *Evviva il Doge!* (Coro, Capitano, Fiesco, Paolo) Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala di Milano 6:54 9. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act 3 - *M'ardon le tempia* (Doge, Fiesco) Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala di Milano 7:14 10. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act 3 - *Piango, perché mi parla* (Fiesco, Doge) Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala di Milano 3:49 11. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act 3 - *chi veggo?* (Amelia, Doge, Gabriele, Fiesco) Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala di Milano 2:43 12. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* / Act 3 - *Gran Dio, li benedici Romano Gandolfi* 7:26
Simon Boccanegra - Piero Cappuccilli Jacopo Fiesco - Nicolai Ghiaurov Amelia Grimaldi - Mirella Freni Gabriele Adorno - José Carreras Paolo Albiani - José van Dam Pietro - Giovanni Foiani Un'ancella - Maria Fausta Galamini Un capitano dei balestrieri - Antonio Savastano
Coro e Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala Claudio Abbado – conductor

In 1856, Verdi agreed to write a new opera for Teatro la Fenice in Venice. Although his thoughts again turned to Shakespeare's *King Lear*, Verdi finally decided that Antonio Gutierrez's *Simon Bocanegra* would be a better subject for the Venetian public. Francesco Piave wrote the basic libretto, but because Verdi was in Paris at the time, Giuseppe Montanelli provided the changes which Verdi required. At the premiere on March 12, 1857, the libretto was universally criticized as being nearly unintelligible. The music also failed to please the public: they found it too declamatory and without melody. In 1880, Verdi began to work on a total revision of the opera with Arrigo Boito providing the new text. Every scene except the second act has many minor changes to the score, but the primary change was the addition of the council chamber scene in Act One. Boito wanted to make more changes, but Verdi stood firm in his decision not to rewrite the entire work despite his admiration for Boito's new text. Because of this, Boito requested that his name not be placed on the title page. The opera was certainly more successful at the March 24, 1881, premiere of the revised version, but the public still found the opera gloomy, and it has never found its way into the central repertoire.

The music of *Simon Boccanegra* is very different from most of Verdi's other operas. This is his first opera without a prelude or overture (although the 1857 version did have a prelude). The curtain rises immediately on the prologue with the action taking place 25 years before the rest of the opera. The first scene of Act One is dominated by an aria for Amelia and one of Verdi's great father-daughter duets. The entire scene in the council chamber is of the highest order. Remember that this section was entirely new and was written just before *Otello*. The second act is not nearly up to this level, as can be expected since it was left nearly intact as first composed. The tenor in this opera is really of secondary importance, although he does have a lovely aria in "*Senyo avvampar nell'anima*." It is interesting to note that the title character does not have an aria which is easily pulled from the opera for concert and recital use, yet *Boccanegra* appears in nearly every scene of the opera. By this time, Verdi had completely dispensed with the two-part aria with cabaletta style, and all of the arias are used to move the action forward rather than comment on what has happened. The recitative preceding Fiesco's "*Il lacerato spirito*" sounds unconvincing within the context of the whole opera because this is the only remaining example

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of recitative in the older style. All other such passages were revised in 1881. Given the proper cast of singing-actors, Simon Boccanegra is one of Verdi's most dramatic operas. At its best, this opera can stand comparison with its predecessor, Aida, and its follower, Otello. ---Richard LeSueur

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