

SPOTIFY SERIES: Great Singers in Palm Beach Opera History

Curated by James Barbato, Director of Artistic Administration

Over the past 59 seasons, Palm Beach Opera audiences have enjoyed performances by many of the world's greatest singers. In this Spotify Series, we celebrate our company's artistic heritage with four playlists that feature these exceptional artists in some of their best commercial recordings. Each week, we highlight 10 singers from one period in PBO history.

WEEK #1 - PBO in the Csonka Era (1962-1983)



Austrian conductor Paul Csonka was Palm Beach Opera's Artistic Director for the company's first 22 years, a period in which the company swiftly grew to attract international stars, including Beverly Sills and Robert Merrill. Csonka was already a distinguished musician when he was approached to lead the company's inaugural performance of *La traviata* in 1962, having become a celebrity in Cuba for bringing the Opera Nacional de Havana to prominence from 1938-1962, before fleeing to Miami shortly after Castro's rise to power. Coincidentally, his move to Florida was the second political relocation of his life – his musical career began with the founding of an Opera Guild in Salzburg, which was giving performances on tour in the US during the Nazi annexation of Austria.

Click here to listen: [Palm Beach Opera History, WEEK #1](#)

1. Frank Guarrera – Largo al factotum (Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia*)

1968 *La traviata* (Germont)

1971 *Rigoletto* (Rigoletto)

1972 *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Figaro)

1976 *Die Fledermaus* (Dr. Falke)

1976 *Cavalleria rusticana* (Alfio)

1976 *I paglacci* (Silvio)

2. Licia Albanese – In quelle trine morbide (Puccini's *Manon Lescaut*)

1968 *La traviata* (Violetta)

3. Daniele Barioni – Or son sei mesi (Puccini's *La fanciulla del West*)

1968 *La traviata* (Alfredo)

4. Roberta Peters – Der Hölle Rache (Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*)

1969 *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Lucia)

1972 *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Rosina)

1988 *L'elisir d'amore* (Adina)

5. Norman Treigle – Scintille, diamant (Offenbach's *Les contes d'Hoffmann*)

1973 *Faust* (Méphistophélès)

1974 *Le nozze di Figaro* (Figaro)

6. Giuseppe Campora – E lucevan le stelle (Puccini's *Tosca*)

1969 *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Edgardo)

1970 *Carmen* (Don José)

1972 *La bohème* (Rodolfo)

1974 *Madama Butterfly* (Pinkerton)

1975 *Tosca* (Cavaradossi)

1976 *I pagliacci* (Canio)

1977 *The Merry Widow* (Danilo)

1978 *Manon* (des Grieux)

1979 *Un ballo in maschera* (Riccardo)

1980 *La bohème* (Rodolfo)

7. Robert Merrill – Votre toast (Bizet's *Carmen*)

1970 *Carmen* (Escamillo)

1976 *I pagliacci* (Tonio)

8. Beverly Sills – Sempre libera (Verdi's *La traviata*)

1975 *La traviata* (Violetta)

1977 *La fille du régiment* (Marie)

1979 *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Rosina)

9. Alan Titus – Aprite un po' (Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*)

1979 *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Figaro)

10. Cristina Deutekom - No! giusta causa non è (Verdi's *I Lombardi*)

1981 *Norma* (Norma)

***NEW* SPOTIFY SERIES:** “Great Singers in Palm Beach Opera History,” curated by Jim Barbato, Director of Artistic Administration

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In WEEK #1, we celebrate Csonka Era (1962-1983). Paul Csonka was Palm Beach Opera’s Artistic Director for the company’s first 22 years. You can download the complete LISTENING GUIDE or go directly to the PLAYLIST.

This week, in the spirit of looking back, our general director has added some of his favorite operas that Palm Beach Opera has produced over its nearly 60-year history on his playlist. You can listen to his list here ([General Director David Walker's Playlist](#)) and find all of our music and playlists on [Palm Beach Opera's Spotify profile](#).