

Time: 10:30-noon

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Topic: **Happy 100th Birthday, Maria Callas!**

I. Introductions and Announcements

- A. Interest in attending NJ Symphony in New Brunswick, 2023-24: Selection of concert for group attendance
- B. Music Appreciation webpage: <https://williamrfernekes.com/music-appreciation-series>

II. Who was Maria Callas?

- A. Maria Anna Cecilia Sofia Kalogeropoulos, Dec. 2, 1923-Sept. 16, 1977
- B. Born in NY City, died in Paris, France
- C. Studied at the Athens Conservatory
- D. Parents separated when her mother took Maria and her sister in 1937 to Athens.
- E. Maria's relationship with her mother was problematic. As Callas herself said in these excerpts from two interview: (Source, Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maria_Callas)

"My sister was slim and beautiful and friendly, and my mother always preferred her. I was the ugly duckling, fat and clumsy and unpopular. It is a cruel thing to make a child feel ugly and unwanted... I'll never forgive her for taking my childhood away. During all the years I should have been playing and growing up, I was singing or making money. Everything I did for them was mostly good and everything they did to me was mostly bad."

In 1957, she told Chicago radio host Norman Ross Jr., "There must be a law against forcing children to perform at an early age. Children should have a wonderful childhood. They should not be given too much responsibility."

- F. Married Italian industrialist Giovanni Battista Meneghini in 1949; their marriage ended in 1959; she had begun a relationship with Aristotle Onassis in 1957
- G. Her relationship with Onassis ended in 1968, when Onassis married Jacqueline Kennedy. Callas died in Paris in 1977, isolated and heartbroken that Onassis had rejected her.

III. Great Roles of Callas

- A. Bel Canto Repertory: Bellini's Norma, Donizetti's Lucia di Lammermoor, Rossini, Il Barbiere di Siviglia
- B. Dramatic Roles: Tosca, Verdi's Macbeth, Cherubini's Medea, Bizet's Carmen, Verdi's La Traviata

Supplementary Resources

A. Biography of Callas: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maria_Callas

B. Films

1. Callas, A Documentary Plus Bonus, Bel Canto Society BCS-DO194
2. Maria by Callas, Sony Pictures Classics, Blu-Ray 55375
3. Tosca: 1964 London (Act 2), EMI Recordings.

C. YouTube

1. Carmen, Habanera, 1962:
<https://youtu.be/EseMHR6VEM0?si=2d7huHwQzFI8NwF->
2. Maria Callas in Hamburg, May 15, 1959 (Full concert)
https://youtu.be/_mkLcgZ3qXI?si=5Gkn1vPSeyZogVje
3. BBC Documentary on Callas, "Reputations"
https://youtu.be/cyQWdDwCmyg?si=nJeMAh7P_89q3OTk
4. Becoming Callas: What Made Her So Special?
https://youtu.be/YT3RsEKZYV8?si=pFosRxuWoT_skX4L
5. The Art of Soprano Maria Callas-Documentary
https://youtu.be/ZL7-sfjdzTw?si=odLeIKcgqAiA_aXh

D. Museum

1. Maria Callas Museum, Athens: Website <https://mariacallasmuseum.gr/en/>

E. Other Websites

1. Warner Music Website: <https://www.maria-callas.com/en/>