

New York Times  
January 27, 1967

## Ettore Bastianini Is Dead at 43; Baritone Performed With Met

**Sang Roles in Last 4 Years  
While Stricken With Cancer  
—Triumphed With Callas**

SIRMIONE, Italy, Jan. 26 (AP)—Ettore Bastianini, a leading operatic baritone, died last night at a clinic in this Lake Garda resort. He was 43 years old.

Mr. Bastianini sang several seasons with New York's Metropolitan Opera.

### A Courageous Voice

Mr. Bastianini had been suffering from cancer of the vocal cords and epiglottis for four years, but he would not allow his affliction to be made public while he was alive, his physician, Louis Perrotta, said in New York yesterday.

After the condition was discovered, Mr. Bastianini continued to sing with a single vocal cord and a paralyzed diaphragm, until his final appearance at the Metropolitan Opera as Rodrigo in Verdi's "Don Carlo" on Nov. 11, 1965.

Acts of physical courage were common in his career. In his youth, the singer often competed in the Palio, the unusual horse race run on the cobblestones, bareback, around Siena's medieval piazza. Jockeys are permitted anything short of pulling a gun on their rivals.

At 18, he was a mechanic with the Italian Air Force in Africa. When it became clear that Italy was losing in World War II, he and some friends, with only a sketchy knowledge of flying, stole a plane and flew it back to Italy.

Mr. Bastianini, a choir singer, went to Florence to study as a basso. During a season in Cairo, he became a baritone. Before he came to the Metropolitan for the 1953-54 season, he had sung widely in Italy and had been a member of the La Scala Opera of Milan. In 1955 he co-starred with Maria Callas in a memorable production of "La Trav-



Sedge Leblang

Ettore Bastianini

ata" at La Scala, staged by Luchino Visconti.

He also sang in Bellini's "Il Pirata" and Verdi's "Un Ballo in Maschera" with Miss Callas.

Harold C. Schonberg, critic of The New York Times, wrote on Dec. 26, 1953 of Mr. Bastianini's Count di Luna in "Il Trovatore": "He was a commanding figure on stage, a young-looking threatening count who moved assuredly through his stage business. His singing was up to the par established by his previous appearances."

On Dec. 3, 1955, Mr. Schonberg in "Andrea Chénier," that "here is a fine vocal technician and a completely natural actor, one with presence and dignity on the stage."

Of his final performance at the Met, two years after he discovered his illness, Theodore Strongin wrote in The Times that "Ettore Bastianini as Rodrigo was vocally steady throughout and always convincing as an actor."

Mr. Bastianini and his wife were separated. They had a son.

The singer was given a funeral service in Milan yesterday and on Saturday morning there will be another in his native Siena. His Metropolitan Opera colleagues, Carlo Bergonzi and Franco Corelli, will sing.