

ANDREAS BOCELLI

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Bocelli has been said to be the greatest tenor in the world and the most popular. It is also claimed that he is the greatest tenor of all time.

Such remarks are extreme and untrue. Opinion is one thing: truth can be completely different.

He has been called a classical crossover artist which is one who has deserted classical music of other styles. He may sing excerpts from operas but he is not a classical singer. Neither is he an opera singer although he has tried in that genre and even recorded some operas but his performances have never been successful. In fact, quite the reverse.



He has performed with some good singers and also with very poor singers usually from the pop world.

He was born in Pisa on 22 September 1955. From birth, he had poor eyesight and he went blind at the age of 12 in a soccer accident.

He did not become active with his singing career until 1992 when he was 34 years old. Two years later, he won the Sanremo Festival and became very popular in the world of light and easy-listening music. His records sold exceptionally well and at one time he held top place in the US Classical Charts... although he was not a classical singer. Can you envisage him singing Tristan or Don Carlos or Die Mullerin by Schubert? Can you expect to see him in oratorio in say Messiah or The Dream of Gerontius?

He is not a classical singer.

Bocelli plays keyboards, flute, saxophone, trombone, harp, harmonica, guitar, drums and melodica.

He married Ennica Cenzatti on 27 June 1992. They have two sons. Amos was born in February 1995 and Matteo in October 1997.

In 2006, he was made a Grand Officer of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic and, in 2010, honoured with a star on Hollywood's Hall of Fame... but these honours do not prove a great ability but, rather, a popularity. Older women apparently swoon over him, but one wonders why!

His marriage failed but he is not divorced and now has a girl friend, Veronica Berti, with whom he lives and who is expecting his child in the Spring of 2012.

While we can be sympathetic to someone who is blind, we must not equate sympathy with ability or greatness! He has expressed his support of experiments on animals to find cures for illness and blindness.

He has been very successful financially with massive sales of his CDs which has brought a lot of money in for his record company, agent and himself.

But it does not alter the facts that he is not a classical singer, and he is not a good singer.

Here are some of the comments of senior professional singers and other experts:

He has:

poor phrasing, uneven tone, lack of technique

lacks the technique to support and project his sound; has to use microphones.

his sustained notes wobble

his soft high notes also wobble and are painfully weak

inadequate breath control forces him to clip notes prematurely

has trouble with basic things

diction is unclear and very poor

has an unvarying coarse tone

certainly not a good singer

opera performances were unconvincing and very poor. No wonder opera houses do not employ him.

voice has a thin ghastly quality

always has wayward intonation

no phrase is properly shaped

has every technical shortcoming

oddly inexpressive

sings Handel and Gluck in the same style as pop songs; has no sense of style

he squeezes notes rather than sings them.

In a recent BBC Songs of Praise, he sang Ave Maria. It was awful. There was no variation in tone, no expression, there was poor breath control, wobbly notes etc. It was simply bad and excruciatingly nasal.

He is not a classical singer. He is not a good singer. People who admire him for his looks, have sympathy for his disability and shallow women who fancy him do not make him a good singer.

Those who claim he is a great singer and the finest tenor of all time are obviously no real musicians

Recently, we heard the comedian Ken Dodd sing. He is not a great singer but, at least, he was in tune!

Of course, there are great singers in light music and easy listening music such as the marvellous Howard Keel!

In the classical world, there have been many great tenors Caruso, Melchior, Bjorling, Wifred Brown, Pavarotti (who befriended Bocelli), Carreras, Domingo to name a few. Bocelli cannot compare with any of these.

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