

FOR RELEASE 6:30 P.M., EDT
Sunday, September 25, 1966

REMARKS BY MRS. LYNDON B. JOHNSON
OPENING NIGHT OF THE METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE
SPECIAL TELEVISION PROGRAM -- BELL TELEPHONE HOUR

Office of the Press Secretary
to Mrs. Johnson

THE WHITE HOUSE

This is a great glittering golden night to remember! And I am proud to be here at the opening of this new opera house in its magnificent Lincoln Center setting.

Truly, the Metropolitan is living up to the tradition of Caruso, Scotti, Melba and all the other great artists who made the Metropolitan one of the great companies of the world.

The new building is breathtaking. I am enchanted by the Chagall murals which combine fantasy and delicacy of coloring.

Marc Chagall has said that they are an expression of his gratitude to America.

If you want a heart-warming example of the American melting pot, just look at these names in the opera program tonight! Like our country, our opera house is a magnet for people of genius from the world over.

And, of course, it gives opportunity to the finest of our own native-born talent -- like Leontyne Price, our radiant star tonight. She began her musical career singing in a little church in Laurel, Mississippi. Now she has reached the loftiest heights a singer can aspire to: helping to baptise the new Metropolitan Opera House by singing the leading role in Samuel Barber's new opera, "Anthony and Cleopatra."

I have enjoyed too, hearing Jess Thomas and Justino Diaz as Caesar and Antony in this opulent production of one of the most famous stories in history.

Tonight is truly a milestone in music.

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