
A History Of Opera The Last Four Hundred Years

Opera & Ideas

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TYRONE MCLEAN

Opera & Ideas Princeton University Press
In *Opera: A History in Documents*, Piero Weiss presents a wide-ranging, vivid, and carefully researched tour of operatic history. A unique anthology of primary source material, this survey includes 115 chronologically organized selections--passages from private letters, public decrees, descriptions of first performances, portions of libretti,

literary criticism and satire, newspaper reviews and articles, and poetry and fiction--from opera's late Renaissance infancy through modern times. This first-hand testimony allows students to experience the history of opera as eyewitnesses, offering an immediacy and validity unmatched by standard histories. Readers are transported to a Medici wedding in sixteenth-century Florence, to the Haymarket Theatre for a performance of Handel's *Rinaldo*, to Mozart at work on *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, and to Bertolt Brecht's

writing desk, among many other landmarks in opera's history. Weiss expertly guides students, providing highly accessible headnotes to each selection that both contextualize the excerpts and position them within the broader historical narrative. In addition, he offers original translations of more than half of the selections in the book, many of which appear here in English for the first time. Stage settings, costumes, portraits, contemporary playbills, and other illustrations enliven the text and help to recreate the feel of the era under discussion. *Opera: A History in Documents* is an intrinsically lively text that will enrich college courses on opera and delight any music-loving reader. [Remaking the Song](#) Univ of California Press

"Libretto-bashing has a distinguished tradition in the blood sport of opera," writes Arthur Groos in the introduction to this broad survey of critical approaches to that much-maligned genre. To examine, and to challenge, the long-standing prejudice against libretti and the scholarly tradition that has, until recently, reiterated it, Groos and Roger Parker have commissioned thirteen stimulating essays by musicologists, literary critics, and historians. Taken as a whole, the volume demonstrates that libretti are now very much within the purview of contemporary humanistic scholarship. Libretti pose questions of intertextuality, transposition of genre, and reception history. They invite a broad spectrum of contemporary reading strategies ranging from the formalistic to

the feminist. And as texts for music they raise issues in the relation between the two mediums and their respective traditions. Reading Opera will be of value to anyone with a serious interest in opera and contemporary opera criticism. The essays cover the period from the early nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries, with a particular focus on works of the later nineteenth century. The contributors are Carolyn Abbate, William Ashbrook, Katherine Bergeron, Caryl Emerson, Nelly Furman, Sander L. Gilman, Arthur Groos, James A. Hepokoski, Jurgen Maehder, Roger Parker, Paul Robinson, Christopher Winkle, and Susan Youens. Originally published in 1988. The Princeton Legacy Library uses the latest print-on-demand technology to again make available

previously out-of-print books from the distinguished backlist of Princeton University Press. These editions preserve the original texts of these important books while presenting them in durable paperback and hardcover editions. The goal of the Princeton Legacy Library is to vastly increase access to the rich scholarly heritage found in the thousands of books published by Princeton University Press since its founding in 1905.

The Gilded Stage Princeton University Press

Publisher Description

A Short History of Opera A&C Black
"In this elegantly constructed study of the early decades of public opera, the conflicts and cooperation of poets, composers, managers, designers, and

singers—producing the art form that was soon to sweep the world and that has been dominant ever since—are revealed in their first freshness."—Andrew Porter

"This will be a standard work on the subject of the rise of Venetian opera for decades. Rosand has provided a decisive contribution to the reshaping of the entire subject. . . . She offers a profoundly new view of baroque opera based on a solid documentary and historical-critical foundation. The treatment of the artistic self-consciousness and professional activities of the librettists, impresarios, singers, and composers is exemplary, as is the examination of their reciprocal relations. This work will have a positive effect not only on studies of 17th-century, but on the history of opera in

general."—Lorenzo Bianconi
Charles Garnier's Paris Opéra Routledge

An illustrated retelling of the plots of fifteen well-known operas.

Space Opera Hyperion

Covering over 1500 singers from the birth of opera to the present day, this marvelous volume will be an essential resource for all serious opera lovers and an indispensable companion to the enormously successful Grove Book of Operas. The most comprehensive guide to opera singers ever produced, this volume offers an alphabetically arranged collection of authoritative biographies that range from Marion Anderson (the first African American to perform at the Met) to Benedict Zak (the classical tenor and close friend and colleague of Mozart). Readers will find fascinating

articles on such opera stars as Maria Callas and Enrico Caruso, Ezio Pinza and Fyodor Chaliapin, Lotte Lehmann and Jenny Lind, Lily Pons and Luciano Pavarotti. The profiles offer basic information such as birth date, vocal style, first debut, most memorable roles, and much more. But these articles often go well beyond basic biographical information to offer colorful portraits of the singer's personality and vocal style, plus astute evaluations of their place in operatic history and many other intriguing observations. Many entries also include suggestions for further reading, so that anyone interested in a particular performer can explore their life and career in more depth. In addition, there are indexes of singers by voice type and by opera role premiers.

The articles are mostly drawn from the acclaimed Grove Music Online and have been fully revised, and the book is further supplemented by more than 40 specially commissioned articles on contemporary singers. A superb new guide from the first name in opera reference, The Grove Book of Opera Singers is a lively and authoritative work, beautifully illustrated with color and black-and-white pictures. It is an essential volume--and the perfect gift--for opera lovers everywhere.

Opera in Theory and Practice, Image and Myth Penguin UK

2019 HUGO AWARD FINALIST, BEST NOVEL The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy meets the joy and glamour of Eurovision in bestselling author Catherynne M. Valente's science fiction

spectacle, where sentient races compete for glory in a galactic musical contest...and the stakes are as high as the fate of planet Earth. A century ago, the Sentience Wars tore the galaxy apart and nearly ended the entire concept of intelligent space-faring life. In the aftermath, a curious tradition was invented—something to cheer up everyone who was left and bring the shattered worlds together in the spirit of peace, unity, and understanding. Once every cycle, the great galactic civilizations gather for the Metagalactic Grand Prix—part gladiatorial contest, part beauty pageant, part concert extravaganza, and part continuation of the wars of the past. Species far and wide compete in feats of song, dance and/or whatever facsimile of these can

be performed by various creatures who may or may not possess, in the traditional sense, feet, mouths, larynxes, or faces. And if a new species should wish to be counted among the high and the mighty, if a new planet has produced some savage group of animals, machines, or algae that claim to be, against all odds, sentient? Well, then they will have to compete. And if they fail? Sudden extermination for their entire species. This year, though, humankind has discovered the enormous universe. And while they expected to discover a grand drama of diplomacy, gunships, wormholes, and stoic councils of aliens, they have instead found glitter, lipstick, and electric guitars. Mankind will not get to fight for its destiny—they must sing.

Decibel Jones and the Absolute Zeroes have been chosen to represent their planet on the greatest stage in the galaxy. And the fate of Earth lies in their ability to rock.

The Story of the Metropolitan Opera, 1883-1950 Princeton University Press

The History of Italian Opera marks the first time a team of scholars has worked together to investigate the entire Italian operatic tradition, rather than limiting its focus to major composers and their masterworks. Including both musicologists and historians of other arts, the contributors approach opera not only as a distinctive musical genre but also as a form of extravagant theater and a complex social phenomenon. This sixth volume in the series centers on the sociological and critical aspects of opera

in Italy, considering the art in the context of an Italian literary and cultural canon rarely revealed in English and American studies. In its six chapters, contributors survey critics' changing attitudes toward opera over several centuries, trace the evolution of formal conventions among librettists, explore the historical relationships between opera and Italian literature, and examine opera's place in Italian popular and national culture. In perhaps the volume's most striking contribution, German scholar Carl Dahlouse offers his most important statement on the dramaturgy of opera.

A Night at the Opera Princeton University Press

The Metropolitan has stood among the grandest of opera companies since its

birth in 1883. Tracing the offstage/onstage workings of this famed New York institution, Charles Affron and Mirella Jona Affron tell how the Met became and remains a powerful actor on the global cultural scene. In this first new history of the company in thirty years, each of the chronologically sequenced chapters surveys a composer or a slice of the repertoire and brings to life dominant personalities and memorable performances of the time. From the opening night Faust to the recent controversial production of Wagner's "Ring," Grand Opera is a remarkable account of management and audience response to the push and pull of tradition and reinvention. Spanning the decades between the Gilded Age and the age of new media, this story of the Met

concludes by tipping its hat to the hugely successful "Live in HD" simulcasts and other twenty-first-century innovations. Grand Opera's appeal extends far beyond the large circle of opera enthusiasts. Drawing on unpublished documents from the Metropolitan Opera Archives, reviews, recordings, and much more, this richly detailed book looks at the Met in the broad context of national and international issues and events.

Opera in Seventeenth-Century Venice
Hal Leonard Corporation

Opera is the fastest growing of all the performing arts, attracting audiences of all ages who are enthralled by the gorgeous music, vivid drama, and magnificent production values. If you've decided that the time has finally come to

learn about opera and discover for yourself what it is about opera that sends your normally reserved friends into states of ecstatic abandon, this is the book for you. Opera 101 is recognized as the standard text in English for anyone who wants to become an opera lover--a clear, friendly, and truly complete handbook to learning how to listen to opera, whether on the radio, on recordings, or live at the opera house. Fred Plotkin, an internationally respected writer and teacher about opera who for many years was performance manager of the Metropolitan Opera, introduces the reader (whatever his or her level of musical knowledge) to all the elements that make up opera, including: A brief, entertaining history of opera; An explanation of key operatic concepts,

from vocal types to musical conventions; Hints on the best way to approach the first opera you attend and how to best understand what is happening both offstage and on; Lists of recommended books and recordings, and the most complete traveler's guide to opera houses around the world. The major part of Opera 101 is devoted to an almost minute-by-minute analysis of eleven key operas, ranging from Verdi's thunderous masterpiece Rigoletto and Puccini's electrifying Tosca through works by Mozart, Donizetti, Rossini, Offenbach, Tchaikovsky, and Wagner, to the psychological complexities of Richard Strauss's Elektra. Once you have completed Opera 101, you will be prepared to see and hear any opera you encounter, thanks to this book's

unprecedentedly detailed and enjoyable method of revealing the riches of opera. The Oxford Illustrated History of Opera Modern Library

In her new book, Carolyn Abbate considers the nature of operatic performance and the acoustic images of performance present in operas from Monteverdi to Ravel. Paying tribute to music's realization by musicians and singers, she argues that operatic works are indelibly bound to the contingency of live singing, playing, and staging. She seeks a middle ground between operas as abstractions and performance as the phenomenon that brings opera into being. Weaving between opera's "facts of life" and a series of works including *The Magic Flute*, *Parsifal*, and *Pelléas*, Abbate explores a spectrum of attitudes

towards musical performance, which range from euphoric visions of singers as creators to uncanny images of musicians as lifeless objects that have been resuscitated by scripts. In doing so, she touches upon several critical issues: the Wagner problem; coloratura, virtuosity, and their critics; the implications of disembodied voice in opera and film; mechanical music; the mortality of musical sound; and opera's predilection for scenes positing mysterious unheard music. An intersection between transcendence and intense physical grounding, she asserts, is a quintessential element of the genre, one source of the rapture that operas and their singers can engender in listeners. *In Search of Opera* mediates between an experience of opera that can be

passionate and intuitive, and an intellectual engagement with opera as a complicated aesthetic phenomenon. Marrying philosophical speculation to historical detail, Abbate contemplates a central dilemma: the ineffability of music and the diverse means by which a fugitive art is best expressed in words. All serious devotees of opera will want to read this imaginative book by a music-critical virtuoso.

Sing Me a Story Cornell University Press
Fascinating and highly readable, this is the definitive social history of the world's most romantic, flamboyant, glamorous, and politically influential art-form: opera. From its beginnings in the Renaissance cities of northern Italy, opera has permeated through Europe, America, and beyond, becoming a global business

in the digital age. This history unwraps the story of opera from the charm and chaos of Mozart's Vienna to Frederick the Great's Berlin. It covers the lure of fin-de-siècle Paris, the rough and tumble of the Australian outback, and the new world of the Americas—colorful backdrops to the always dramatic, sometimes tragic, sometimes hilarious episodes that make up this rich and fascinating story.

The Grove Book of Opera Singers Univ of California Press

“The best single volume ever written on the subject, such is its range, authority, and readability.”—Times Literary Supplement
Why has opera transfixed and fascinated audiences for centuries? Carolyn Abbate and Roger Parker answer this question in their “effervescent,

witty” (Die Welt, Germany) retelling of the history of opera, examining its development, the musical and dramatic means by which it communicates, and its role in society. Now with an expanded examination of opera as an institution in the twenty-first century, this “lucid and sweeping” (Boston Globe) narrative explores the tensions that have sustained opera over four hundred years: between words and music, character and singer, inattention and absorption. Abbate and Parker argue that, though the genre’s most popular and enduring works were almost all written in a distant European past, opera continues to change the viewer—physically, emotionally, intellectually—with its enduring power.

The Story of Opera Univ of California

Press

This text tells how opera, steeped in European aristocratic tradition, was transplanted into the democratic cultural environment of America. It includes vignettes of productions, personalities, audiences and theatres throughout the country from 1735 to the present day.

Reading Opera Simon and Schuster

By making systematic use of the mostly unpublished Opera Archive, Mead fills in the missing links to previous investigations and unlocks the significance of this seminal masterpiece.

[A History of Opera](#) Thames & Hudson

Opera is in many ways the most extraordinary artistic medium of the last four hundred years. Prohibitively expensive and patently unrealistic, it can nevertheless paint the human passions

with astonishing power and drama. This book, the first new, full-length, single-volume history of opera for more than a generation provokes in-depth discussions of many works by the greatest opera composers, from Monteverdi, Handel and Mozart, to Verdi and Wagner, to Strauss, Puccini, Berg, and Britten. There are lively discussions of opera's social, political and literary background, its economic circumstances and the almost continual polemics that have accompanied its development through the centuries. Central to the book is an exploration of the tensions that have always sustained and enlivened opera. Abbate and Parker examine the problems that opera has faced in the last half century, when new works - which were once opera's life-

blood - have shrunk to a tiny minority, have largely failed to find a permanent place in the repertoire. Yet the book's final message is one of celebration. Even if the majority of opera's most popular and enduring works were written in what is now a remote European past, in circumstances very different from our own, and the viability of contemporary opera is ever more in question, opera as an art form remains extraordinarily buoyant and challenging. It continues to transform people physically, emotionally, and intellectually, and to articulate human experience in ways no other art form can match.

The History of the Wexford Festival Opera, 1951-2021 University of Chicago Press

(Limelight). This first-of-its-kind, highly

entertaining, and carefully researched account reveals how nearly 200 operas by leading composers and librettists have portrayed the major events and personalities of more than 2000 years of history. In a continuous and absorbing narrative, the book sweeps from Roman times to 1820, with a cast of characters that includes Julius Caesar, Antony and Cleopatra, Attila, Charlemagne, Henry VIII, Elizabeth I, Catherine the Great, Napoleon and hundreds more. All are seen as the figures historians generally perceive them to have been and as their on-stage counterparts, created and re-imagined by some of opera's greatest artists.

Opera and Modern Culture W. W. Norton & Company
 “Delightful and anti-

reverential”—Sunday Times (London)
 With an encyclopedic knowledge of opera and a delightful dash of irreverence, Sir Denis Forman throws open the world of opera—its structure, composers, conductors, and artists—in this hugely informative guide. *A Night at the Opera* dissects the eighty-three most popular operas recorded on compact disc, from Cilea's *Adriana Lecouvreur* to Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*. For each opera, Sir Denis details the plot and cast of characters, awarding stars to parts that are “worth looking out for,” “really good,” or, occasionally, “stunning.” He goes on to tell the history of each opera and its early reception. Finally, each work is graded from alpha to gamma (although the Ring cycle gets an “X”), and Sir Denis has no qualms about

voicing his opinion: the first act of *Fidelio* is "a bit of a mess," while the last scene of *Don Giovanni* "towers above the comic finales of *Figaro* and *Così* and whether or not [it] is Mozart's greatest opera, it is certainly his most powerful finale." The guide also presents brief biographies of the great composers, conductors, and singers. A glossary of musical terms is included, as well as *Operatica*, or the essential elements of opera, from the proper place and style of the audience's applause (and boos) to the use of subtitles. *A Night at the Opera* is for connoisseurs and neophytes alike. It will entertain and inform, delight and (perhaps) infuriate, providing a subject for lively debate and ready reference for years to come.

Phaidon Book of the Opera Univ of

California Press

"Outstanding. Kramer's scholarship is as impeccable as his insights are at once original and consistently brilliant. The presentation is thorough, and the argument is well anchored in theory, history and musical detail. Kramer's discourse is crystalline and jargon free. The connections from one chapter to another are seamless. The story is, simply stated, a page-turner."—Richard Leppert, editor of *Theodor W. Adorno's Essays on Music* "Lawrence Kramer's *Opera and Modern Culture* is remarkable both for its imaginative exploration of important issues and for the rich array of the author's engagements with other thinkers. In particular, by decentering without dismissing the composer (who could dismiss Wagner?), he makes works

of reception—productions of Salome on video, uses of the Lohengrin Prelude by Charlie Chaplin and W.E.B. Du Bois—central texts in the process of understanding the phenomenon of opera, rather than footnotes to an idea that he really does dismiss: 'the work itself.'"—James Parakilas, author of Piano

Roles: 300 Years of Life with the Piano and Introduction to Opera (forthcoming) Singers of Italian Opera Penguin UK Arranged chronologically with an index of operas and a separate index of composers, librettists and literary sources.

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