

## Leonoras Last Act Essays In Verdian Discourse Princeton Studies In Opera

Arthur Sullivan (1842–1900) was Victorian Britain's most celebrated and popular composer, whose music to this day reaches a wider audience than that of any of his contemporaries. Yet the comic operas on which Sullivan's reputation is chiefly based have been consistently belittled or ignored by the British musicological establishment, while his serious works have until recently remained virtually unknown. The time is thus long overdue for scholarly re-engagement with Sullivan. The present book offers a new appraisal of the music of this most notable nineteenth-century British composer, combining close analytical attention to his music with critical consideration of the wider aesthetic and social context to his work. Focusing on key pieces in all the major genres in which Sullivan composed, it includes accounts of his most important serious works – the music to *The Tempest*, the 'Irish' Symphony, *The Golden Legend*, *Ivanhoe* – alongside detailed examination of the celebrated comic operas created with W.S. Gilbert to present a balanced portrayal of Sullivan's musical achievement.

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.

An examination of the female opera singer during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Leading scholars of opera and film explore the many ways these two seemingly unrelated genres have come together from the silent-film era to today.

The first comprehensive study of Verdi's perennially popular opera *Il trovatore*, written by one of the world's great Verdi authorities.

Music, theatre and politics have maintained a long-standing relationship that continues to be strong. The contributions in this volume bridge the conventional chronological division between 'late Romantic' and 'modern' music to thematize a wide array of i

It has long been argued that opera is all about sex. *Siren Songs* is the first collection of articles devoted to exploring the impact of this sexual obsession, and of the power relations that come with it, on the music, words, and staging of opera. Here a distinguished and diverse group of musicologists, literary critics, and feminist scholars address a wide range of fascinating topics--from Salome's striptease to hysteria to jazz and gender--in Italian, English, German, and French operas from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries. The authors combine readings of specific scenes with efforts to situate these musical moments within richly and precisely observed historical contexts. Challenging both formalist categories of musical analysis and the rhetoric that traditionally pits a male composer against the female characters he creates, many of the articles work toward inventing a language for the study of gender and opera. The collection opens with Mary Ann Smart's introduction, which provides an engaging reflection on the state of gender topics in operatic criticism and musicology. It then moves on to a foundational essay on the complex relationships between opera and history by the renowned philosopher and novelist Catherine Clément, a pioneer of feminist opera criticism. Other articles examine the evolution of the "trouser role" as it evolved in the lesbian subculture of fin-de-siècle Paris, the phenomenon of opera seria's "absent mother" as a manifestation of attitudes to the family under absolutism, the invention of a "hystericized voice" in Verdi's *Don Carlos*, and a collaborative discussion of the staging problems posed by the gender politics of Mozart's operas. The contributors are Wye Jamison Allanboork, Joseph Auner, Katherine Bergeron, Philip Brett, Peter Brooks, Catherine Clement, Martha Feldman, Heather Hadlock, Mary Hunter, Linda Hutcheon and Michael Hutcheon, M.D., Lawrence Kramer, Roger Parker, Mary Ann Smart, and Gretchen Wheelock.

*Opera: The Basics* offers an excellent introduction to four centuries of opera. Its easy to follow sections explore topics including: the origins of opera basic terminology the history of major opera genres including: serious opera, comic opera, semi-serious opera and vernacular opera. With key notes, discography and videography, this is the ideal book for students and interested listeners who want to learn more about this important musical genre.

First edition published as: *Giuseppe Verdi: a guide to research*. New York: Garland, 1998.

*Beyond Reason* relates Wagner's works to the philosophical and cultural ideas of his time, centering on the four music dramas he created in the second half of his career: *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, and *Parsifal*. Karol Berger seeks to penetrate the "secret" of large-scale form in Wagner's music dramas and to answer those critics, most prominently Nietzsche, who condemned Wagner for his putative inability to weld small expressive gestures into larger wholes. Organized by individual opera, this is essential reading for both musicologists and Wagner experts.

Leonora's Last Act Essays in Verdian Discourse Princeton University Press

Once musicians such as Mozart were little more than court servants; now they are multimillionaire superstars wielding more power than politicians. How did this extraordinary change come about? Tim Blanning's brilliantly enjoyable book examines how everything from the cult of the romantic to technology and travel all fed the inexorable rise of music in the West, making it the most dominant and ubiquitous of the art forms. Encompassing balladeers, the great composers, jazz legends and rock gods, this is an enthralling story of power, patronage, creativity and

genius.

On 3 May 1810 George Gordon, Lord Byron, swam like the mythic Leander from Sestos on the European side of the Hellespont to Abydos on the Asian shore. The hero of his poem "Don Juan" has lived in "feminine disguise" in the sultan's harem for more than a century. To commemorate Byron's Don Juan, the third volume of the "Ottoman Empire and European Theatre" series focuses on the image of the harem in literature and theatre. Nineteen international contributors explore historical conceptions of the Ottoman harem and seraglio in British, French and South East European sources from the late seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. Contributions by Jennifer L. Airey, Gönül Bakay, Michael Chappell, Anne Greenfield, Isobel Grundy, Bent Holm, Michael Hüttler, Hans Peter Kellner, Emily M. N. Kugler, Andreas Münzmay, Domenica Newell-Amato, Walter Puchner, Marian Gilbert Read, Käthe Springer, Stefanie Steiner, Laura Tunbridge, Himmət Umunc, Hans Ernst Weidinger, Mi Zhou.

Embodying Voice: Singing Verdi, Singing Wagner articulates the process of developing an operatic voice, explaining how and why the training of such a voice is as complex and sophisticated as it is mysterious. This book illustrates how putting together a voice, embodying a sound, and creating a character are vital to an audience's emotional involvement and enjoyment. Moreover, it addresses an imbalance of power between the opera director and the orchestra conductor – ultimately, it is the communicative power of the singer's voice that brings life to an opera, a fact well known by Verdi and Wagner. Embodying Voice highlights the singer's creative agency to be co-creator of the composer's music. It explores the ways in which vocal performance is constructed and controlled, connecting layers of mind and bodily engagement that allow operatic singers to achieve expression beyond the text itself. Further reading, listening, and performance lists are provided at the end of each chapter, complemented by musical examples throughout.

The Operatic Archive: American Opera as History extends the growing interdisciplinary conversation in opera studies by drawing on new research in performance studies and the philosophy of history. Moving beyond traditional aesthetic conceptions of opera, this book argues for opera's powerful potential for historical impact and engagement in late twentieth- and twenty-first-century works by American composers. Considering opera's ability to serve as a vehicle for memory, historical experience, affect, presence, and the historical sublime, this volume demonstrates how opera's ability to represent and evoke historical events and historical experience differs fundamentally from the representations and recreations of other modes (specifically, literary and dramatic representations). Building on the work of performance scholars such as Joseph Roach, Rebecca Schneider, and Diana Taylor, and in consultation with recent debates in the philosophy of history, the book will be of interest to a wide range of scholars and researchers, particularly those working in the areas of opera studies and performance studies.

When Nietzsche dubbed Richard Wagner "the most enthusiastic mimomaniac" ever to exist, he was objecting to a hollowness he felt in the music, a crowding out of any true dramatic impulse by extravagant poses and constant nervous movements. Mary Ann Smart suspects that Nietzsche may have seen and heard more than he realized. In *Mimomania* she takes his accusation as an invitation to listen to Wagner's music—and that of several of his near-contemporaries—for the way it serves to intensify the visible and the enacted. As Smart demonstrates, this productive fusion of music and movement often arises when music forsakes the autonomy so prized by the Romantics to function mimetically, underlining the sighs of a Bellini heroine, for instance, or the authoritarian footsteps of a Verdi baritone. *Mimomania* tracks such effects through readings of operas by Auber, Bellini, Meyerbeer, Verdi, and Wagner. Listening for gestural music, we find resemblance in unexpected places: between the overwrought scenes of supplication in French melodrama of the 1820s and a cluster of late Verdi arias that end with the soprano falling to her knees, or between the mute heroine of Auber's *La Muette de Portici* and the solemn, almost theological pantomimic tableaux Wagner builds around characters such as Sieglinde or Kundry. *Mimomania* shows how attention to gesture suggests a new approach to the representation of gender in this repertoire, replacing aural analogies for voyeurism and objectification with a more specifically musical sense of how music can surround, propel, and animate the body on stage.

In a lively exploration of Jacques Offenbach's final masterpiece, Heather Hadlock shows how *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* summed up not only the composer's career but also a century of Romantic culture. A strange fusion of irony and profundity, frivolity and nightmare, the opera unfolds as a series of dreamlike episodes, peopled by such archetypes as the Poet, the Beautiful Dying Girl, the Automaton, the Courtesan, and the Mesmerist. Hadlock shows how these episodes comprise a collective unconscious. Her analyses touch on topics ranging from the self-reflexive style of the protagonist and the music, to parallels between nineteenth-century discourses of theater and medical science, to fascination with the hysterical female subject. *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* is also examined as both a continuation and a retraction of tendencies in Offenbach's earlier operettas and *opéra-comiques*. Hadlock investigates the political climate of the 1870s that influenced the composer's vision and the reception of his last work. Drawing upon insights from feminist, literary, and cultural theory, she considers how the opera's music and libretto took shape within a complex literary and theatrical tradition. Finally, Hadlock ponders the enigmas posed by the score of this unfinished opera, which has been completed many times and by many different hands since its composer's death shortly before the premiere in 1881. In this book, the "mad loves" that drive *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*--a poet's love, a daughter's love, erotic love, and fatal attraction to music--become figures for the fascination exercised by opera itself.

Opera performances are often radically inventive. Composers' revisions, singers' improvisations, and stage directors' re-imaginings continually challenge our visions of canonical works. But do they go far enough? This elegantly written, beautifully concise book, spanning almost the entire history of opera, reexamines attitudes toward some of our best-loved musical works. It looks at opera's history of multiple visions and revisions and asks a simple question: what exactly is opera? *Remaking the Song*, rich in imaginative answers, considers works by Handel, Mozart, Donizetti, Verdi, Wagner, Puccini, and Berio in order to challenge what many regard as sacrosanct: the opera's musical text. Scholarly tradition favors the idea of great operatic texts permanently inscribed in the canon. Roger Parker, considering examples ranging from Cecilia Bartoli's much-criticized insistence on using Mozart's alternative arias in the *Marriage of Figaro* to Luciano Berio's new ending to Puccini's unfinished *Turandot*, argues that opera is an inherently mutable form, and that all of us—performers, listeners, scholars—should celebrate operatic revisions as a way of opening works to contemporary needs and new pleasures.

In what sense did Shakespeare's representation of the Weird Sisters participate in the rewriting of village witchcraft? Was it likely to "encourage the Sword"? Did opera's specific medial conditions offer

Verdi special opportunities to justify the presence of stage witches more than three centuries later? How valid is the parallel between 19th century opera and the voyeurism of madhouse spectacle? Was Shakespeare's play really engaged in the project of exorcizing Queen Elizabeth's cultural memory? What does Verdi's chorus of Scottish refugees have to do with shifting representations of 'the people'? These are among the questions tackled in this study. It provides the first in-depth comparison of Shakespeare's and Verdi's Macbeth that is written expressly from the perspective of current Shakespearean criticism whilst striving to do justice to the topic's musicological dimension at the same time. Exploring to what extent the play's matrix of possible readings is distinct from Verdi's two operatic versions, the book seeks to relate such differences both to the historical contexts of the works' geneses and to their respective medial conditions. In doing so, it pays particular attention to shifting negotiations of witchcraft, gender, madness, and kingship. The study eventually broadens its discussion to consider other Shakespearean plays and their operatic offshoots, reflecting on some possible relations between historical and medial difference.

Winner of the Academy Award for best dramatic score in 1938, the score for *The Adventures of Robin Hood* is seen by many as the archetypal accompaniment to a Warner Brothers swashbuckler, and it established the score's composer, Erich Wolfgang Korngold, as one of the leading exponents of film score composition at a formative point in its history. In the newest addition to the *Scarecrow Film Score Guides* series, author Ben Winters uses manuscript and archival research to challenge preconceived notions about the score's composer and its authorship. Winters examines Korngold's career, his film scoring techniques, and his engagement with the Hollywood studio system; he examines the film's treatment of the Robin Hood legend, its historical and critical contexts, and its place within the swashbuckler genre and the studio's anti-fascist agenda.

How and why do listeners come over time to 'feel the nation' through particular musical works?

Opera and ballet criticism in early 19th century France are examined in new ways here, with the motivations and beliefs of journalist critics being taken seriously. The essays look at the backgrounds that led critics to write as they did.

Nothing strikes the ear quite like a soprano singing in the sonic stratosphere. Whether thrilling, chilling, or repellent to the listener, the reaction to cascades of coloratura with climaxing high notes is strong. Coloratura-agile, rapid-fire singing-was originally essential for all singers, but its function changed greatly when it became the specialty of particular sopranos over the course of the nineteenth century. The central argument of *Vocal Virtuosity* challenges the historical commonplace that coloratura became an anachronism in nineteenth-century opera. Instead, the book demonstrates that melismas at mid-century were made modern. Coloratura became an increasingly marked musical gesture during the century with a correspondingly more specific dramaturgical function. In exploring this transformation, the book reveals the instigators of this change in vocal practice and examines the historical traces of Parisian singers who were the period's greatest exponents of vertiginous vocality as archetypes of the modern coloratura soprano. The book constructs the historical trajectory of coloratura as it became gendered the provenance of the female singer, while also considering what melismas can signify in operatic performance. As a whole, it argues that vocal virtuosity was a source of power for women, generating space for female authorship and creativity. In so doing, the book reclaims a place in history for the coloratura soprano.

Documents the changes in approaches to gender in opera in the early 19th century.

'The Oxford Handbook of Opera' captures the highly charged dynamic between opera and its audience, bringing the complexities of scholarship and the excitement of performance into the mainstream conversation. Fifty essays address an extensive range of topics.

Les Ballets C de la B was founded by Alain Platel in 1984. Since then it has become a company that enjoys great success at home and abroad. Over the years, Platel has developed a unique choreographic oeuvre. His motto, 'This dance is for the world and the world is for everyone', reveals a deep social and political commitment. Through the three topics of emotions, gestures and politics, this book unravels the choreopolitics of Platel's Les Ballets C de la B. His choreopolitics go beyond conveying a (political) message because rather than defending one opinion, Platel is more concerned about the exposure of the complexity within the debate itself. Highly respected scholars from different fields contribute to this book to provide an interdisciplinary perspective on the intense emotions, the damaged narratives, and the precarious bodies in Platel's choreographic oeuvre.

"A major contribution . . . not only to Puccini studies but also to the study of nineteenth-century Italian opera in general." —Nineteenth-Century Music Review In this groundbreaking survey of the fundamentals, methods, and formulas that were taught at Italian music conservatories during the 19th Century, Nicholas Baragwanath explores the compositional significance of tradition in Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti, Verdi, Boito, and, most importantly, Puccini. Taking account of some 400 primary sources, Baragwanath explains the varying theories and practices of the period in light of current theoretical and analytical conceptions of this music. *The Italian Traditions and Puccini* offers a guide to an informed interpretation and appreciation of Italian opera by underscoring the proximity of archaic traditions to the music of Puccini. "Dense and challenging in its detail and analysis, this work is an important addition to the growing corpus of Puccini studies. . . . Highly recommended." —Choice

This highly original book draws on narrative and film theory, psychoanalysis, and musicology to explore the relationship between aesthetics and anti-Semitism in two controversial landmarks in German culture. David Levin argues that Richard Wagner's opera cycle *Der Ring des Nibelungen* and Fritz Lang's 1920s film *Die Nibelungen* creatively exploit contrasts between good and bad aesthetics to address the question of what is German and what is not. He shows that each work associates a villainous character, portrayed as non-Germanic and Jewish, with the sometimes dramatically awkward act of narration. For both Wagner and Lang, narration--or, in cinematic terms, visual presentation--possesses a typically Jewish potential for manipulation and control. Consistent with this view, Levin shows, the Germanic hero Siegfried is killed in each work by virtue of his unwitting adoption of a narrative role. Levin begins with an explanation of the book's theoretical foundations and then applies these theories to close readings of, in turn, Wagner's cycle and Lang's film. He concludes by tracing how Germans have dealt with the Nibelungen myths in the wake of the Second World War, paying special attention to Michael Verhoeven's 1989 film *The Nasty Girl*. His fresh and interdisciplinary approach sheds new light not only on Wagner's Ring and Lang's *Die Nibelungen*, but also on the ways in which aesthetics can be put to the service of aggression and hatred. The book is an important contribution to scholarship in film and music and also to the broader study of German culture and national identity.

"Divas and Scholars" is a dazzling and beguiling account of how opera comes to the stage, filled with Philip Gossett's personal experiences of triumphant - and even failed - performances and suffused with his towering passion for music. Gossett, the world's leading authority on the performance of Italian opera, brings to life the problems, and occasionally the scandals, that attend the production of some of our favorite operas. Gossett begins by tracing the social history of nineteenth-century Italian theaters in order to explain the nature of the musical scores from which performers have long worked. He then illuminates the often hidden but crucial negotiations between what is written and how it is interpreted by opera conductors and performers.

Now in an updated 2nd edition, *Musicology: The Key Concepts* is a handy A-Z reference guide to the terms and concepts associated with contemporary musicology. Drawing on critical theory with a focus on new musicology, this updated edition contains over 35 new entries including: Autobiography Music and Conflict Deconstruction Postcolonialism Disability Music after 9/11 Masculinity Gay Musicology

Aesthetics Ethnicity Interpretation Subjectivity With all entries updated, and suggestions for further reading throughout, this text is an essential resource for all students of music, musicology, and wider performance related humanities disciplines.

Publisher Description

The Reader's Guide to Music is designed to provide a useful single-volume guide to the ever-increasing number of English language book-length studies in music. Each entry consists of a bibliography of some 3-20 titles and an essay in which these titles are evaluated, by an expert in the field, in light of the history of writing and scholarship on the given topic. The more than 500 entries include not just writings on major composers in music history but also the genres in which they worked (from early chant to rock and roll) and topics important to the various disciplines of music scholarship (from aesthetics to gay/lesbian musicology).

An indispensable study of nineteenth-century German music, history and nationalism.

Paul Atkinson explores the remarkable world of opera through his fieldwork with the internationally known Welsh National Opera company. In order to show us how cultural phenomena are produced and enacted, he takes us on stage and behind the scenes into the collective social action that goes into the realization of an opera. The author demonstrates how artistic interpretation is translated into the routine work of the rehearsal studio and the theatre, and how producers negotiate a practical reality with her or his performers to ultimately create extraordinary performances through the mundane, everyday work that makes them possible. The author calls for a sustained investigation of cultural phenomena, not based solely on textual analysis but on the importance of collective work and social organization. Atkinson's work will appeal to anthropologists and sociologists who study the performance arts, as well as to those engaged in theatre arts, opera and music.

This Companion provides a biographical, theatrical, and social-cultural background for Verdi's operas, examines in detail important general aspects of its style and method of composing, and synthesizes stylistic themes in discussions of representative works. Aspects of Verdi's milieu, style, creative process, and critical reception are explored in essays by highly reputed specialists. Like others in the series this Companion is aimed primarily at students and opera lovers.

"In this book, opera scholar Pierpaolo Polzonetti shows that the consumption of food and drink is a meaningful, essential component of opera, both on and off the stage. The book explores how convivial culture shaped the birth of opera and its development, especially through the early nineteenth century, when eating at the opera house was still common. Through analyses of convivial scenes in operas from Monteverdi to Verdi and Puccini, the book then shows how food/drink consumption and sharing, or refusal to do so, define the characters' identity and relationships. The first part of the book moves chronologically from around 1480 to the middle of the nineteenth century, when Wagner's operatic reforms put a stop to conviviality at the opera house by banishing refreshments during the performance and mandating a darkened auditorium and absorbed listening. The second part instead focuses on questions of comedy, embodiment, and indulgence in both tragic and comic operas from Monteverdi to Mozart. In the third part, Polzonetti looks at opera characters, their onstage consumption of coffee and chocolate, and what it signifies for their social standing within the opera. The book ends with an illuminating and entertaining discussion of the diet Maria Callas underwent in preparation for her famous performance as Violetta in Verdi's *La traviata*. Neither food lovers nor opera lovers will want to miss Polzonetti's page-turning and imaginative book"--

Giacomo Puccini is one of the most frequently performed and best loved of all operatic composers. In *Il Trittico*, *Turandot*, and *Puccini's Late Style*, Andrew Davis takes on the subject of Puccini's last two works to better understand how the composer creates meaning through the juxtaposition of the conventional and the unfamiliar -- situating Puccini in past operatic traditions and modern European musical theater. Davis asserts that hearing Puccini's late works within the context of *la solita forma* allows listeners to interpret the composer's expressive strategies. He examines Puccini's compositional language, with insightful analyses of melody, orchestration, harmony, voice-leading, and rhythm and meter.

Cinema and opera have become intertwined in a variety of powerful and unusual ways. *Vocal Apparitions* tells the story of this fascinating intersection, interprets how it occurred, and explores what happens when opera is projected onto the medium of film. Michal Grover-Friedlander finds striking affinities between film and opera--from Lon Chaney's classic silent film, *The Phantom of the Opera*, to the Marx Brothers' *A Night at the Opera* to Fellini's *E la nave va*. One of the guiding questions of this book is what occurs when what is aesthetically essential about one medium is transposed into the aesthetic field of the other. For example, Grover-Friedlander's comparison of an opera by Poulenc and a Rossellini film, both based on Cocteau's play *The Human Voice*, shows the relation of the vocal and the visual to be surprisingly affected by the choice of the medium. Her analysis of the Marx Brothers' *A Night at the Opera* demonstrates how, as a response to opera's infatuation with death, cinema comically acts out a correction of opera's fate. Grover-Friedlander argues that filmed operas such as Zeffirelli's *Otello* and Friedrich's *Falstaff* show the impossibility of a direct transformation of the operatic into the cinematic. Paradoxically, cinema at times can be more operatic than opera itself, thus capturing something essential that escapes opera's self-understanding. A remarkable look at how cinema has been haunted--and transformed--by opera, *Vocal Apparitions* reveals something original and important about each medium.

In these essays, Roger Parker brings a series of valuable insights to bear on Verdian analysis and criticism, and does so in a way that responds both to an opera-goer's love of musical drama and to a scholar's concern for recent critical trends. As he writes at one point: "opera challenges us by means of its brash impurity, its loose ends and excess of meaning, its superfluity of narrative secrets." Verdi's works, many of which underwent drastic revisions over the years and which sometimes bore marks of an unusual collaboration between composer and librettist, illustrate in particular why it can sometimes be misleading to assign fixed meanings to an opera. Parker instead explores works like *Rigoletto*, *Il trovatore*, *La forza del destino*, and *Falstaff* from a variety of angles, and addresses such contentious topics as the composer's involvement with Italian politics, the possibilities of an "authentic" staging of his work, and the advantages and pitfalls of analyzing his operas according to terms that his contemporaries might have understood. Parker takes into account many of the interdisciplinary influences currently engaging musicologists, in particular narrative and feminist theory. But he also demonstrates that close attention to the documentary evidence--especially that offered by autograph scores--can stimulate equal interpretive activity. This book serves as a model of research and critical thinking about opera, while nevertheless retaining a deep respect for opera's continuing power to touch generations of listeners.

In nineteenth-century Europe the ruling elites viewed the theater as a form of communication which had enormous importance. The theater provided the most significant form of mass entertainment and was the only arena aside from the church in which regular mass gatherings were possible. Therefore, drama censorship occupied a great deal of the ruling class's time and

energy, with a particularly focus on proposed scripts that potentially threatened the existing political, legal, and social order. This volume provides the first comprehensive examination of nineteenth-century political theater censorship at a time, in the aftermath of the French Revolution, when the European population was becoming increasingly politically active. Karen Henson explores a wealth of new historical material about singers and opera performance in the late nineteenth century.

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