



The Oxford Handbook of Opera (Oxford Handbooks)

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What IS opera? Contributors to *The Oxford Handbook of Opera* respond to this deceptively simple question with a rich and compelling exploration of opera's adaption to changing artistic and political currents. Fifty of the world's most respected scholars cast opera as a fluid entity that continuously reinvents itself in a reflection of its patrons, audience, and creators. The synergy of power, performance, and identity recurs thematically throughout the volume's major topics: Words, Music, and Meaning; Performance and Production; Opera and Society; and Transmission and Reception. Individual essays engage with repertoire from Monteverdi, Mozart, and Meyerbeer to Strauss, Henze, and Adams in studies of composition, national identity, transmission, reception, sources, media, iconography, humanism, the art of collecting, theory, analysis, commerce, singers, directors, criticism, editions, politics, staging, race, and gender. The title of the penultimate section, Opera on the Edge, suggests the uncertainty of opera's future: is opera headed toward catastrophe or have social and musical developments of the last hundred years stimulated something new and exciting, and, well, operatic? In an epilogue to the volume, a contemporary opera composer speaks candidly about opera composition today.

The Oxford Handbook of Opera is an essential companion to scholars, educators, advanced students, performers, and knowledgeable listeners: those who simply love opera.

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