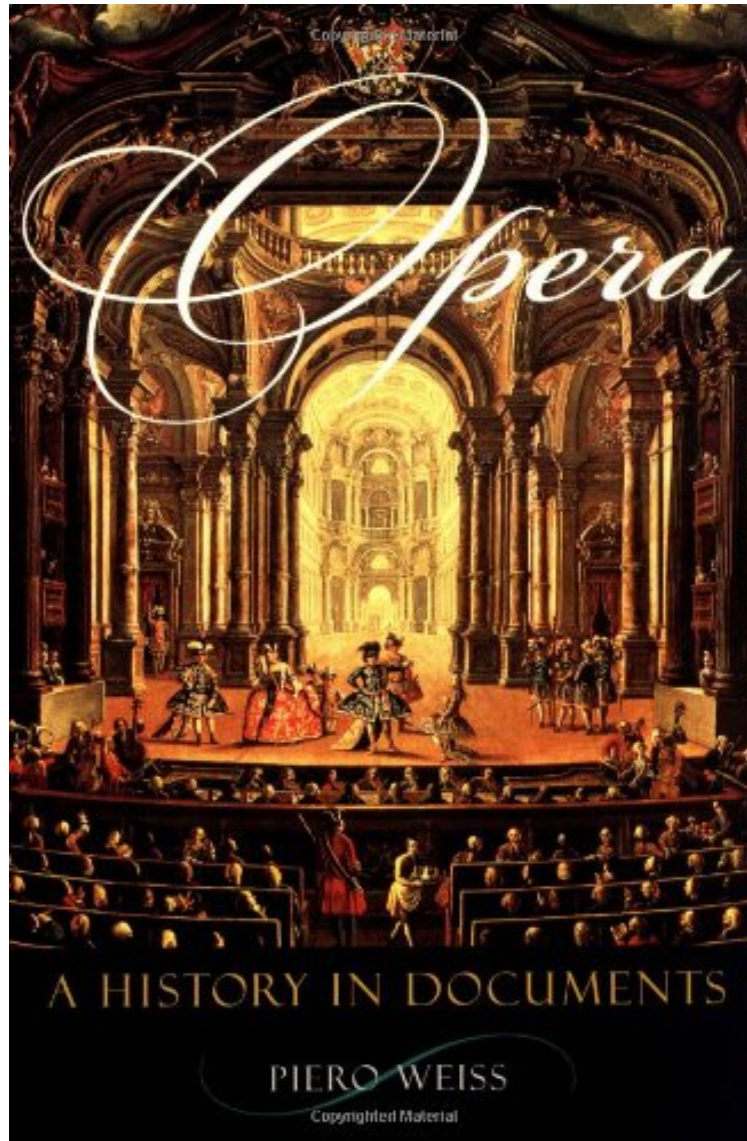


(Download ebook) Opera: A History in Documents

Opera: A History in Documents

Piero Weiss

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Piero Weiss : Opera: A History in Documents before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Opera: A History in Documents:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Opera comes to life through the voices of its creatorsBy James F. HarringtonA unique and fascinating look at primary sources outlining the development of opera from the Medici wedding in 1585 to Stravinsky's collaboration with W.H. Auden on The Rake's Progressand beyond! This is an excellent book for anyone who is trying to gain a greater understanding of opera, its major players throughout history,

and who would like to understand opera as a living, breathing art form. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Four Stars By Kat Staesgood book but a little boring towards the end

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.

From *Library Journal* Beginning with the *Intermedio*, which was performed at a Medici wedding in 1589, and ending with John Adams's 1987 *Nixon in China*, this book provides a novel view of dozens of operas over the centuries. The author, a noted scholar and authority on the history of opera who chairs the musicology department at the Johns Hopkins Peabody Conservatory, illuminates the history of opera through documents, each presented in historical context. His selection of documents includes letters, diary accounts, critical notices, playbills, and libretto excerpts that highlight fascinating aspects of the works and their performances, as well as the era in which they originated. We learn, for example, what Stendhal thought of Rossini's *Barber of Seville*, as well as Tchaikovsky's own thoughts on Eugene Onegin and Mozart's first ideas about his *Marriage of Figaro*. Opera lovers will be delighted at this new and excellent source of information and insight. Recommended for public and academic libraries. Timothy J. McGee, Univ. of Toronto Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. "Weiss's extraordinary selection of documents includes some wonderful illustrations in addition to substantial excerpts from letters, prefaces, pamphlets, and even libretti. . . . This volume is a priceless addition to the literature, and the pages of my copy are already dog-eared from constant use."--*Music and Letters* About the Author Piero Weiss is at Peabody Conservatory.