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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

You're never going to haul this book to the opera house, it is true, but, on the other hand, you'll probably never again have to fret over where to find a libretto for most standard repertory operas. This massive, 1,474-page (plus endpapers) volume, which could readily double as a doorstop or a booster seat at the theater, contains all the words, in their original languages (for the most part) and in English, of 101 out-of-copyright operas. The selections run the gamut from Ludwig van Beethoven's *Fidelio* through Carl Maria von Weber's *Euryanthe*, with scores of stories in between. In addition to the word-for-word libretti, a brief précis of each plot is also provided.

There are some puzzling omissions--Mozart's *Così fan tutte* and *Abduction from the Seraglio*--and puzzling inclusions as well: Paderewski's *Manru* and Horatio Parker's *Mona* are not considered standard operas by any authority that readily springs to mind. Borodin's *Prince Igor* is, incomprehensibly, given in Italian and English (the Russian people improbably sing, "Ad Igor, signor nostro, vittoria"), as are Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov* and Tchaikovsky's *Evgeny Onegin*. There are also some annoying little errors that could have been avoided with more careful proofreading ("*Madam Butterfly*"?), and the paper used is disappointingly cheap. Still, with these caveats in mind, *The Book of 101 Opera Librettos* is a very useful book for the money, a one-stop shop for many of the operas you're likely to encounter. Just be sure to read the libretto *before* you leave for the opera house.

Language Notes

Text: English, French, German, Italian

About the Author

A multiple GRAMMY® nominee, pianist Allison Brewster Franzetti has received international acclaim from critics and audiences alike for her stunning virtuosity and musicality, both as a soloist and chamber musician. Born in New York City, she received her Bachelor of Music degree from the Manhattan School of Music and her Master of Music degree from the Juilliard School. She has won first prizes from the Paderewski Foundation and the Piano Teachers Congress of New York as well as awards from the Kosciuszko Foundation and the Denver Symphony Orchestra. She was the recipient of two HEART (History, Education, Arts – Reaching Thousands) Grants from the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders and the Starr Foundation, and was appointed Concert Artist in Piano and Chamber Music at Kean University in 2001. She was elected to the honor society Phi Kappa Phi in 2002. Kean University bestowed its first Graduate Commencement Performing Artist Award on her in 2003. An accomplished accompanist and chamber musician, Allison Brewster Franzetti has collaborated with some of the finest performers and composers in the world, including Sir James Galway, John Corigliano, Stephen Paulus, Lowell Liebermann, Ransom Wilson, Eugenia Zukerman, Julius Baker, Robert White, and members of major American and international symphony orchestras. She has performed at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, festivals in the United States, Mexico and Europe, and on radio and television.

Users Review

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Alejandra Dunlap:

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