

The Cambridge Companion to Grand Opera

In this fascinating and accessible exploration of the world of grand opera, a team of operatic scholars and writers examines those important Romantic operas which embraced the Shakespearean sweep of tragedy, history, love in time of conflict, and the struggle for national self-determination. Rival nations, rival religions and violent resolutions are common elements, with various social or political groups represented in the form of operatic choruses. The book traces the origins and development of a style created during an increasingly technical age, which exploited the world-renowned skills of Parisian stage-designers, artists and dancers, as well as singers. It analyses in detail the grand operas of Rossini, Auber, Meyerbeer and Halévy, and discusses Wagner, grand opera in Russia, the Czech lands, Italy, Britain and the Americas. It also includes an essay by the renowned opera director David Pountney.

DAVID CHARLTON is Professor of Music History at Royal Holloway, University of London. He has published *Grétry and the Growth of Opéra-Comique* (Cambridge, 1986), *E. T. A. Hoffmann's Musical Writings: Kreisleriana; The Poet and the Composer; Music Criticism* (Cambridge, 1989) and, most recently, *French Opera, 1730–1830* (2000).

Cambridge Companions to Music

Instruments

The Cambridge Companion to Brass

Instruments

Edited by Trevor Herbert and John Wallace

The Cambridge Companion to the Cello

Edited by Robin Stowell

The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet

Edited by Colin Lawson

The Cambridge Companion to the Guitar

Edited by Victor Anand Coelho

The Cambridge Companion to the Organ

Edited by Nicholas Thistlethwaite and
Geoffrey Webber

The Cambridge Companion to the Piano

Edited by David Rowland

The Cambridge Companion to the Recorder

Edited by John Mansfield Thomson

The Cambridge Companion to the Saxophone

Edited by Richard Ingham

The Cambridge Companion to the Violin

Edited by Robin Stowell

Composers

The Cambridge Companion to Bach

Edited by John Butt

The Cambridge Companion to Bartók

Edited by Amanda Bayley

The Cambridge Companion to Berg

Edited by Anthony Pople

The Cambridge Companion to Beethoven

Edited by Glenn Stanley

The Cambridge Companion to Berlioz

Edited by Peter Bloom

The Cambridge Companion to Benjamin Britten

Edited by Mervyn Cooke

The Cambridge Companion to Brahms

Edited by Michael Musgrave

The Cambridge Companion to John Cage

Edited by David Nicholls

The Cambridge Companion to Chopin

Edited by Jim Samson

The Cambridge Companion to Debussy

Edited by Simon Trezise

The Cambridge Companion to Handel

Edited by Donald Burrows

The Cambridge Companion to Schubert

Edited by Christopher Gibbs

The Cambridge Companion to Ravel

Edited by Deborah Mawer

The Cambridge Companion to Stravinsky

Edited by Jonathan Cross

Topics

The Cambridge Companion to Blues and Gospel Music

Allan Moore

The Cambridge Companion to Grand Opera

Edited by David Charlton

The Cambridge Companion to Jazz

Edited by Mervyn Cooke and David Horn

The Cambridge Companion to the Musical

Edited by William A. Everett and Paul R. Laird

The Cambridge Companion to the Orchestra

Edited by Colin Lawson

The Cambridge Companion to Pop and Rock

Edited by Simon Frith, Will Straw and John Street

The Cambridge Companion to

GRAND OPERA

.....

EDITED BY

David Charlton

Royal Holloway, University of London



CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Tokyo, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521646833

© Cambridge University Press 2003

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2003

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication Data

ISBN 978-0-521-64118-0 Hardback
ISBN 978-0-521-64683-3 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate. Information regarding prices, travel timetables, and other factual information given in this work is correct at the time of first printing but Cambridge University Press does not guarantee the accuracy of such information thereafter.

Contents

List of illustrations [page ix]

Notes on contributors [xi]

Preface [xiii]

Acknowledgements [xvi]

Abbreviations [xvii]

Chronology [xviii]

1 Introduction *David Charlton* [1]

Part I • The resourcing of grand opera

2 The ‘machine’ and the state *Hervé Lacombe* [21]

3 Fictions and librettos *Nicholas White* [43]

4 The spectacle of the past in grand opera *Simon Williams* [58]

5 The chorus *James Parakilas* [76]

6 Dance and dancers *Marian Smith* [93]

7 Roles, reputations, shadows: singers at the Opéra, 1828–1849
Mary Ann Smart [108]

Part II • Revaluation and the twenty-first century

8 Directing grand opera: *Rienzi* and *Guillaume Tell* at the Vienna State Opera *David Pountney* [131]

Part III • Grand operas for Paris

9 La Muette and her context *Sarah Hibberd* [149]

10 Scribe and Auber: constructing grand opera *Herbert Schneider* [168]

11 Meyerbeer: *Robert le Diable* and *Les Huguenots*
Matthias Brzoska [189]

12 Meyerbeer: *Le Prophète* and *L’Africaine* *John H. Roberts* [208]

13 The grand operas of Fromental Halévy *Diana R. Hallman* [233]

14 From Rossini to Verdi *M. Elizabeth C. Bartlet* [258]

15 After 1850 at the Paris Opéra: institution and repertory
Steven Huebner [291]

[vii]

Part IV • Transformations of grand opera

- 16 Richard Wagner and the legacy of French grand opera
Thomas Grey [321]
- 17 Grand opera in Russia: fragments of an unwritten history
Marina Frolova-Walker [344]
- 18 Grand opera among the Czechs *Jan Smaczny* [366]
- 19 Italian opera *Fiamma Nicolodi* [383]
- 20 Grand opera in Britain and the Americas *Sarah Hibberd* [403]

Notes [423]

Select bibliography [470]

Index [476]

Illustrations

- 1 'Handsome page! my handsome page! what a shapely costume!': *L'Illustration*, 22 November 1851. (V&A Picture Library) [15]
- 2 Press advertisement for numerous derivatives of a grand opera. [16]
- 3 Daily seating summary designed for use at Paris Opéra performances in the Salle Le Peletier during the 1860s. [32]
- 4 Perspective seating-plan of the Paris Opéra, Salle Le Peletier (1821–73). (Coll. Jean-Louis Tamvaco) [33]
- 5 General view from the wings during an interval at the Paris Opéra. (Coll. Jean-Louis Tamvaco) [36]
- 6 Porcelain vase (c. 1834) bearing the portrait of Laure Cinti-Damoreau. (Coll. Jean-Louis Tamvaco) [40]
- 7 *Question*: 'Why do foreigners understand Scribe's opera so easily?' *Answer*: 'Because they don't know French!': *L'Illustration*, 12 January 1856. (V&A Picture Library) [47]
- 8 The art of the theatrical scene-painter: *L'Illustration*, 24 February 1894. (V&A Picture Library) [63]
- 9 Ciceri, set design for Act I of *Sapho* (1818). (cliché Bibliothèque nationale de France) [65]
- 10 Ciceri, set design for Act III scene 6 of *Alfred le Grand* (1822). (cliché Bibliothèque nationale de France) [66]
- 11 Final scene of *La Muette de Portici* as revived in Paris in 1863: *L'Illustration*, 31 January 1863. [68]
- 12 A page from a typical *livret de mise-en-scène*. [81]
- 13 Lise Noblet dancing the role of La Folie in Auber's *Gustave III*. (Reproduced by kind permission of Dover Publications, Inc.) [96]
- 14 'A regular at the Opéra': *L'Illustration*, 16 November 1844. (V&A Picture Library) [105]
- 15 *Rienzi* at the Vienna Staatsoper, directed by David Pountney in December 1997. (Wiener Staatsoper/photo Zeiniger) [138]
- 16 *Rienzi* at the Vienna Staatsoper: choreography by Renato Zanella. (Wiener Staatsoper/photo Zeiniger) [140]
- 17 *Guillaume Tell* at the Vienna Staatsoper, directed by David Pountney in October 1998. (Wiener Staatsoper/photo Zeiniger) [143]
- 18 Fanny [Franziska] Elssler as Fenella in *La Muette de Portici* in 1832. (Reproduced by kind permission of Dover Publications, Inc.) [155]
- 19 Costume designs (1828) for *La Muette de Portici* by Hippolyte Lecomte (1781–1857). (cliché Bibliothèque nationale de France) [165]
- 20 Act V trio from *Robert le Diable* painted by François-Gabriel Lépaulle (1804–86). (Paris, Musée de la musique. © Photo RMN Gérard Blot) [194]

- 21 Memento of *Guido et Ginevra* (subtitled *The Florentine Plague*) by V. Adani. (coll. Jean-Louis Tamvaco) [241]
- 22 Scene from *La Reine de Chypre* (1841) reproduced from a piano-vocal score published by the firm of Tallandier. (Editor's coll.) [242]
- 23 Two trumpets made by Sax for grand operas. (Paris: Collection Musée de la musique/cliché A. Giordan) [255]
- 24 The bass Adolphe Joseph Louis Alizard (1814–50) in Act II of Verdi's *Jérusalem* (1847). (Coll. Jean-Louis Tamvaco) [271]
- 25 Emmy Destinn (Ema Destinnová, 1878–1930) as Aida. (Editor's coll.) [295]
- 26 Poster for the première of Jules Massenet's *Le Cid* at the Paris Opéra (1885). (Coll. S. Huebner) [297]
- 27 Scene-builders constructing the wooden horse for *Les Troyens*, Parisian première of Acts I and II at the Opéra: *L'Illustration*, 7 October 1899. [313]
- 28 View from the 'standing stalls' within the new National Theatre, Prague. [367]
- 29 The rebuilt theatre at Niblo's Garden, New York, in 1855. (Library of Congress) [415]

Contributors

- M. Elizabeth C. Bartlet**, a specialist in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century French opera, has edited Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* for the critical edition of his oeuvre, published a monograph on the staging of grand opera, and written widely on music during the Revolution, Consulate and Empire (including a two-volume book on Etienne-Nicolas Méhul). She serves on the editorial committee for the Rameau *Opera Omnia* and her editions of *Platée* and *Dardanus* are forthcoming in this series.
- Matthias Brzoska**, Professor of Musicology at the Folkwang-Hochschule, Essen (Germany), is editing Meyerbeer's *Le Prophète* for the new critical edition of the composer's stage works. He is author of *Die Idee des Gesamtkunstwerks in der Musiknovellistik der Julimonarchie* (1995), and co-editor of a three-volume *Geschichte der Musik* for Laaber (2001).
- David Charlton** is Professor of Music History at Royal Holloway, University of London. His most recent books are *French Opera 1730–1830: Meaning and Media* and *Michel-Jean Sedaine (1719–1797): Theatre, Opera and Art* (co-edited with Mark Ledbury).
- Marina Frolova-Walker** studied musicology at the Moscow Conservatoire, receiving her doctorate in 1994. She lectures at the Faculty of Music, University of Cambridge, and is a Fellow of Clare College.
- Thomas Grey** is Associate Professor of Music at Stanford University. He is author of *Wagner's Musical Prose: Texts and Contexts* (1995) and editor of *Richard Wagner: Der fliegende Holländer* (2000), as well as the *Cambridge Companion to Wagner* (forthcoming).
- Diana R. Hallman**, Associate Professor of Musicology at the University of Kentucky, centres her research in nineteenth-century opera, French grand opera and the music of Fromental Halévy. She is author of various articles, and of *Opera, Liberalism, and Antisemitism in Nineteenth-Century France: The Politics of Halévy's 'La Juive'* (2002); her next book will be *Fannie Bloomfield Zeisler: American Virtuoso of the Gilded Age*.
- Sarah Hibberd** is a research fellow in the Department of Music, Royal Holloway, University of London. She is currently working on representations of historical figures on the Parisian lyric stage during the July Monarchy.
- Steven Huebner** has taught at McGill University, Montreal, since 1985 and is the author of *The Operas of Charles Gounod* (1990) and *French Opera at the Fin de Siècle: Wagnerism, Nationalism and Style* (1999).
- Hervé Lacombe** is Professor of Music at the University of Rennes 2 (France), and specialises in nineteenth-century French music. His *The Keys to French Opera in the Nineteenth Century* was published in 2001, and the extended study, *Georges*

Bizet: Naissance d'une identité créatrice (Fayard, 2000), won the Prix des Muses for biography and the Prix Bordin of the Académie des Beaux-Arts.

Fiamma Nicolodi is Professore ordinario de Drammaturgia musicale at the University of Florence (Italy). She has worked on composers from Rossini and Meyerbeer through to Dallapiccola and Berio, published on symbolist music-theatre, musical nationalism, and music in the fascist era; she is currently director of the *Lessico musicale italiano* (LESMU).

James Parakilas is the James L. Moody, Jr. Family Professor of Performing Arts at Bates College (Maine), where he chairs the Music Department. He has written *Ballads Without Words: Chopin and the Tradition of the Instrumental Ballade* (1992) and, with collaborators, *Piano Roles: Three Hundred Years of Life with the Piano* (2000).

David Pountney has been an international opera director for thirty years as well as spending ten years each as a member of Scottish Opera and then English National Opera. He has also written numerous opera translations from several languages, as well as original opera librettos for Stephen Oliver, John Harle and Maxwell Davies.

John H. Roberts is Professor of Music and Head of the Music Library at the University of California, Berkeley. He wrote his doctoral dissertation on the genesis of Meyerbeer's *L'Africaine* and has published widely on Handel, particularly his borrowing from other composers.

Herbert Schneider teaches musicology at the Universität des Saarlandes at Saarbrücken (Germany). His main fields of research are French music and theory from the seventeenth to the end of the nineteenth centuries, and the musical relations between Germany and France.

Jan Smaczny is Hamilton Harty Professor of Music at Queen's University, Belfast. He has written extensively on many aspects of Czech music and, chiefly, on the life and works of Dvořák.

Mary Ann Smart, Associate Professor of Music at the University of California, Berkeley, is author of 'Bellini' and 'Donizetti' in *New Grove/2* and editor of the critical edition of Donizetti's last opera, *Dom Sébastien*. Her recent book *Resonant Bodies* examines music and gesture in repertory between French grand opera of the 1830s and Wagner's *Ring*.

Marian Smith was educated at Carleton College and the University of Texas, and received a doctoral degree in musicology from Yale University. She is Associate Professor of Music at the University of Oregon and author of *Ballet and Opera in the Age of Giselle* (2000), which was awarded the de la Torre Bueno Prize.

Nicholas White is Lecturer in the Department of French at the University of Cambridge and Official Fellow of Emmanuel College. He is author of *The Family in Crisis in Late Nineteenth-Century French Fiction* (1999) and co-editor of *Scarlet Letters: Fictions of Adultery from Antiquity to the 1990s* (1997). His edition of Mauldon's translation of Huysmans's *Against Nature* won the 1999 Scott Moncrieff Prize.

Simon Williams is Professor of Dramatic Art at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He is the author of *German Actors of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (1985), *Shakespeare on the German Stage* (1990) and *Richard Wagner and Festival Theatre* (1994).

Preface

This Companion is about nineteenth-century opera of a certain large-scale type; it provides a survey, arranged thematically, which contains more information about its subject than any previous publication in English. Yet the operas considered here are mostly different from those within, for example, Eric A. Plaut's *Grand Opera: Mirror of the Western Mind* (Chicago, 1993). The association between 'grand opera' and large material resources is an essential aspect of our definition here, one which in fact takes French opera as its focus, though not as its boundary. The core of our repertory is characterised in the 1954 edition of *Grove's Dictionary* under 'Grand opéra', which says:

A *grand opéra* is a nineteenth-century French type . . . [containing] a serious, often tragic subject of an epic or historical nature, the use of the chorus in action, the inclusion of a ballet, at least one spectacular scene with elaborate writing for the solo and choral voices in concert and (normally) division into five acts . . .

In Part I we investigate several of these resources, and also offer new interpretations concerning the wider significance of grand opera, which played no small part in the cultural consciousness of its age. (In the view of many, it stood at the top of a particular artistic hierarchy.) However – and crucially – the present Companion is not just about French opera. The impact of Parisian grand opera on composers in every developed country was enormous; consequently, for example, Donizetti and Verdi came to work in Paris, and their work is duly considered within. The same impact was translated into further works, in several different countries, so that the term 'grand opera' for us consciously reflects the reality that the French model and its many non-French derivatives were, for a half-century, ubiquitous and dominant. Their dominance was not uniform, and was heaviest during the years up to 1870; yet they continued to be dominant. Wagner and *verismo* did not dislodge them until very late, and they co-existed with 'Italian opera' as a mainstream type. To help to demonstrate this point, our authors have supplied information at the end of each chapter in Part III showing how rapidly grand operas of French origin were to be seen, sometimes in adapted forms, throughout the operatic stages of the world.

In Part IV the wider evolution of grand opera as a genre is explored. After the particular case of Wagner in Chapter 16, this is shown through various national studies. Non-French opera traditions are covered in Chapters 17 to

20, detailing (within the constraints of allowable space) the assimilation of French works in these respective countries, but at the same time exploring the less well known range of native operatic creations.

Our phrase 'grand opera' differs from the traditional use of the term, which was generalised. Thus *The New Grove Dictionary*, 2001 edition (hereafter *New Grove/2*), offers no entry for 'grand opera' and the reasons are not hard to divine, if one is familiar with the way the term has developed. (More on this debate will be found in Chapter 1 below.) The 1954 article in *Grove* naturally took older usage into account:

[*Grand opéra*]: A term with a definite meaning in French, unlike the English 'grand opera', which is not its equivalent and is useless for classification, since it is loosely used to mean simply serious as distinct from comic opera.

And former American usage of 'grand opera' was similarly vague, or sweeping: my old libretto of Puccini's *Tosca*, issued by Charles E. Burden at Steinway Hall, New York, price 35 cents, is headed: 'Grand Opera by the Boston-National Grand Opera Company, A National Institution' – which, at the same time, neatly illustrates the way that such operatic terms can simultaneously apply to (i) a genre, (ii) a theatrical company, (iii) a building, and (iv) an institution. Indeed the French phrase *grand opéra* evolved over two centuries ago through just such a loose web, centred on the Paris Opéra.

Perhaps a transitional period of meaning was reached in 1945, at least for England, when for the first time the State began to give regular subsidy to the main London opera companies and subsequently took over Covent Garden. In an appraisal entitled 'The Opera in Britain' (1948) our phrase occurs only once: 'For grand opera, a large cast, chorus and symphony orchestra are required, besides a full-sized opera house, with production and decor in keeping.'¹

Nevertheless, since this Companion is about a multi-media genre it contains many types of information that may not be apparent from the chapter titles. Here is a location-note showing where various important themes are discussed:

Terminology, genre and definitions: Chapters 1, 10 and 15

French laws, censorship, budgets, salaries: Chapter 2

Survey of plots: Chapter 3

Musical forms: Chapters 10 (duets), 13, 14 and 16

Orchestration: Chapter 13

Staging and production: Chapters 4, 8 and 18

Contracts between artists and the Opéra: Chapter 14

The relation of grand opera to society and politics is something that many chapters deal with: particular case-studies are found in Chapters 4, 9, 11 and 13.

The international appeal of grand opera is reflected in the different ways that different nations actually think and write about the topic. A key aspect of this Companion's design lies in the invitation to scholars from different countries and critical traditions to participate, writing (originally) in four different languages. This itself has made for an implicit dialogue on current grand opera research and clarifies international perceptions of the topic. Most of our contributors have already written book-length studies on aspects of grand opera. In this general connection Christopher Smith's role as translator of three of these chapters must be mentioned, together with those of Deirdre O'Grady and Tim Carter for the fourth: it cannot be stressed too strongly that their generosity and painstaking work has brought to this book the benefit of rare linguistic and musicological skills.

Constructing grand opera has often previously involved the apposition of Auber, Meyerbeer and Halévy to other composers such as Verdi, Wagner and Musorgsky. This Companion offers an opportunity to re-evaluate that construction by widening the total picture, emphasising operatic re-creation and reception as such. The choice of illustrations has been made with a view to suggesting how grand opera was absorbed into wider culture and its artefacts; further analysis of this comes in Chapter 2. Thus the mixed media of our illustrations and images are intended to carry due weight in the appreciation of their 'content'.

In mentioning 're-creation', special attention must be drawn to David Pountney's essay, Chapter 8, which shows that the actual praxis of re-creation forces one to face a host of vital contextual issues; the essay serves also to remind British readers that their own national experience of grand opera in recent years compares but sporadically with the range and vitality of foreign experience: both productions considered here were created for Vienna. As the genre approaches its 200th anniversary it deserves to be increasingly revived and reinterpreted in the opera house.

Information tables will be found in several chapters, and a general chronology at the head of Chapter I. It was decided, in general, not always to include detailed opera plots. That information is, after all, usually found by appropriate reference to other books or on-line sources (*Kobbé's Opera Book*, *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera* (henceforth *Opera Grove*), *The New Penguin Opera Guide* etc.) and, besides, there was too much else to write about. Instead, our authors have approached the matter of narrative in a number of ways, keeping the reader informed of those plot elements which are essential to know in order to understand their current argument.

Note

1 [anon.], 'The Opera in Britain', *Planning*, 15/290 (8 November 1948), 147–62, here 156.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost I should like to thank all contributing authors and translators for their exceptional goodwill, patience and forbearance in the interests of this common endeavour. Second I should like to thank the Research Committee, Department of Music, Royal Holloway, for granting a research leave in 2001; and third Patricia Scholfield for her partnership in keeping a complicated show on the road.

For various words of wisdom and advice imparted in the course of this volume's development I owe thanks to several friends and acquaintances: Mike Ashman, Beth Bartlet, Geoffrey Chew, Francesca Chiarelli, John Deathridge, Jan Hart, Janet Johnson, Barry Millington, Karin Pendle, Philip Reed, Clive Scott, Anastasia Siopsi and Nicholas White.

For equally generous help with ascertaining or obtaining various sources and information, I am most grateful to Diana Bickley, Gunther Braam, Rodolfo Caesar, my father A. W. F. Charlton, Roberto Duarte, Mark Everist, Sarah Hibberd, Kostas Kardamis, Michel Noiray, Margaret Oliver, Cécile Reynaud, Rodrigo Cicchelli Velloso and Nicole Wild.

Christina Fuhrmann is owed especial thanks for allowing us to have rapid access to her completed doctoral dissertation concerning operatic adaptations at Covent Garden, and allowing us to make use of her research.

The particular help and the generous counsel of Robert Ignatius Letellier played an important part in the volume and is acknowledged with many thanks.

Jean-Louis Tamvaco went out of his way to make available both information and many special pictorial sources, and this considerable generosity made the enhanced scope of the iconographical content of this project possible. Other essential help in this area was kindly provided by Bettina Porpaczy, and her colleagues Mss Sedivy, Tremmel and Maly at the Vienna Staatsoper.

The contribution to the volume of Christopher Smith (formerly Reader in French and a colleague of mine at the University of East Anglia) extends beyond the translator's authority and sympathy evident in the three chapters he prepared: in the course of this work he clarified numerous points of fact and detail. Our debt to him is extensive and my thanks cannot be too warmly expressed.

Abbreviations

Grove Opera *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, ed. Stanley Sadie, 4 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1992)

New Grove/2 *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd edn, ed. Stanley Sadie, 29 vols. (London: Macmillan, 2001)

Paris Opéra, The most important of the French lyric theatres, and the oldest, or Opéra established by letters patent in 1669. Its official titles included: Académie Royale de Musique (1815–48); Théâtre de la Nation (1848–50); Académie Nationale de Musique (1850–51); Académie Impériale de Musique (1851–54); Théâtre Impériale de l'Opéra (1854–70); Théâtre National de l'Opéra (1870→). From 1821 to 1873 the Opéra occupied the Salle Le Peletier (see Figs. 4 and 5), which burned down on 28–29 October 1873. The new house designed by Charles Garnier in 1861 was begun the same year and opened on 5 January 1875.

Chronology

| | Events and operas in France | Events and operas outside France |
|------|---|--|
| 1799 | Napoleon becomes First Consul | |
| 1804 | Napoleon crowns himself Emperor | |
| 1807 | <i>La Vestale</i> (3, Spontini; Jouy) | |
| 1809 | <i>Fernand Cortez</i> (3, Spontini; Jouy, Esmenard) | |
| 1815 | Napoleon defeated and exiled: Louis XVIII restored to the throne | <i>Ivan Susanin</i> (2, Cavos; Shakhovskoy) |
| 1817 | <i>Fernand Cortez</i> revised version (3, Spontini; Jouy) | |
| 1821 | Death of Napoleon on St Helena; new Paris Opéra, rue Peletier, opens | Greek war of independence (to 1829); revolution in Piedmont crushed by Austria |
| 1824 | Death of Louis XVIII; accession of Charles X; Rossini becomes director of Théâtre Italien | Death of Lord Byron |
| 1825 | <i>Il crociato in Egitto</i> (2, Meyerbeer; Rossi) (prem.: Venice, 1824) | |
| 1826 | <i>Le Siège de Corinthe</i> (3, Rossini; Balocchi and Soumet) | |
| 1827 | <i>Moïse et Pharaon</i> (4, Rossini; Balocchi, Jouy); Hugo, <i>Cromwell</i> | |
| 1828 | <i>La Muette de Portici</i> (5, Auber; Scribe) | |
| 1829 | <i>Guillaume Tell</i> (4, Rossini; Jouy, Bis) | |
| 1830 | July Revolution: abdication of Charles X; succession of Louis-Philippe; censorship lifted; Véron succeeds Lubbert as Opéra director | Greece declared independent; Belgium proclaims independence |
| 1831 | <i>Robert le Diable</i> (5, Meyerbeer; Scribe); Chopin arrives in Paris; Hugo, <i>Notre-Dame de Paris</i> | Polish uprising suppressed by Russia; revolutions in Parma, Modena, Papal States, crushed by Austria |
| 1832 | | Deaths of Walter Scott and of Goethe |
| 1833 | <i>Gustave III</i> (5, Auber; Scribe) | |
| 1834 | | <i>The Mountain Sylph</i> (2, Barnett; Thackeray), London |
| 1835 | <i>La Juive</i> (5, Halévy; Scribe); reintroduction of censorship follows assassination attempt on the king | <i>Askold's Tomb</i> (4, Verstovsky; Zagoskin), St Petersburg |
| 1836 | <i>Les Huguenots</i> (5, Meyerbeer; Scribe, Deschamps) | <i>A Life for the Tsar</i> (5, Glinka; Rozen, Sollogub, Kukul'nik, Zhovovsky), St Petersburg |
| 1837 | | <i>Fair Rosamond</i> (4, Barnett; C. Z. Barnett, Shannon), London; <i>Joan of Arc</i> (3, Balfé; Fitzball), London |
| 1838 | <i>Guido et Ginevra</i> (5, Halévy; Scribe) | |
| 1839 | <i>Le Lac des fées</i> (5, Auber; Scribe, Mélesville) | |
| 1840 | <i>La Favorite</i> (4, Donizetti; Royer, Scribe and Vaëz); birth of Zola | |

| | Events and operas in France | Events and operas outside France |
|------|---|--|
| 1841 | <i>La Reine de Chypre</i> (5, Halévy; St-Georges) | |
| 1842 | Death of Cherubini | <i>Ruslan and Lyudmila</i> (5, Glinka; Shirkov and others), St Petersburg; <i>Rienzi</i> (5, Wagner), Dresden |
| 1843 | <i>Dom Sébastien</i> (5, Donizetti; Scribe) <i>Charles VI</i> (5, Halévy; C. and G. Delavigne) | <i>Der fliegende Holländer</i> (3, Wagner), Dresden; <i>The Bohemian girl</i> (3, Balfe; Bunn), London |
| 1844 | | <i>The Daughter of St Mark</i> (3, Balfe; Bunn), London |
| 1845 | | <i>Leonora</i> (3, Fry; J. R. Fry), Philadelphia; <i>Tannhäuser</i> (3, Wagner), Dresden |
| 1847 | <i>Jérusalem</i> (4, Verdi; Royer and Vaez) | <i>Esmeralda</i> (4, Dargomizhsky; Hugo [trans. Dargomizhsky and others]), Moscow |
| 1848 | February Revolution: abdication of Louis-Philippe. Louis-Napoléon elected president of the Second Republic. Dramatic censorship lifted (until 1850) | Revolutions in Italy, Germany, Austrian Empire, Poland; Wagner supports insurrection in Dresden and subsequently lives in exile in Switzerland until 1860 |
| 1849 | <i>Le Prophète</i> (5, Meyerbeer; Scribe) | |
| 1850 | <i>L'enfant prodigue</i> (5, Auber; Scribe) Death of Balzac | <i>Genoveva</i> (4, Schumann), Leipzig; <i>Lohengrin</i> (3, Wagner), Weimar |
| 1851 | <i>Sapho</i> (3, Gounod; Augier); Louis-Napoleon seizes power | Great Exhibition, London |
| 1852 | Second Empire proclaimed (2 Dec.), led by Napoleon III | |
| 1852 | <i>Le Juif errant</i> (5, Halévy; Scribe, St-Georges) | |
| 1854 | <i>La Nonne sanglante</i> (5, Gounod; Scribe and Delavigne) | Crimean War (to 1856); France acts as international power broker |
| 1855 | Exposition universelle <i>Les Vêpres siciliennes</i> (5, Verdi; Scribe and Duveyrier) | Accession of Tsar Alexander II |
| 1857 | Baudelaire, <i>Les Fleurs du mal</i> | |
| 1858 | <i>La Magicienne</i> (5, Halévy; St-Georges) | |
| 1859 | <i>Herculanum</i> (4, David; Méry and Hadot) <i>Faust</i> (5, Gounod; Barbier and Carré) (Théâtre Lyrique version). War in northern Italy. | <i>Catalina di Guisa</i> (3, Paniagua y Vasques; Romani), Mexico City Darwin, <i>On the Origin of Species</i> |
| 1860 | | <i>Kroatika</i> (4, Dütsch; Kulikov), St Petersburg; <i>Lurline</i> (3, Wallace; Fitzball), London |
| 1861 | <i>Tannhäuser</i> (3, Wagner) (Opéra version); work begins on the new Paris Opéra designed by Garnier | Emancipation of Russian serfs Death of Cavour, architect of Italian unification; death of Scribe. Victor Emmanuel II proclaimed King of Italy |
| 1862 | <i>La Reine de Saba</i> (5, Gounod; Barbier and Carré); French intervention in Mexico (to 1866); Hugo, <i>Les Misérables</i> | Prague: Provisional Theatre opened |
| 1863 | <i>Les Troyens</i> Acts III–V (Berlioz) at Théâtre Lyrique | <i>Judith</i> (5, Serov; Serov and others), St Petersburg; second Polish revolt |
| 1864 | Death of Meyerbeer | |
| 1865 | <i>L'Africaine</i> (5, Meyerbeer; Scribe) (edited by Fétis) | <i>Tristan und Isolde</i> (3, Wagner), Munich; <i>The Templars in Moravia</i> (3, Šebor; Sabina), Prague; <i>Rogneda</i> (5, Serov; Serov and others), St Petersburg |

| Events and operas in France | | Events and operas outside France |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| 1866 | | <i>The Brandenburgers in Bohemia</i> (3, Smetana; Sabina), Prague; war between Prussia and Austria |
| 1867 | <i>Don Carlos</i> (5, Verdi; Du Locle and Méry) | |
| 1868 | | <i>Lejla</i> (4, later 5, Bendl; Krásnohorská), Prague; <i>Mefistofele</i> (5, Boito), Milan; <i>Dalibor</i> (3, Smetana; Wenzig), Prague; <i>The Hussite Bride</i> (5, Šebor; Ruffer), Prague |
| 1869 | <i>Faust</i> (5, Gounod; with added ballets: Opéra version); Verlaine, <i>Fêtes galantes</i> | <i>Das Rheingold</i> (1, Wagner), Munich |
| 1870 | Franco–Prussian war; French defeated at Sedan; collapse of Second Empire; founding of Third Republic | <i>Il Guarany</i> (4, Gomes; Scalvini, D’Ormeville), Milan; <i>Bretislav</i> (5, Bendl; Krásnohorská), Prague; <i>Die Walküre</i> (3, Wagner), Munich. Italian army occupies Rome, which is then incorporated within the Kingdom of Italy. Birth of Lenin |
| 1871 | Paris Commune (March–May) | Proclamation of German Empire (Reich); Bismarck governs German Empire to 1890. <i>Aida</i> (4, Verdi; Ghislanzoni), Cairo |
| 1873 | | <i>The Maid of Pskov</i> (4 then 3, Rimsky-Korsakov), St Petersburg; <i>Fosca</i> (4, Gomes; Ghislanzoni), Milan |
| 1874 | | <i>Boris Godunov</i> (4, Musorgsky), St Petersburg; <i>La Gioconda</i> (4, Ponchielli; Boito), Milan. Russian Populist students try to incite peasantry |
| 1875 | Inauguration of the new Paris Opéra designed by Garnier | <i>Demon</i> (3, Rubinstein; Viskovatov, Maykov), St Petersburg; <i>Makkavei</i> (<i>Die Maccabäer</i>) (3, Rubinstein; Mosenthal), Berlin [St Petersburg, 1877]; <i>Mefistofele</i> [revised] (4, Boito), Bologna |
| 1876 | | <i>Der Ring des Nibelungen</i> (Wagner): as a cycle, Bayreuth; <i>Vanda</i> (5, Dvořák; Beneš-Šumavský and Zákrejs), Prague |
| 1877 | <i>Le Roi de Lahore</i> (5, Massenet; Gallet) | <i>Samson et Dalila</i> (3, Saint-Saëns; Lemaire), Weimar |
| 1878 | <i>Polyeucte</i> (5, Gounod; Barbier and Carré) | |
| 1879 | Anti-clericalism movement increases in France | <i>Maria Tudor</i> (4, Gomes; Praga, Boito, Zanardini), Milan; <i>Neron</i> (4, Rubinstein; Barbier), Hamburg |
| 1880 | <i>Aida</i> (4, Verdi; French translation by Du Locle and Nutter) | <i>Don Giovanni d’Austria</i> (4, Marchetti; D’Ormeville), Turin; <i>Il figliuol prodigo</i> (4, Ponchielli; Zanardini), Milan |
| 1881 | <i>Le Tribut de Zamora</i> (4, Gounod; d’Ennery and Brésil) | Tsar Alexander II assassinated. <i>The Veiled Prophet of Khorassan</i> (3, Stanford; Squire), Hanover [in German]; <i>Orleanska deva</i> (<i>The Maid of Orleans</i>) (4, Tchaikovsky), St Petersburg; <i>Libuše</i> (3, Smetana; Wenzig), Prague; <i>Blaník</i> (3, Fibich; Krásnohorská), Prague; <i>Hérodiade</i> (3, later 4, Massenet; Milliet, Hartmann and Zanardini), Brussels |
| 1882 | <i>Françoise de Rimini</i> (5, Thomas; Barbier and Carré) | <i>Dimitrij</i> (4, Dvořák; Červinková-Riegrová), Prague |

| | Events and operas in France | Events and operas outside France |
|--------|--|---|
| 1883 | <i>Henry VIII</i> (4, Saint-Saëns; Détroyat and Silvestre) | <i>Dejanice</i> (4, Catalani; Zanardini), Milan. Prague: National Theatre rebuilt |
| 1884 | Huysmans, <i>A rebours</i> | <i>Sigurd</i> (4, Reyer; du Locle and Blau), Brussels; <i>Mazeppa</i> (3, Tchaikovsky; Burenin, rev. Tchaikovsky), Moscow; <i>The Bride of Messina</i> (3, Fibich; Hostinský), Prague |
| 1885 | <i>Le Cid</i> (4, Massenet; d'Ennery, Gallet and Blau) | <i>Marion Delorme</i> (5, Ponchielli; Golisciani), Milan German expansion in Africa begins |
| 1886 | <i>Patrie!</i> (5, Paladilhe; Gallet and Sardou) | <i>Khovanshchina</i> (5, Musorgsky, completed by Rimsky-Korsakov), St Petersburg <i>Gwendoline</i> (3, Chabrier; Mendès), Brussels |
| 1889 | | <i>Lo schiavo</i> (4, Gomes; Paravicini), Rio de Janeiro |
| 1890 | <i>Ascanio</i> (5, Saint-Saëns; Gallet) | <i>Prince Igor</i> (4, Borodin), St Petersburg |
| 1891 | | <i>Les Troyens</i> (5, Berlioz), Karlsruhe; <i>Ivanhoe</i> (3, Sullivan; Sturgis), London |
| 1892 | | <i>Mlada</i> (4, Rimsky-Korsakov), St Petersburg; <i>Cristoforo Colombo</i> (5, Franchetti; Illica), Genoa; <i>Nydia</i> (5, Fox), London |
| 1893 | <i>Thaïs</i> (3, Massenet; Gallet) | <i>I Medici</i> (4, Leoncavallo), Milan |
| 1894 | <i>Frédégonde</i> (5, Saint-Saëns; Gallet) | |
| 1896 | Dreyfus case re-opened | <i>Hedy</i> (4, Fibich; Schulzová), Prague |
| 1897 | | <i>Pampa</i> (3, Berutti; Borra), Buenos Aires. Czech language in Bohemia granted equality with German |
| 1897/8 | | <i>Sadko</i> (3 or 5, Rimsky-Korsakov), Moscow |
| 1898 | Zola, 'J'accuse' | |
| 1899 | Dreyfus pardoned | <i>Yupanki</i> (3, Berutti; Rodriguez Larreta), Buenos Aires |
| 1900 | | Russian Socialist Revolutionary Party founded. King Umberto of Italy assassinated |
| 1901 | | <i>Os saldunes</i> (3, Miguéz; Neto), Rio de Janeiro |
| 1902 | | <i>Servilia</i> (5, Rimsky-Korsakov), St Petersburg |
| 1903 | | Russian Communist Party founded |
| 1904 | | <i>Armida</i> (4, Dvořák; Vrchlický), Prague |
| 1905 | Separation of Church and State | |
| 1907 | | <i>Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh</i> (4, Rimsky-Korsakov), St Petersburg |

