

Victor Herbert on Patrick Gilmore, Roger Sessions on Arnold Schoenberg, Copland on Igor Stravinsky, Arthur Berger on Copland, and John Zorn on Carl Stallings. With such a rich web of interconnections, it is no surprise that Tick, as she writes in her preface, came to “hear the sources talk to one another in imaginary conversations” (vii). Equipped with a robust index, her anthology allows the inquisitive reader to dip into its pages at any point and explore lines of inquiry that extend outward in all directions.

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Verdi in America: Oberto through Rigoletto. By George W. Martin. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2011.

Opera has been in the forefront of musical genres in the United States almost from its founding. During the early years of the nineteenth century, a number of visiting companies, including the famous Manuel Garcia troupe, the New Orleans Opera Company, and various English companies, toured the East Coast. Lorenzo da Ponte, thrice Mozart’s librettist, was residing in New York, where he formed an opera company, which was not financially successful. As the country’s population grew, the performance of opera was viewed as the indicator of an up-to-date, sophisticated society that was equal to its European counterpart. Italian opera predominated in New York, which, by mid-century, was the largest metropolis in the country. Audiences clamored to hear recent operas, including those by Rossini, Donizetti, and the young talent, Giuseppe Verdi, as well as the best European singers. If the performing forces didn’t fully equal those that could be heard in Europe, they were, at the least, a decent approximation that gave listeners a good idea of the original.

George W. Martin has written a comprehensive book on the performance of Verdi in the United States. His *Verdi in America: Oberto through Rigoletto* is a tour de force. Martin surveys, discusses, and speculates on many aspects of Verdi’s first seventeen operas. The book is divided into an introduction, three main parts, and a conclusion. In a brief preface, Martin enumerates the three purposes of the book: “to describe the reception in the United States during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries of each of Verdi’s first seventeen operas . . . recounting how opinion of them formed and changed; to show how the so-called Verdi Renaissance of the twentieth century gave new life to some of his operas that previously had failed here while leading seven more to their U.S. premieres; and to provide a context against which the operas’ receptions may be gauged” (2).

Martin’s introduction is wide ranging, as is chapter 7, which introduces the operas discussed in part 2. In the introduction, Martin provides a contextual overview for the ups and downs of Verdi reception not only in the United States, but in Europe as well. He notes, for example, that at the Metropolitan Opera between 1893 and 1896, six of Verdi’s operas were performed forty-two times. A decade later, Wagner greatly

surpassed Verdi: ten of the former's operas, his entire mature output, received 156 performances, compared to seventy-four performances of five of the latter's more popular operas.

Chapter 7, "The Country's Growth Stimulates Opera," documents the growth of opera performances through the tours of the Havana Company, the local New York companies managed by Max Maretzek and Maurice Strakosch, the influence of the German population on German-language performances, the construction of new and larger venues, and other topics. Surprisingly, there is no mention of the performances by French singers of French-language operas, operettas, and vaudevilles, which also contributed to New York's leading position in the production of opera in America.

Martin's examination of each opera is comprehensive, from its first performance in the United States to its most recent performances through 2008. In part 1, he examines the six Verdi operas presented by the Havana Company in the United States between 1847 and 1850. Each opera is allotted a chapter, in which Martin details its world, western hemisphere, and American premieres. For *Nabucco*, for example, he speculates on the reasons that, even though it was popular all over Europe, its first performance in the western hemisphere occurred after the premieres of three later operas—*I Lombardi*, *Ernani*, and *I due Foscari*.

Following his documentation of the operas' nineteenth-century receptions, Martin recounts the operas' mixed fortunes in the twentieth century. For many of the performances in the latter half of the twentieth century, Martin has been present in the audience. In some cases, he seconds the opinions of the critics. At other times, he disputes their judgments. For a 1957 performance of the 1865 version of *Macbeth* by the New York City Opera, for example, which included the ten-minute ballet in which Hecate is summoned by the witches, Martin notes that Howard Taubman of the *New York Times* "judged the dancing as 'barely passable'" (127). He continues, "In fact, the ballet was as much mime as dancing—Verdi directed that 'Hecate should never dance, but only assume poses'—and in my opinion (having attended two of the three performances) much of it was impressive, not only the movements that [Robert] Joffrey designed for the evocation and appearance of Hecate, but the music itself" (127).

In part 2, Martin examines three American resident opera companies—the New Orleans, Maretzek, and Richings troupes—and the four Verdi operas they premiered between 1850 and 1860—*I masnadieri*, *Jérusalem*, *Luisa Miller*, and *Rigoletto*. Although *Rigoletto* is today the most performed of the four, Martin recounts the divided opinions that greeted its premieres in New York and Boston. In his discussion of these early performances, for which Maretzek had commissioned an orchestration from the piano-vocal score rather than using Verdi's original, Martin questions the impresario's decision to bring Verdi's off-stage band to the stage; this decision resulted in an imbalance of instrumental forces—the American band of twenty played against an orchestra of about forty—causing the *Herald's* critic to comment that they "succeeded in making a tremendous noise during the first act. The vocal music was entirely crushed" (203).

In part 3, Martin examines the seven operas that did not receive their first American performances until the late twentieth century. Martin's attention to detail is most impressive. He has consulted the critical editions of the operas, when

available, to discern how accurately each production followed the opera as Verdi intended it to be heard, and has carefully documented the various performances that have been given by regional companies across the nation. In documenting the history of performances of *Giovanna d'Arco*, for example, Martin begins his exploration with the performance of a cavatina by Clotilde Barili at a Henri Herz concert in January 1847. The next performance appears to have been in 1850, when Theresa Parodi sang a romanza. Several other numbers were heard in arrangements, played by the U.S. Marine Band in 1855, and the Overture was heard at the opening of the Brooklyn Academy of Music in 1861. He continues to trace the various performances of excerpts through the twentieth century until the 1966 American premiere in concert form by the American Opera Society, and one by the Boston Concert Opera in 1978. Among the other productions documented are the 1976 stage premiere by the New York Grand Opera; the 1980 San Diego performances; a 1983 outdoor performance in Central Park; and later representations, in both concert and staged versions, by the Opera Orchestra of New York, the Collegiate Chorale, and the Canadian Opera Company, among others.

Verdi in America concludes with six appendices, of which the last, "An Arrangement, a Reduction, and the Score as Written," is the most interesting. Martin distinguishes between an operatic "arrangement," which connotes an orchestra of "thirty-two instruments or less," and a "reduction," which defines one of "thirty-two or more." To examine the differences, Martin returns to *Stiffelio*. He compares three performances by different companies in several venues with varied numbers of strings, winds, and brass players. His examples, though specifically addressing *Stiffelio*, provide readers with an excellent understanding of the problems companies face when undertaking the production of any opera. Martin concludes, "Each performance offers a compromise, and as most operagoers recognize, more is not always better, and neither is less" (362).

Martin succeeds extraordinarily in achieving his stated goals. He has written a vibrant book that is filled with enough detailed information on Verdi's operas to satisfy a researcher's needs, but is also readily accessible to the general operagoer who is interested in the history of Verdi performances in America. One looks forward with great anticipation to his survey of the remainder of Verdi's operas, from *La Traviata* through *Falstaff*.

John Graziano



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Jazz/Not Jazz: The Music and Its Boundaries. Edited by David Ake, Charles Hiroshi Garrett, and Daniel Goldmark. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012.

One of the most contentious issues in jazz scholarship in the past several decades has been the definition of jazz itself. The contributors to a fine new collection of