



Staging Scenes from the Operas of Mozart: A Guide for Teachers and Singers

By William Ferrara

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In *Staging Scenes from the Operas of Mozart: A Guide for Teachers and Singers*, opera director William Ferrara offers the perfect resource for the dramatic preparation of opera scenes for directors and student performers. Topics include study and research, rehearsal planning, blocking, characterization, and costuming for four of Mozart's most popular operas. He surveys basic concepts of opera acting and directing and provides a step-by-step guide to the rehearsal process. While much has appeared on the history and musical performance practice of the operas of Mozart, no guide to the directing and acting of his operas—with simple, concise staging instructions and practical information concerning casting, props, and costumes—has yet seen publication.

Featuring over one hundred illustrations, including costume designs by Martha Ferrara, the author breaks new ground for student performers and directors alike, as he walks readers through the process of staging scenes from Mozart's operas. The first part of the guide, which focuses on study and preparation, comprises five chapters: ideas for organizing the opera class, a description of the job of the director, a step-by-step review of the rehearsal process, a set of five exercises for researching and analyzing the scenes, and a vocabulary for actors and directors. The next four sections of the book consist of detailed staging guides for a selection of scenes from Mozart's most frequently performed operas: *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutte*, and *Die Zauberflöte*. The introduction to each scene includes a brief discussion of the story and characters, suggestions for costuming, and minimal set and props. The heart of this guide is the text and translation of each scene, embedded with line-by-line acting notes, and blocking directions and diagrams. These are for use by the actors during speaking and blocking rehearsals and are especially valuable when rehearsing recitatives.

Intended for college and university voice teachers seeking guidance for developing a scenes program or opera workshop class, this is also the perfect workbook for students studying opera stage direction, as well as graduate and undergraduate students performing opera scenes by Mozart.

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Editorial Review

Review

A resource for directors and student performers, this work provides guidance on staging four of Mozart's most popular operas, including concrete suggestions for blocking, characterization and costuming. The author, a professor and opera director himself, surveys basic concepts of opera acting and offers step-by-step instruction for the rehearsal process. (*Opera America*)

About the Author

William Ferrara is Director of Opera at the University of Oklahoma School of Music. He enjoys an international reputation as a stage director and acting teacher for opera. In his thirty-year career he has directed more than 150 productions of plays, musicals, and operas at colleges and professional theaters across the country and in Italy and South America.

Illustrator **Martha Ferrara** is head of the Undergraduate Costume Design Program at California Institute of the Arts and is an award-winning designer for theater, dance, opera, and film. She is best known for interpreting performance costumes from the works of visual artists, including Oskar Kokoschka, Grandma Moses, and Kasimir Malevich. These costumes have been exhibited at the National Gallery of Art–East Wing, the Smithsonian Institution, and the History of Sculpture exhibit in Basel, Switzerland.

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