

The staging of opera has become immensely controversial over the last twenty years. Tom Sutcliffe here offers an engaging and far-reaching book about opera performance and interpretation. This work is a unique tribute to the most distinctive and adventurous achievements in the theatrical interpretation of opera as it has developed in recent decades. Readers will find descriptions of the most original and successful avant-garde opera productions in Britain, Europe, and America. Sutcliffe beautifully illustrates how updating, transposition, or relocation, and a variety of unexpected imagery in opera, have qualified and adjusted our perception of the content and intention of established masterpieces. *Believing in Opera* describes in detail the seminal opera productions of the last fifty years, starting with Peter Brook in London after the war, and continuing with the work of such directors and producers as Patrice Chereau in Bayreuth, Peter Sellars and David Alden in America, Ruth Berghaus in Frankfurt, and such British directors as Richard Jones, Graham Vick, Peter Hall, and David Pountney. Through his descriptions of these works, Sutcliffe states that theatrical opera has been enormously influenced by the editing style, imagery, and metaphor commonplace in the cinema and pop videos. The evolution of the performing arts depends upon revitalization and defamiliarization, he asserts. The issue is no longer naturalism, but the liberation of the audiences imagination powered by the music. Sutcliffe, an opera critic for many years, argues that opera is theater plus music of the highest expressive quality, and as a result he has often sided with unconventional and novel theatrical interpretations. He believes that there is more to opera than meets the ear, and his aim is to further the process of understanding and interpretation of these important opera productions. No other book has attempted this kind of monumental survey. Originally published in 1997. The Princeton Legacy Library uses the latest print-on-demand technology to again make available previously out-of-print books from the distinguished backlist of Princeton University Press. These paperback editions preserve the original texts of these important books while presenting them in durable paperback editions. The goal of the Princeton Legacy Library is to vastly increase access to the rich scholarly heritage found in the thousands of books published by Princeton University Press since its founding in 1905.

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