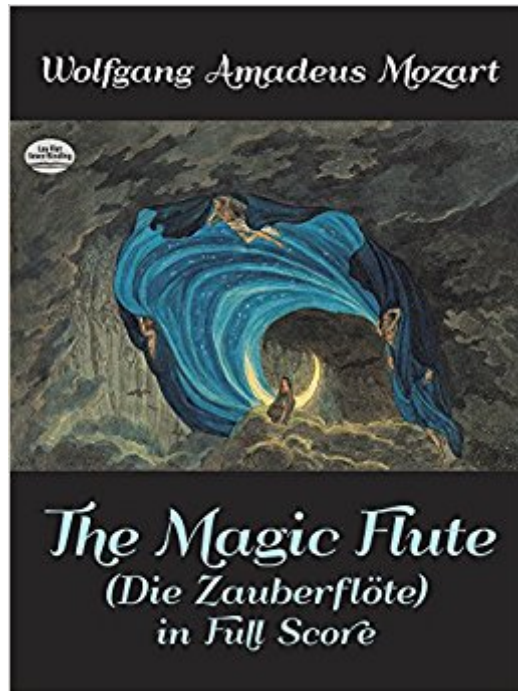




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The Magic Flute (Die Zauberflöte) In Full Score (Dover Music Scores)



Synopsis

"It is the evident quiet approbation which best pleases me! It is apparent that this opera is rising rapidly and steadily in estimation." • Mozart, letter to his wife, October 7-8, 1791. Unfortunately, his tragic death a scant two months later prevented Mozart from ever realizing the full accuracy of this observation, made a few performances after the cool reception given *The Magic Flute* at its Viennese premiere. In May 1791, Mozart's friend Emanuel Schikaneder commissioned *The Magic Flute*. In keeping with the popular level of this theater, Schikaneder himself supplied Mozart with the libretto about the rescue of a good fairy's daughter from a wicked magician by a hero armed with a magic flute. After a good deal of the music was written, the composer and librettist • both Freemasons • grafted Masonic ideals onto the plot, transforming a simple fairy tale into a moralistic allegory and a Singspiel into one of the world's greatest operas. This handsome, moderately priced volume, reprinted directly from an authoritative edition, will enable musicians, music students, and opera lovers to gain a fuller appreciation of Mozart's mastery of operatic language, orchestral color, and dramatic expression. A helpful feature of this edition is the inclusion of all spoken dialog, usually abbreviated in other editions.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Mozart's "fairy-tale opera" is one of the most beloved works in the repertory. It is a favorite for children's first exposure to opera as it is an enchanting work jammed with melodies that are both

noble and playful. The Magic Flute is also one of the most problematic works in the repertory, full of staging difficulties (the hero enters, pursued by a monstrous serpent, and promptly faints--not very heroic of him) and some elements that seem unpleasantly sexist and racist to today's sensibilities. And there's the perennial malcontent who's all too eager to point out that The Magic Flute is not really a grand opera in any case, but a mere singspiel, with spoken dialogue and coarse comedy, no better than an operetta. And what's with all the Masonic imagery? The story certainly has problems, but the score--one of Mozart's last--overcomes them all as surely as the Three Ladies scrag the serpent and Sarastro and the forces of truth and reason overcome the wicked Queen of the Night. This music has it all, from the heroic notes of Sarastro and the priests to the humor of the bird catcher Papageno. Don't overlook the wonderful ensembles of the Drei Damen and Drei Knaben; Mozart blends trios of soprano voices in a way that's undiluted magic, and that no one even came close to imitating until more than two centuries later, when Richard Strauss took the master's lessons to heart. You can examine for yourself just how Mozart achieved his effect with this full orchestral score from Dover. It's a reprint of another publisher's out-of-copyright score (C.F. Peters of Leipzig, in this particular case); also, there's not a word of English in it once you get past Dover's title pages and the translation of the table of contents that they've thoughtfully provided. What you will get is all of the instrumental parts (note that most pianists will be unable to do much with this score!), all of the vocal parts, and acres of uncut German dialogue. Dover scores are a reasonably priced resource for singers, instrumentalists, conductors, and anyone who cares deeply about the opera.

Adapting any work to sequential art is intimidating, but adapting opera takes a special kind of confidence. Adapting comic opera--particularly one by Mozart--takes a confidence that borders on hubris. Fortunately, Russell, who's adapted everything from Neil Gaiman's short stories to The Ring of the Niebelung, has the talent to back up his ambition. Sure and confident, Russell's art switches from tense action sequences to slapstick without missing a beat. His sense of physical characterization is also impressive, helping readers keep track of Mozart's often confusing cast of characters. Even traditionally less-recognized aspects of comics presentation, like color and lettering, here serve the story brilliantly. And as impressive as Russell's art is, his writing is possibly even more noteworthy. Much of this graphic novel is told without narration or dialogue (presumably to simulate the longer musical passages Mozart included in the opera), and Russell's selection of sequential images keeps the story moving along without ever losing readers. When he does use dialogue, often the hardest part of a graphic novel to pull off properly, he hits just the right tones:

brash and aspiring for young Prince Tamino, earthy and hearty for cynical bird-catcher Papageno, haughty and cryptic for the mysterious Queen of Night. NBM's reprint of Russell's classic adaptation superbly displays the artist's skill at both writing and illustrating. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

I bought this because we were going to see a local abbreviated production. Now, my daughter wants us to read it to her all the time. And she wants the CD playing in the background as we read. She is very happy that Papagena wears pink. She is very concerned about the padlock on Papageno's mouth. She has cast the opera from the beautiful illustrations. The first lady is Mommy, the other ladies are her sitter and her sitter's mother (?). Her brother Will is the serpent, "but it is just a costume." "Mommy kills 'ill" is a frequent refrain (wishful thinking? Nah, she dotes on her brother. She is just type-casting. That is why I, her father, is Prince Tamino. She knows many of the details of the story, even though we often selectively edit the text when we read it to her. My only quibbles, as someone who has performed, directed and conducted this opera many times, are the odd deviations from the libretto. Some plot points are muddled and some characters are misinterpreted. I find myself telling the story as written by Schikaneder and Mozart more often than not, which is extra work. Also, some of the musical selections are odd. I would have picked numbers that move the plot such as the quintet of the "bad guys" in the finale rather than arias that stop the show, such as Sarastro's snoozer.

I just wanted to warn people thinking of getting this book -- make sure you're getting the one you want! The editorial review for the children's version of "The Magic Flute" refers in part to a Black Dog Opera version -- **that's** the one with the libretto and two CDs. The children's version (retold by Anne Gatti) has only one CD of selections from the opera, and no libretto, just a retelling of the story. I bought the children's version by mistake, based on the editorial review and the customer reviews (some of which also claim that 2 CDs are included), but it turns out these do not refer at all to the children's version. That said, if you're just looking for something for your kids, definitely go for the children's version (ASIN 0811810038). The illustrations are cute, and the text is written to follow along with the CD selections... fine for the age range they indicate. If, however, you want the full libretto with translations, and the full opera on CD, make sure you get the "Black Dog" version which is referenced as "hardcover edition" on the kid's version page. (Hope that makes sense!)

This retelling is child friendly as well as a nice overview of the opera's plot for any age of reader. It is

best as a read aloud - in smallish doses - to children younger than fourth grade due to the word density. I send this book home frequently when my piano students play excerpts from The Magic Flute. The artwork is bright, and the CD gives the students an idea of the original work. I recommend reading the book and then viewing some scenes on YouTube.

Nowhere else will you find such a deal. I was skeptical at first, but was not disappointed when my first Black Dog set came in the mail. The book is extremely informative, helpful, and educational, and the CDs are high-quality recordings of notable performances. I do not know how they do it for such a good price, but get them while you can --- I wish I had known about these two years ago!

I did not buy this for myself, but for my seven year old grand nephew, together with the abridged Met Magic Flute. His father, my nephew, has reported they go together like hand and glove. I trust his judgement, so I am recommending the combo to anyone who wants to introduce children to the magic of opera.

Thank you

The book includes the lyrics but also the story of the "making". My children (under 9) and I really enjoy listening to the 2 CDs

This is definitely the best opera by Mozart. This edition is well organized and gives you all music and dialogs.

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