



Seven Mozart Librettos: A Verse Translation

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"McClatchy's heroic labor is a remarkable achievement. . . . Mozart and Da Ponte will be smiling down on this volume."?Richard Wilbur

A landmark event in the world of music, Mozart's seven major librettos have finally been translated in verse with a sparkling poetic quality that matches the magnificence of the originals. Beginning this epic endeavor with his translation of *The Magic Flute*, first introduced at the Metropolitan Opera, McClatchy has now completed his translations of *Idomeneo*, *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, *Cosi Fan Tutte*, and *La Clemenza di Tito*. The result is a brilliantly translated and handsomely designed volume that brings the lively wordplay and drama of the originals to life in a verse that matches the exuberance and lyricism of the original Da Ponte, Schikaneder, Varesco, Mazzola, and Stephanie librettos. With facing-page text and an illuminating introduction to each opera—including a dramatic recap, a history of the opera, and a list of characters—this book is a masterpiece, the likes of which has never been seen in English before. 8 black-and-white illustrations

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Editorial Review

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Poet and librettist McClatchy's mission in translating the librettos for seven of Mozart's magnificent operas (the "most enduring operas in the history of music") was to "follow the original texts with both fidelity and imagination." As McClatchy explains, Mozart didn't write librettos, but he was "the dramatist of his operas," revising each libretto to best express the inner life of his characters and make the language musical. From Idomeneo, Mozart's "first triumph in the opera house," to The Magic Flute, and including the work of Lorenzo Da Ponte, the poetic librettist for The Marriage of Figaro, Don Giovanni, and Così Fan Tutte with whom Mozart worked closely, McClatchy's translations are marvelously supple, lucid, and spirited. Not only does he break new ground by translating verse into verse, he is also attuned to the wit and profound loneliness and longing in Mozart, infusing each finely crafted line with emotion. Accompanied by scintillating and incisive commentary, each libretto is presented in both its original language and in English on facing pages, making for a unique and thrilling tour de force. --Donna Seaman

Review

"Starred Review. Readers familiar with the operas will enjoy seeing their favorite passages retranslated by the sure hand of a great poet who is steeped in love for language, music, and drama. Highly recommended for all collections; an essential purchase for music libraries."

- *Library Journal*

"To translate any one of these librettos into a readable prose text would be an accomplishment. To translate all seven into rhyming verse and prose recitative, fearlessly tackling two languages, is a major literary and musical event."

- **David Lehman, *The Best American Poetry blog***

About the Author

J. D. McClatchy is the author of six collections of poems, three books of prose, and thirteen original libretti performed around the world. The editor of the Yale Review, he lives in Stonington, Connecticut.

Users Review

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