

# My Memories of an Operatic Golden Age

I was fortunate to grow up during the golden age of opera, a time when the world's greatest singers and conductors graced the stages of the world's leading opera houses. I saw Maria Callas, Renata Tebaldi, Joan Sutherland, and Luciano Pavarotti in their prime, and I heard Herbert von Karajan, Leonard Bernstein, and Georg Solti conduct some of the most memorable performances of my life.



## Virginia Zeani: Virginia Zeani: My Memories of an Operatic Golden Age by David Stubbs

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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In those days, opera was a glamorous affair. The singers were like movie stars, and the audiences were dressed to the nines. The atmosphere was electric, and the performances were often unforgettable. I remember seeing Callas sing Norma at the Metropolitan Opera in the early 1950s. She was in her vocal prime, and her performance was simply breathtaking. The audience was spellbound, and I was left with a memory that I will cherish for the rest of my life.

Tebaldi was another great soprano of the golden age. I saw her sing Aida at the San Francisco Opera in the late 1950s. Her voice was pure and beautiful, and her stage presence was captivating. She was the perfect Aida, and her performance was one of the most moving I have ever seen.

Sutherland was a unique soprano. She had a voice that was both powerful and agile, and she was able to sing the most difficult roles with ease. I saw her sing Lucia di Lammermoor at the Royal Opera House in London in the early 1960s. Her performance was flawless, and she received a standing ovation that lasted for several minutes. She was truly a once-in-a-lifetime singer.

Pavarotti was the greatest tenor of the golden age. I saw him sing Radames in Aida at the Metropolitan Opera in the early 1970s. His voice was simply phenomenal, and his stage presence was electrifying. He was the complete package, and his performance was one of the most exciting I have ever seen.

Karajan was one of the greatest conductors of the golden age. I saw him conduct the Vienna Philharmonic in a performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony at the Salzburg Festival in the early 1960s. His interpretation was both powerful and moving, and the performance was one of the most memorable of my life.

Bernstein was another great conductor of the golden age. I saw him conduct the New York Philharmonic in a performance of Mahler's Symphony No. 2 at Carnegie Hall in the late 1960s. He somehow managed to capture and control the turbulent energy of the music, and the result was

a performance that was both thrilling and profound. He was a true visionary, and his performances were always an event.

Solti was the third great conductor of the golden age. I saw him conduct the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in a performance of Verdi's Requiem at the Ravinia Festival in the early 1970s. His interpretation was both dramatic and intense, and the performance was one of the most powerful I have ever heard. He was a master of the operatic repertoire, and his performances were always unforgettable.

The golden age of opera is long gone, but the memories of those great singers and conductors will live on forever. I am grateful that I had the opportunity to experience their artistry firsthand. It was a truly magical time, and I will never forget it.

In recent years, there has been a renewed interest in opera. A new generation of singers and conductors are emerging, and they are bringing a fresh perspective to the art form. I believe that the future of opera is bright, and I look forward to seeing what the next generation of artists has to offer.



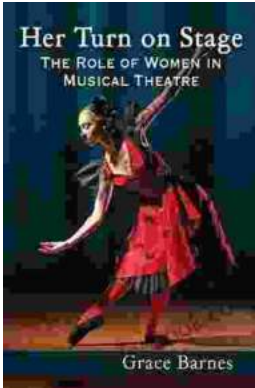
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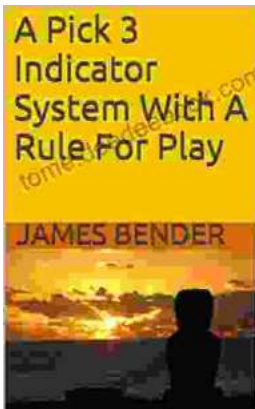
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