



**Carnegie
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Pittsburgh**

PITTSBURGH **OPERA** EDUCATION

2020–2021 Opera Season Recommended Listening and Reading List

A collaboration of Pittsburgh Opera and the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh Music Department, with special thanks to Rebekah Hill and Julie Hanify.

Please note that there are other books, CDs, and DVDs beyond this list available at the Carnegie Library and for purchase at your favorite store. Call numbers indicate holdings of the Music Department, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, unless otherwise indicated.

As we follow current COVID-19 protocols, we encourage you to call 412-622-3114 or visit the website, www.carnegielibrary.org for more information about borrowing materials. Items can be requested and delivered to your neighborhood library for in-person or curbside pick-up (check with your local library for this information).

The Music Department at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh offers an extensive collection of materials pertaining to opera, from composer biographies, studies of operas, and histories of opera, to opera libretti, opera scores, and performances on CD and DVD. The items listed below constitute a small selection to whet your appetite as you look forward to a live or livestreamed performance. Enjoy!

Semele

by George Frideric Handel, 1685–1759

CD

- CD *Semele*, Deutsche Grammophon, 1993 (1990)
Battle, Aler, Ramey, Chance, Horne, Mackie, McNair, Doss; Nelson, Ambrosian Opera Chorus, English Chamber Orchestra
COMPACT DISC Op Han 4874

- CD *Semele*, Erato, 1993 (1983)
Burrowes, Rolfe-Johnson, Lloyd, Penrose, Denley, Thomas, Davies, Jones, Kwella, Friday; Gardiner, Monteverdi Choir, English Baroque Soloists
COMPACT DISC Ch Han 4903

Libretto

The two recordings in our collection contain the libretto by William Congreve.

For further reading

George Frideric Handel: A Life with Friends, by Ellen T. Harris. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2014.

Handel scholar Ellen Harris' biography focuses on the man behind the music. Who was Handel when he was not out in public promoting his compositions? Harris also provides some of the controversial background of *Semele*, an opera disguised as an oratorio. Italian opera fans were not happy when the English-language *Semele* premiered at Covent Garden and not at the Middlesex Opera's theatre. Worse yet, it was and is one of Handel's best works. An interesting read.

ML410.H13 H279 2014

Handel, rev. edition, by Christopher Hogwood. New York: Thames & Hudson, 2007.

Early music specialist Hogwood presents a thorough portrait of the composer. Hogwood's afterword in this revised edition (first edition published in 1984) discusses the interest in scholarship and performances of Handel's works, particularly his Italian operas and dramatic oratorios.

ML410.H13 H57 2007

George Frideric Handel, by Paul Henry Lang. New York: W. W. Norton, 1966.

Lang takes us on a chronological journey of Handel's life and music. In the chapter covering the period when Handel composed *Semele*, 1742–1744, we learn not only about the controversy surrounding the presentation of the work as an oratorio, but also the moral outrage in response to the suggestive libretto and the passionate behavior of the title character. Revered as a composer of religious music, Handel's own classification of this new work landed him in hot water with his dedicated audience.

ML410.H13 L16

Explore more about opera online!

Operabase

<https://www.operabase.com/en>

This website allows you to search opera performance details of artists and international opera companies, including upcoming schedules. Operabase has documented operatic activity worldwide since 1996, with more than 500,000 performances on file. It records the work of artists in more than 900 theaters, and publishes season information to opera-goers in 23 languages.

OperaGlass

opera.stanford.edu/

A great resource for plot synopses of operas, libretti, discographies, and performance histories. Links to other opera websites are also listed.

YouTube

youtube.com

Though YouTube is not a specific site for opera research, it really does have everything and anything as far as video and sound clips. If you use the title of any opera in a search, you will find several archived performances from stage productions, concerts, and more.

Visit the Pittsburgh Opera website: www.pittsburghopera.org

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