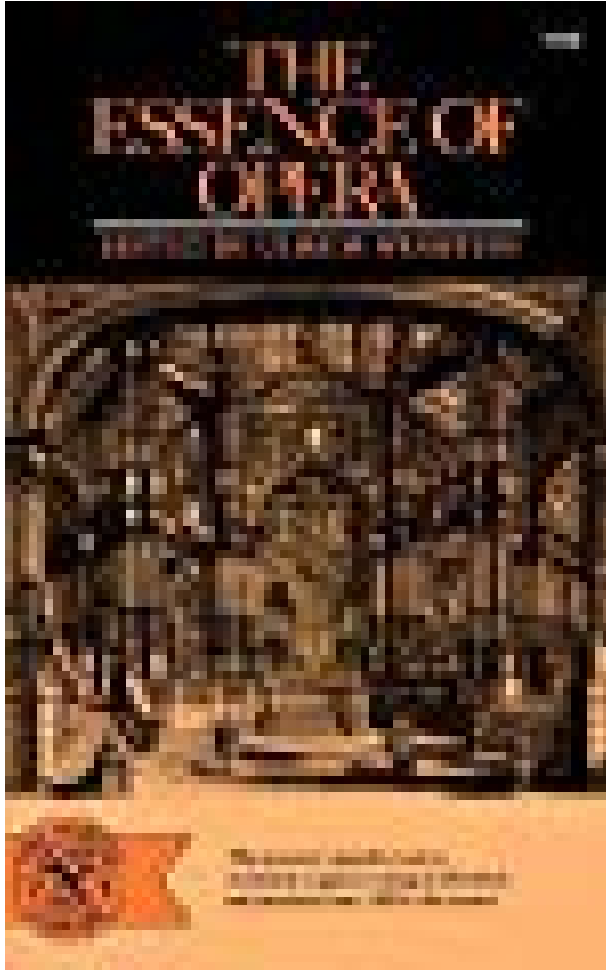


The Essence of Opera



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The contents of this anthology offer a broad historical introduction to the esthetics of opera, reflecting all the major periods and national styles.

Ranging from the Florentine Camerata to the twentieth century, the documents give a first-hand view of the basic issues throughout opera's history and the controversies they have aroused. The selections are drawn from letters, essays, prefaces, and books and represent the views held by a wide variety of composers and librettists over the last 350 years, from Rinuccini to Corneille, Addison, Rameau, the French Encyclopedists, and Metastasio to such writers of the present century as Hoffmannsthal, Claudel, and Brecht.