



## Wagner's Meistersinger: Performance, History, Representation (Music)

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Richard Wagner's *Die Meistersinger von Nurnberg* has been one of the most performed operas ever since its premiere in 1868. It was adopted as Germany's national opera ("Nationaloper"), not least because of its historical coincidence with the unification of Germany under Bismarck in 1871. The first section of this volume, "Performing Meistersinger," contains three commissioned articles from internationally respected artists - a conductor (Peter Schneider), a stage director (Harry Kupfer) and a singer (Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau), all experienced in the performance of this unusually demanding 5-hour work. The second section, "Meistersinger and History," examines both the representation of German history in the opera and the way the opera has functioned in history through political appropriation and staging practice. The third section, "Representations," is the most eclectic, exploring in the first place the problematic question of genre from the perspective of a theatrical historian. The chronic issue of Wagner's chief opponent, Eduard Hanslick, and his musical and dramatic representation in the opera as Beckmesser, is then addressed, as are gender issues, and Wagner's own utterances concerning the opera. Contributors: Nicholas Vazsonyi, Peter Schneider, Harry Kupfer, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Hans Rudolf Vaget, Lutz Koepnick, David B. Dennis, Klaus Van Den Berg, Thomas S. Grey, Lydia Goehr, Eva Rieger, Peter Höyng. Nicholas Vazsonyi is Associate Professor of German and Comparative Literature, University of South Carolina.

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