

Opera & Design - Simon Rees BA, MA

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Opera is an elaborate, even extravagant, art form. From its earliest times at the beginning of the 17th century, up to the present day, it has employed artists and architects to design sets and costumes, and has used the richest materials and effects, often by means of tromp-l'oeil and other forms of visual trickery. Simon Rees traces the arts associated with opera through surviving drawings, paintings, early theatres and their scenery, up to the present day, where such artists as John Piper, Sidney Nolan and David Hockney have thrived as theatre designers. Simon Rees draws on his own experience as Welsh National Opera's Dramaturg from 1989-2012 in delivering this detailed and entertaining account.



Simon Rees studied at Colchester Royal Grammar School and Trinity College, Cambridge, receiving a BA and an MA in English Literature. Taught in Italy and Japan, exploring the art and architecture of both countries. From 1989 to 2012 was Dramaturg at Welsh National Opera in Cardiff, working with set, costume and props designers and giving lectures on their work in opera production. Now a freelance writer and lecturer, lectures widely on opera, art history and literature, travelling extensively with travel companies. Has published several novels (including the award-winning *The Devil's Looking-Glass*), poems and opera librettos.

