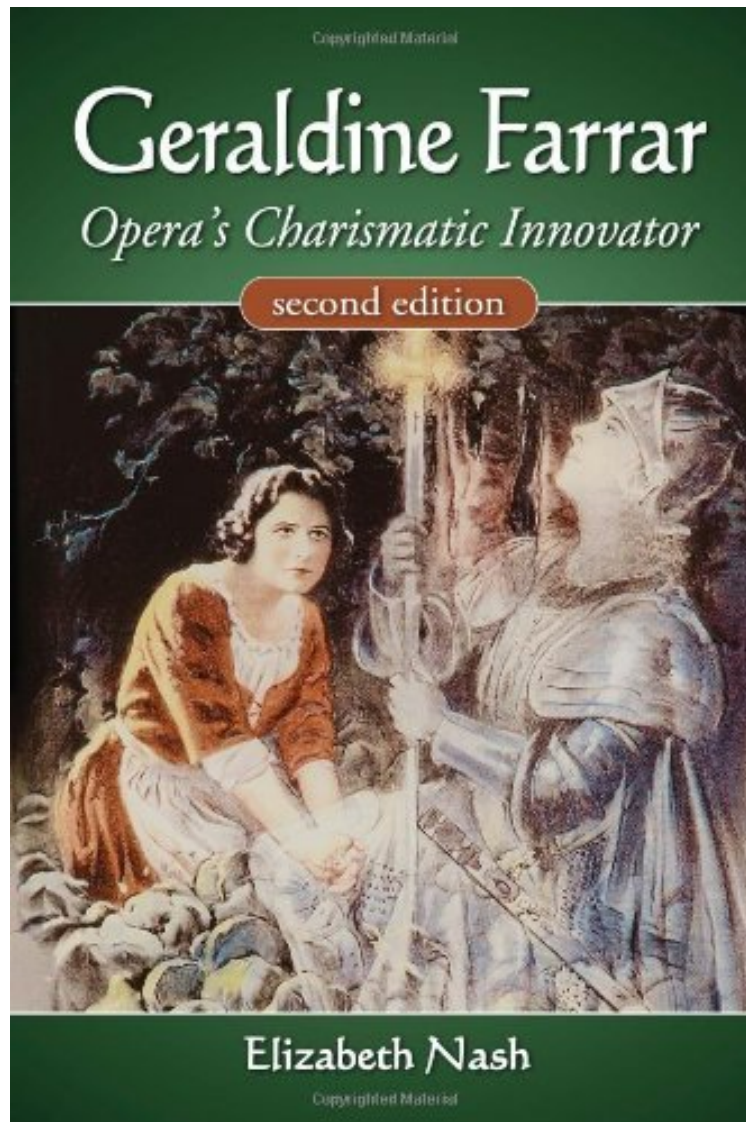


[Library ebook] Geraldine Farrar: Operarsquo;s Charismatic Innovator, 2d ed.

Geraldine Farrar: Operarsquo;s Charismatic Innovator, 2d ed.

Elizabeth Nash

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Elizabeth Nash : Geraldine Farrar: Operarsquo;s Charismatic Innovator, 2d ed. before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Geraldine Farrar: Operarsquo;s Charismatic Innovator, 2d ed.:

4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Interesting enough BUT Certainly Not Definitive with its Mistakes...By Dennis E. FerraraA biography of this American soprano needs to be fully definitive and this one in its second edition by Elizabeth Nash does not fulfill this requirement whatsoever. Granted, she was certainly a actress-singer; however, she is best remembered through her recordings and very little about her films since only two are

available on DVD: Carmen and Joan the Woman; moreover, there are also several problems concerning information and the lack thereof. According to the Metropolitan Opera Annuals as compiled by William Seltsam, 1947, Farrar never sang Violetta in *La traviata* in 1908 or any other time at the Met; rather, she sang only once the very secondary role of Flora in Act I as part of the Farewell Appearance and 25 Anniversary of Marcella Sembrich on February 6, 1908. Strange, Nash lists this fine reference book in her bibliography but did not seem to refer to it enough. The photo, one of several, with incorrect dates, states "Farrar as Violetta in 1919" (pg. 21). Further mistakes include: pg. 68 "Farrar as the Goose Girl, 1916." Again, according to Seltsam, Koningskinder was dropped from the Met in 1914 after the April 18 (Matinee) performance. The opera had been a staple from 1910 until 1914 because of Farrar. In fact, she recorded two excerpts from it; yet, the opera was never seen again on the Met stage. Concerning the photo of "Farrar as Mignon 1916," in the Victor Book of the Opera (2nd and 3rd edition), this same photo appears in 1913 and 1915 respectively and before 1916. The author refers to Farrar's vocal problems; in *The Great Singers from the Dawn of Opera to Caruso, Callas and Pavarotti, Henry Pleasants*, 1981, interesting, this reference book is not listed as part of Nash's bibliography, he refers to Farrar having a vocal node on her throat and an operation followed. Granted, she was an actress singer; however, nothing is discussed regarding her recordings. By the way, the author incorrectly states something about the "Victor Gramophone Company...." The Victor Company was always known as the Victor Talking Machine Company until the change in 1928-1929 and it became RCA-Victor. The German sister company was known as the Gramophone Company but never Gramaphone Company. Regarding the excellent resource website: (www.victor.library.ucsb.edu/index/_plp/talent/detail/28157/Farrar_Geraldine_vocalist_soprano_vocal), the discography there does not list the 33 G T's of Ms. Farrar recorded in Berlin in 1905, and two sessions in 1906. The author should have checked the excellent source on Ms. Farrar found in *The Record Collector*, vol XIII, nos.9/10. Farrar talks about her recordings. Concerning the author's statements that "Farrar recorded from 1907-1927." This is not quite accurate. Farrar's last acoustic sessions were on April 3, 1923, five recordings; however, only two selections were published. There are no recordings in 1924 through 1926; however, on January 11, 1927, five selections were recorded; January 12, 1927, seven sections were recorded; March 12, 1927, 12 selections; and April 5, 1927, seven; however, all electrical recordings including some experimental Bell recordings done in 1930 were all unpublished until the the recent cds issued by WardMarston. Collectors and opera buffs must again wait until someone else decides to really do an excellent and definitive biography on Geraldine Farrar. There is information available regarding Farrar's recording contracts and royalties at BMG in New York. There is nothing discussed regarding Farrar's only reproducing roll for the AMPICO Company: *Mighty Like a Rose* - 201392-G; there is no information regarding Farrar's vocal arrangements and transcriptions. A definitive listing should have been made regarding dates and casts of her MET performances - 1907-1922. If the author knows little about her varied recordings, there are certainly enough very knowledgeable collectors and historians who could have helped Nash to make this book outstanding instead of a short, mediocre book with several factual mistakes. 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. a well-written biography of a great star By Col. William Russell (ret) Writing a biography of a singer is very hard. All too often what get either a boring chronology of she/he sang-here-sang-there or the unobjective written by a fan who lavishes praise ignoring the human failings of the subject. This book is well-written and shows a well-rounded picture of a great star. The one failing of this book is not with the biography but that it would've been helpful to add a discography as an appendix. There is a list of CD reissues but collectors enjoy a discography of the original recordings with recording dates, matrix numbers, and takes published. One comment I will make is that the author fails to give the correct title for Leoncavallo's best-known opera. The correct title is "Pagliacci" (the title on the manuscript), not "I Pagliacci" (a common error that reserach would've gotten right) nor, in her version, "I pagliacci" (the P is capitalized). Another is that the author could've spent a few lines explaining that Farrar, a newcomer, was given the 1906 Metropolitan opening night is that this was not long after Caruso's "monkey house" affair and the management didn't know how the audience would react. As a note, when Caruso did appear next he was given an ovation proving that the fears were groundless.

From 1906 until 1922, Geraldine Farrar was the Metropolitan Operas' most popular and glamorous prima donna. Convinced that music must always serve the drama, she often sacrificed tonal beauty to dramatic effect, and her acting was noted for its intensity and realism. Nevertheless, Farrar was a superb singer, possessing a beautiful lyric soprano voice. Farrar was also a star of the silent screen, appearing in 14 films from 1915 to 1920. In retirement, she was mentor and friend to the African American soprano Camilla Williams, enabling Williams to become the first African American to have a regular contract with a major American opera company. This biography and critical analysis of Farrar's career provides a detailed account of her major contributions to the history of opera.

"descriptions of Farrar's stage performances are so vividly related you feel as if you are there on stage with her...pretty impressive especially when talking about something that happened in the early 1900s...the research is impeccable and richly detailed, the writing first-rate...the balance between the life and the art is well-done"--Classic Images; "a major addition to the literature about singers of the past"--The Record Collector; "an affectionate and respectful profile"--

ARSC Journal."excellent biography and analysis...descriptions of Farrar's stage performances are so vividly related you feel as if you are there on stage with her...pretty impressive especially when talking about something that happened in the early 1900s...the research is impeccable and richly detailed, the writing first-rate...the balance between the life and the art is well-done"--Classic Images; "a major addition to the literature about singers of the past"--The Record Collector; "an affectionate and respectful profile"--ARSC Journal.About the AuthorElizabeth Nash is an associate professor in the University of Minnesota's Department of Theatre Arts and Dance. She lives in Edina Minnesota.