



In Character: Opera Portraiture

John F. Martin

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In Character: Opera Portraiture memorably captures operatic performers away from the audience but fully inhabiting their roles. It showcases the work of John F. Martin, who for years set up a portable studio in the basement of the San Francisco Opera and photographed the players in costume and full makeup right before or after they took the stage. The subjects range from nonsinging supernumeraries through chorus members and comprimarii to operas greatest stars, such as Anna Netrebko, Natalie Dessay, Deborah Voigt, Juan Diego Flórez, and Dmitri Hvorostovsky. Their roles run the gamut of opera personalities: heroes and heroines, villains and outcasts, royalty and common folk, Biblical figures and creatures of myth. Facing Martin's camera, each artist projects the essence of his or her character, however great or small the part.

The book also features a foreword by author Amy Tan; a preface by David Gockley, general director of the San Francisco Opera; essays on opera behind the scenes, the vital role of costumes, and the transformation of singers into characters; and an interview with world-renowned soprano Danielle de Niese. A collection unlike any other, In Character will have broad appeal to opera and theater buffs, costume and fashion aficionados, and anyone who appreciates fine art photography.

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