

Audio Encyclopedia

Development of Opera in Bulgaria

Bulgarian Opera Houses

Sofia National Opera • Blagoevgrad Opera • Burgas Opera • Pleven Opera • Plovdiv Opera
Ruse Opera • Stara Zagora Opera • Varna Opera

Bulgarian Opera Composers

Georgi Atanasov • Marin Goleminov • Parashkev Hadjiev • Konstantin Iliev • Alexander Jossifov
Krasimir Kyurkchiiski • Emanuil Manolov • Lazar Nikolov • Lyubomir Pipkov
Alexander Raichev • Bozhidar Spasov • Veselin Stoyanov • Pancho Vladigerov

Opera Stars from Bulgaria

Additional Bulgarian Singers

Bulgarian National Radio

Boris Christoff International Competition For Young Singers

Bulgarian National Operas

- Atanasov: Gergana
- Hadjiev: Lud Gidiya
- Manolov: Siromachkinya

Bulgarian Stars in Opera from Other Countries

- Verdi *Un ballo in maschera*
- Wagner *Lohengrin*

Selected excerpts:

- Bellini *Norma*
- Ponchielli *La gioconda*
- Puccini *Turandot*
- Verdi *Aida*
- Verdi *Attila*
- Verdi *Un ballo in maschera*
- Verdi *Il trovatore*

Balkanton Recordings



Opera from Bulgaria

Perhaps one of the most important, but not well known, exports of Bulgaria is its opera singers. There are few major opera stages in the world that have not benefited from the artistry and voices of these singers. To many otherwise knowledgeable opera fans, these singers are perceived to be Russian rather than Bulgarian. There are a number of reasons for this: little understanding of the Slavic languages, limited awareness of Bulgaria itself, and possibly the political climate of earlier decades which restricted many Bulgarian singers to performing in the Eastern Bloc countries.

The interest in opera in Bulgaria dates only from the end of the 19th century. This was most likely due to the country being under the control of the Ottoman Turks until the liberation of 1878. The earliest operatic influences came from Czech bandmasters who set up orchestras in Bulgaria after the liberation as well as performances in the 1880's and 1890's by touring opera companies from Italy and Russia. That tradition is reflected in the opening music for this page, a fragment of the ballet from Tzar Kaloyan.

Our purpose in this project is to present an overview of the singers and operatic life in Bulgaria rather than an in-depth study. Anyone interested in more detailed information on a particular singer or subject presented here is encouraged to research more thoroughly. Meanwhile, we hope that this volume of the Audio Encyclopedia will both convey insight into the rich development of opera in Bulgaria and incentive to research the artists and music of the country.

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