

Carlo Zuccarini

# Enjoying the Operatic Voice

*A Neuropsychanalytic Exploration of the Operatic Reception Experience*

COGNITIVE SCIENCE AND PSYCHOLOGY

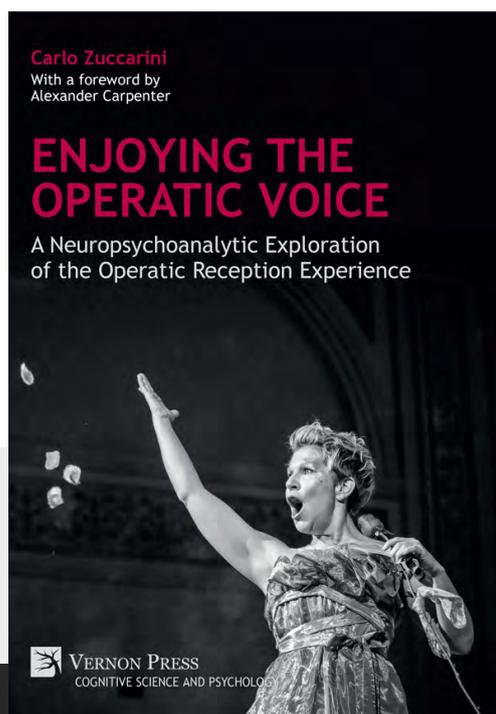
## About the author

**Carlo Zuccarini** holds a PhD in Psychology and an MA in Psychoanalysis and Contemporary Society, both from Brunel University in London. This book is based on his doctoral research. He is an independent scholar, and his research interests include psychoanalysis, in particular, applied to operatic performance and the singing voice and music psychology/neuropsychology. He has presented his research on the reception of the operatic voice at conferences in England and Austria, including the Mozart & Science conference in Vienna. In addition to combining his research with his long-standing passion for opera, he is an established translator specialising in psychoanalysis, psychology and medicine.

## Summary

There has been a long-standing and mutually-informing association between psychoanalysis, literature and the arts. Surprisingly, given the oral/aural basis of the 'talking cure', music has largely been overlooked by psychoanalysis. Notably, neuroscientific research investigating music reception and production has been steadily increasing in range and scope over the years. However, in order to avoid confounding factors, empirical studies have focused primarily on non-vocal music. Remarkably, operatic vocal music has not featured prominently in either field. Yet the multi-dimensional, multi-layered nature of opera, which fuses together a number of different arts, would appear to provide fertile soil for both disciplines.

This book aims to fill that gap, providing a stepping stone for further research. It leverages the individual strengths of psychoanalysis and neuroscience both separately and jointly as the inter-discipline of neuropsychanalysis. By combining various theories of mind with knowledge about music processing in the brain, this book comprehensively examines the operatic reception experience, providing an account in subjective as well as objective terms. It explores the bittersweet enjoyment of operatic vocal music, which can literally move an operaphile to tears. The explanation for this may be found in a number of subjective dynamics that are unique to the reception of opera, rather than in any distinct objective neural processes, which are common to the reception of all music. These subjective dynamics, which are recruited during neural processing, are triggered by the equally unique features of the operatic voice, in combination with a number of auxiliary elements that are specific to opera. This book will be of interest to academics in a broad range of science and arts disciplines related to music perception and performance, such as music psychology and operatic performance. It may also appeal to passionate operaphiles who wish to understand what drives their addiction!



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