



Giacomo Meyerbeer: A Guide to Research

Robert Ignatius Letellier and Marco Clemente Pellegrini

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This Guide has resulted from years of research on the papers and music of Giacomo Meyerbeer, and aims to provide a bibliographical aid and point of reference for further research. The first part presents the private papers connected to the composer and his principal librettist, Eugène Scribe both archival and printed, with working papers and correspondence, as found in Berlin, Paris and some of the famous libraries of the world. The body of Part 2 draws together all the known resources on Meyerbeer's life and historical reputation from full scale biographies and entries in reference books, through critical discussions to website resources to records of symposia. The third part provides material about his background with its unique mixture of Jewish and Prussian elements, the powerful role of the city of Berlin in his life and work. The fourth part lists bibliographic material for Meyerbeer's music, looking at his operas, grouped as German, Italian and French, with each individual entry providing a record of the scores available, both modern and historical, the various arrangements made from the operas during the heyday of their popularity, reviews of modern performances, discography, and bibliography of studies and publications pertinent to the wider cultural and historical contexts of the works. The next two sections constitute an extended record of material pertinent to the contemporaries of Meyerbeer. In the fifth section are select bibliographies of composers, authors, artists, performers, politicians, those who played some part in the composer's life, or anyone of significance in his wider contemporary circumstances. This is continued in the sixth part where the cultural and aesthetic elements of the composer's milieu, or life in the theatre during seventy years of the nineteenth century, are listed. The seventh part adds a bibliography of social and historical background, where the incidental issues of Judaism in nineteenth-century Europe, and the wider political, historical and geographical circumstances of Meyerbeer's life, his relentless travelling, and closely recorded experiences in Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, England, and Austria. The eighth section provides a thematic key to this extensive material. Part 9 provides an extended tripartite series of lists of the published scores, arrangements and some special studies of Meyerbeer over the period 1820 to 2005 in alphabetical, chronological and thematic ordering. The last two sections furnish the modern equivalent of this record of Meyerbeer and his compositions, showing in Part 11 the list of performances of his operas since the Second World War, and in Part 12, listing the recordings of the operas, both commercial and private, for the same period. The thirteenth and last section is iconographical, pictures that represent an interesting survey of the popular response to Meyerbeer in the 19th century.

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