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# PITTSBURGH **OPERA** EDUCATION

## **2020–2021 Opera Season Recommended Listening and Reading List**

*A collaboration of Pittsburgh Opera and the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh Music Department, with special thanks to Rebekah Hill and Julie Hanify.*

*Please note that there are other books, CDs, and DVDs beyond this list available at the Carnegie Library and for purchase at your favorite store. Call numbers indicate holdings of the Music Department, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, unless otherwise indicated.*

*As we follow current COVID-19 protocols, we encourage you to call 412-622-3114 or visit the website, [www.carnegielibrary.org](http://www.carnegielibrary.org) for more information about borrowing materials. Items can be requested and delivered to your neighborhood library for in-person or curbside pick-up (check with your local library for this information).*

The Music Department at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh offers an extensive collection of materials pertaining to opera, from composer biographies, studies of operas, and histories of opera, to opera libretti, opera scores, and performances on CD and DVD. The items listed below constitute a small selection to whet your appetite as you look forward to a live or livestreamed performance. Enjoy!

## ***Charlie Parker's Yardbird***

by Daniel Schnyder, 1961–  
& Bridgette A. Wimberly

### **CD & DVD**

- CD Parker, Charlie  
*The Complete Verve Master Takes*, Verve, 2003.  
Features recordings of Charlie Parker with various ensembles from 1947–1954. The liner notes are written by Phil Schaap, curator of Jazz at Lincoln Center.  
COMPACT DISC Jz Par 34859

## CD & DVD

CD Parker, Charlie

*Now's the Time: The Revolutionary Charlie Parker*, Savoy Jazz, 2006.

Features recordings of Charlie Parker with various ensembles from 1945–1948. The song, *Now's the Time*, is used as a theme in Schnyder and Wimberly's opera, and features Bird's good friend, Dizzy Gillespie, on trumpet.

COMPACT DISC Jz Par 45903

DVD *Celebrating Bird: The Triumph of Charlie Parker*, Medici Arts, 2009 (1987).

Based upon the biography by Gary Giddins, this documentary presents the life of Charlie Parker through film clips, photos, and interviews. A stunning highlight: Charlie Parker's only surviving television appearance playing *Hot House*.

(DVD) ML419.P4 C45 2009x

## Libretto

The libretto, written by Bridgette A. Wimberly, has not been commercially published.

## For further reading

*Kansas City Lightning: The Rise and Times of Charlie Parker*, by Stanley Crouch. New York: Harper, 2013.

This biography by the late jazz writer and critic, Stanley Crouch, explores the early life and career of Charlie Parker. Crouch writes about Parker's Depression-era childhood in Kansas City and his performances in his hometown (the late-night "freak shows" and "spook breakfasts"), the segregated union halls of Chicago and the ballrooms of New York's Harlem. The biography also reveals Parker's introduction to drugs, the relationship with his protective mother and the romance with his high school sweetheart and first wife, Rebecca Ruffin. A fascinating read.

ML419.P4 C76 2013

*Celebrating Bird: The Triumph of Charlie Parker* by Gary Giddins. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013.

Giddins' revised edition of his 1987 biography attempts to overturn the myths about Charlie Parker and reveal a portrait of a true jazz genius. Drawing upon original sources, including several photographs that have never been published before, Giddins writes with true passion about a remarkable musician.

ML419.P4 G5 2013

<https://danielschnyder.com/>

The official website for composer and saxophonist Daniel Schnyder provides biographical information, a works list, a list of recordings (including Bandcamp tracks) and information about projects and events.

## For further reading

<https://seattleopera.libsyn.com/how-daniel-schnyder-bridgette-wimberly-created-charlie-parkers-yardbird>

This podcast from Seattle Opera features a conversation among *Yardbird*'s composer, Daniel Schnyder, librettist Bridgette A. Wimberly, Seattle Opera's Jonathan Dean, and Abe Beeson of radio station KNKX. Seattle Opera's production of *Charlie Parker's Yardbird* premiered in its 2020 season.

## Explore more about opera online!

### Operabase

<https://www.operabase.com/en>

This website allows you to search opera performance details of artists and international opera companies, including upcoming schedules. Operabase has documented operatic activity worldwide since 1996, with more than 500,000 performances on file. It records the work of artists in more than 900 theaters, and publishes season information to opera-goers in 23 languages.

### OperaGlass

[opera.stanford.edu/](http://opera.stanford.edu/)

A great resource for plot synopses of operas, libretti, discographies, and performance histories. Links to other opera websites are also listed.

### YouTube

[youtube.com](http://youtube.com)

Though YouTube is not a specific site for opera research, it really does have everything and anything as far as video and sound clips. If you use the title of any opera in a search, you will find several archived performances from stage productions, concerts, and more.

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