



Lorenzo Da Ponte: The Life and Times of Mozart's Librettist

Sheila Hodges

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Three of the greatest operas ever written—The Marriage of Figaro, Don Giovanni, and Così fan tutte—join the exquisite music of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart with the perfectly matched libretti of Lorenzo Da Ponte. Da Ponte's own long life (1749–1838), however, was more fantastic than any opera plot. A poor Jew who became a Catholic priest; a priest who became a young gambler and rake; a teacher, poet, and librettist of genius who became a Pennsylvania greengrocer; an impoverished immigrant to America who became professor of Italian at Columbia University—wherever Da Ponte went, he arrived a penniless fugitive and made a new and eventful life. Sheila Hodges follows him from the last glittering years of the Venetian Republic to the Vienna of Mozart and Salieri, and from George III's London to New York City.

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