



Four Last Songs: Aging and Creativity in Verdi, Strauss, Messiaen, and Britten (Hardback)

By Linda Hutcheon, Michael Hutcheon

The University of Chicago Press, United States, 2015. Hardback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book. Aging and creativity can seem a particularly fraught relationship for artists, who often face age-related difficulties at a time when their audience's expectations of their talents are at a peak. In *Four Last Songs*, Linda and Michael Hutcheon explore this issue through close looks at those who created some of the world's most important and influential operas. Giuseppe Verdi (1813 - 1901), Richard Strauss (1864 - 1949), Olivier Messiaen (1908 - 92), and Benjamin Britten (1913 - 76) all wrote operas late in life, pieces that reveal radically individual responses to the challenges of growing older. Verdi's *Falstaff*, his only comedic success, combated the influence of Richard Wagner by introducing young Italian composers to a new model of national music. Strauss, on the other hand, struggling with personal and political problems in Nazi Germany, composed the self-reflexive *Capriccio*, a life review of opera and his own musical legacy. Though it exhausted him physically and emotionally, Messiaen finished at the age of seventy-five his first and only opera, *Saint Francois d Assise*, which marked the religious and aesthetic pinnacle of his...



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