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## **Opera on the Couch Music, Emotional Life, and Unconscious Aspects of Mind**

### *Acknowledgments*

Lee Rather Ph.D.

I want to thank Steve Goldberg MD for inviting me to be part of this project. It was during a fortuitous meeting at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) in 2009 that we realized our shared passion for opera, and he suggested that I become part of the ‘Opera on the Couch’ speaker series. Becoming a regular presenter provided an opportunity to venture beyond clinical writing, to integrate my long-standing pursuits in music and psychoanalysis, and eventually to co-editing this volume. In addition, I also want to thank all of our contributors for the passionate work they put into the manuscripts included in this volume, and for the consistent responsiveness with which they met our editing suggestions.

There is an ever-evolving aesthetic loop between one’s earliest experiences of certain works of art, literature, and music, and one’s deepening appreciation of these works as time passes. I am pleased to contribute a chapter on Mozart’s *The Magic Flute*, which is one such work for me, one which represents the confluence of many currents. To begin with, it was my first opera, experienced in 1963 in the renown Marionette Theater in Munich, in the company of my father, an opera enthusiast and intellectual historian. Many years later, in the aforementioned meeting with Steve at SFMOMA, it turns out were each there on repeats visits to an exhibition that featured drawings, stage

sets, and video images for William Kentridge's production of *The Magic Flute*. And finally, in an uncanny coincidence, I was to discover that *The Magic Flute* had long been one of my wife's favorite operas. In fact, as a sixteen-year-old, she and her friends had spent a year building their own marionettes, stage sets and a small puppet theater to perform and videotape their own neighborhood production of the opera.

Writing and editing are creative processes pursued in relative seclusion, but I have always felt in communion with a host of persons past and present including my colleagues, patients, and the many literary, musical, and cultural heroes that have inspired me. But above all, I want to express my deepest gratitude to Stefanie Nickel-Rather. Her unwavering love, support, humor, and capacity for deep and sustained critical thinking have enriched my life in ways words could never express.

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