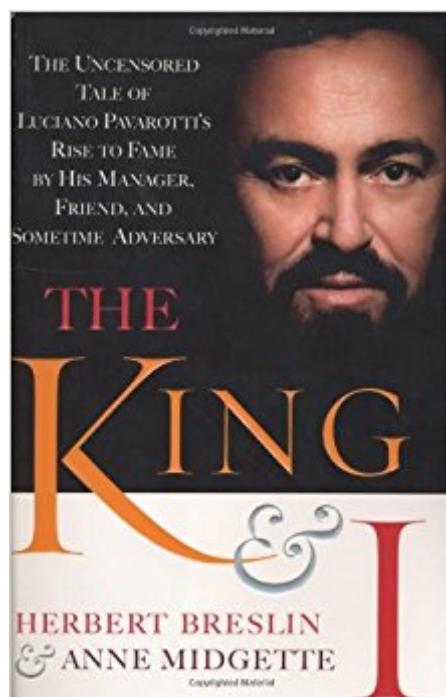


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The King And I: The Uncensored Tale Of Luciano Pavarotti's Rise To Fame By His Manager, Friend And Sometime Adversary



Synopsis

Luciano Pavarotti's longtime manager and friend tells all. *All. The King and I* is the story of the thirty-six-year-old business relationship between Luciano Pavarotti and his manager, Herbert Breslin, during which Breslin guided what he calls, justifiably, "the greatest career in classical music." During that career, Breslin moved Pavarotti out of the opera house and onto the concert (and the world) stage and into the arms of a huge mass public. How he and Pavarotti changed the landscape of opera is one of the most significant and entertaining stories in the history of classical music, and Herbert Breslin relates the tale in a brash, candid, witty fashion that is often bitingly frank and profane. He also provides a portrait of his friend and client—a "beautiful, simple, lovely guy who turned into a very determined, aggressive, and somewhat unhappy superstar"—that is by turns affectionate and satirical and full of hilarious details and tales out of school, with Pavarotti emerging as something like the ultimate Italian male. The book is also enlivened by the voices of other players in the soap opera drama that was Pavarotti's career, and they are no less uncensored than Herbert Breslin. The last word, in fact, comes from none other than Luciano Pavarotti himself! *The King and I* is the ultimate backstage book about the greatest opera star of the past century—and it's a delight to read as well.

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Customer Reviews

In this outspoken and entertaining book, the authors chronicle Breslin's 36 years as publicist and manager for tenor Pavarotti, from the early days when the singer was, Breslin says, "a very

beautiful, simple, lovely guy," to the final years of his career, when Breslin found him "a very determined, aggressive, and somewhat unhappy superstar." In Breslin's frank telling, Pavarotti emerges as a charming but utterly impossible man with an outsized ego, a need to dominate, a total disregard for other people (from secretaries and coaches to world-renowned conductors) and a passion for food, women, horses and money. Breslin is blunt about Pavarotti's many quirks and foibles, such as his superstitions, his inability to read music and his frequent failure to learn the words of his opera parts in time for performances. Accounts of the singer's missteps in recent years, such as the embarrassing final Metropolitan Opera appearances, are especially unflattering. Tenor and manager parted by mutual agreement, but Breslin doesn't take the separation lightly. Pavarotti seems unaffected by the acrimony; the book concludes with an interview he gave Midgette, a classical music reviewer for the *New York Times*, in which he expresses appreciation for his longtime manager and friend. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

At his career peak, Pavarotti was called the king of the high Cs. But Breslin, his manager for 36 years, called him Mr. Brain; he knew everything, you see. With his clear, projecting voice, Pavarotti rose to fame with a strategy of impressive solo concertizing that eventually propelled him to the operatic stage. His first loves, however, were food and the society of family and friends. Generous, he also had a lazy streak that later stunted the development of his repertoire. He had trouble memorizing words, and he never read music. He moved minimally onstage, preferring to emote through singing, not action; his foray into movies, *Yes, Giorgio*, was a near disaster. Breslin's forte was his stubbornness at getting everything his client wanted--and he is driven by money. Sprinkled with many stories of other clients and Pavarotti's costars, the book is more about the manager-client relationship, including the coddling and the epithets, than about Pavarotti *per se*. Nevertheless, its stories of a star's rise and fall are told from the heart. Alan HirschCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

As a huge fan of Pavarotti, I was thrilled to start reading this book. Mr. Breslin had a clear disdain for Mr. Pavarotti's personality, but acknowledged the amazing vocal talents of a great singer. I zipped right through this book, which is gossipy and wry. It was a good read, and showed a side of Pavarotti we are all curious to learn, but feel guilty after enjoying the stories initially. I gave it away to a friend after reading it once.

I'm still in love w/Luciano

Mr. Breslin speaks very highly of himself here and it is hard to hear much of anything else but....I managed. His bitterness shows itself while revealing a lot of juicy items about his so-called friend of 36 years. All true? Who can tell for sure. I was shocked to know that the Pav was still alive when this ghastly tale broke. I was sure that he had died prior to it's release but to see that he actually read most of it and also gave an interview regarding it....will wonders never ceased. He must have been terribly hurt but then again.... it was who he was and he knew it. The only thing he refuted was the fact about reading notes in a score which he claims to have been able to do. I think he did. What pettiness on Breslin's side. He was a nothing transported to millionaire status during Pavorotti's era.I have learned much about Opera by reading this book however. I enjoyed learning about other singers and their relationship to Luciano. To me though it appears to be the Soap Opera of the 17th and 18th centuries. And makes billions for the producers today.The few Italian men who wrote these sordid tales setting them to music must have been living these sordid kinds of lives and then had beautiful singers, at the time, sing their hearts out to justify their lifestyles.Pavarotti himself lived the Opera stories that he sang. His movie, Yes, Georgio, was none other than a prophetic foretelling of his adultery against Adua his lovely, talented and faithful wife of 35 years who did only good for her gigolo husband. And to think he had his long marriage annulled. How horrible of him! She stayed at home raising their three little girls while Pavarotti played the millionaire gigolo cavorting with several floozies that happens to come along. Nicoletta is definitely a part in this tale of sin and betrayal. I have lost all respect for this man that I loved so much. I will no longer listen to Opera either due to what I have learned about it.The words to the songs being sung set to truly lovely music are stories filled with lust, plots of murder, bloody deaths, are licentious and vulgar. To me, Opera has become a cult. A cult for the rich to dress up to go hear sorted plays that sing of worldliness and sin. Classical music is what I now prefer or better yet. Gospel music. Ciao!

This was a good read. Interesting life of Pavarotti.

It seems like a very honest book with many insites into the world of Pavarotti. Knowing one of the players in the book made it even more interesting.

Wonderful book that tells it like it is and was

This book is mostly a list of complaints that Breslin had in reference to working for Pavarotti. He didn't complain about the money he made though in exploiting this man's talent. Pavarotti was human like the rest of us and of course had his faults. Others have described him as warm, loving and generous. This may be illustrated by the chapter that Pavarotti wrote at the end of this book. He was most generous to Breslin in his comments and never mentioned anything unflattering about his former manager. Maybe this illustrates the attitudes of the two men better than anything Breslin mentions in the book. Finally, Pavarotti will be defined most by his incomparable voice and great talent. He was truly the greatest tenor. Vinceroooooooo! Vinceroooooooo! Mr. Pavarotti, you won!! You won!!!

We all loved to hear Pavarotti sing. He returned to his audience his joy of singing; it looked as if he was grateful for us to share that experience. But he was also the typical "testa di tenore". He made a mess of a great career. The book appears to be honest and true. It is better not to know the personal life of great artists. It is also good reading, and probably only confirms a lot of what we, music lovers, knew.

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