

OPERA EXPLAINED

This series introduces, in words and music, the plot and background of major operas. Using the principal themes and arias, taken from the Naxos recording of the complete work, Thomson Smillie is informative yet entertaining, enabling the listener to get more from this remarkable art form.

An Introduction to... BEETHOVEN Fidelio

written by **Thomson Smillie**
narrated by **David Timson**

Fidelio is a work like no other. Beethoven's only opera is about the joy of married love – by a man who never knew that pleasure. It is about heroism by a man who was often mean and petty in his human relations; it is about freedom by a man who was a prisoner of his own deafness; and ultimately it is about joy by a man who experienced precious little of it. Maybe there is a divine logic to that: feelings that the artist could not experience but could express find their noblest manifestation in music of overwhelming power and majesty.

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