



The Ballad of Baby Doe: "I Shall Walk Beside My Love"

By Duane A. Smith, John Moriarty

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First produced at the Central City Opera House in 1956, "The Ballad of Baby Doe" is now widely considered a classic and is the second most produced American opera. In *The Ballad of Baby Doe*, Duane A. Smith tells the tale of the complicated birth of this most American of operas.

Inspired in 1953 by composer Douglas Moore's interest in Horace Tabor's story and funded by the Central City Opera House Association, the opera came together through a unique combination of hard work and serendipity. Smith relates how key people - including investors and historians in addition to creative talent - turned Moore's idea into a reality and brought the story of the Tabors to millions of opera fans worldwide. In addition, Smith compares the opera's libretto with historical reality, and the book even includes a chapter on the production written by John Moriarty, who conducted the opera in 1981, 1988, and 1996.

For anyone interested in opera history or this Colorado story in particular - the emblematic tale of silver millionaire Horace Tabor and the two women he married - *The Ballad of Baby Doe* will be the definitive history for years to come.

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Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #4194180 in Books
- Brand: Brand: University Press of Colorado
- Published on: 2002-03-15
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.40" h x .40" w x 5.50" l, .49 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 128 pages

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About the Author

Duane A. Smith is a professor of history at Fort Lewis College in Durango, and is the author or coauthor of more than fifty books on Colorado and the West. He also serves as chair of the Durango Parks and Forestry Board and on the Anima School House Museum Board. **John Moriarty** is the artistic director, emeritus, Central City Opera House Association. He conducted "The Ballad of Baby Doe" there most recently in 1996.

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