Harbison's Full Moon in March: intimate opera

Overheard, back deck right while awaiting the start of a chamber production of The Barber of Seville. "Well done, we booked for Teatro at the Garden simply on its reputation. And, sitting in the Orchestra Stalls seat half-way through the first act, I noticed that Henry had fallen asleep. Well dear, you know what the prices are like at Covent Garden nowadays. So I nudged Henry and woke him up in a grumpy mood, saying: "I've paid the price of a hotel room for this, and I intend to use it as if it was one."

And what possibly apocryphal story illustrates a central problem of opera: it is perceived as being expensive, a rather special and elite activity; not that ordinary individuals cannot enjoy it. But although top prices at the major houses are inevitably inflated, there is usually a good range, with prices for this and create an evening environment can often make up for this and create an evening atmosphere.

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