



# Falling Up: The Days and Nights of Carlisle Floyd, The Authorized Biography

*Thomas Holliday*

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Actors know about "falling up": a split-second ignition from the wings, propelling entrance as a new character, an unwilling ascent to a different mode of being, an in-body experience that overlays preparation, opportunity, choice, or chance. *Falling Up*, the first and only full-length Floyd study, is a metaphor for humanity's uncanny ability to rise from seeming disaster into rebirth. Floyd's consistent succession of soars, stumbles, slides, or wrenches sings of triumph over odds. A modern Renaissance man, Floyd is our greatest living opera composer and librettist, a trained concert pianist, a master stage director, and a teacher. In *Falling Up*, Holliday offers an intimate account of the life that shaped the words and music. Combining insights from hundreds of interviews with Floyd, his family, and many of the last half-century's greatest singers, conductors, and opera administrators, *Falling Up* traces Floyd's Southern roots and the struggles and sacrifices that accompanied his rise to operatic stardom. With more than forty photographs, the detailed evolution of Floyd's fourteen operas, and in-depth analysis of his nonoperatic works, *Falling Up* is essential reading for opera fans and professionals alike, a book that moves, informs, and entertains.

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