

Guide to Single "Aida" opera costume painting C0474

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circa early 1870s

Title Statement

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

C0474

Unit ID

/repositories/2/resources/543

Unit Date

circa early 1870s

box

1 (folder)

Language

No linguistic content; Not applicable .

Abstract

Single pen and watercolor painting on paper of a costume design from the opera "Aida," made circa early 1870s.

Creator

George Mason University. Libraries. Special Collections Research Center

Extent

.01 Linear Feet 1 painting

Physical Location

R 72, C 3, S 5

Repository

George Mason University. Libraries. Special Collections Research Center

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no access restrictions.

Use Restrictions

Public Domain. There are no known restrictions.

Acquisition Information

Purchased by Steve Gerber from J & J Lubrano Music Antiquarians in September 2016.

Processing Information

Processing completed by Amanda Brent in March 2021. EAD markup completed by Amanda Brent in March 2021. This item was formerly part of the Performing Arts Manuscript Materials collection, C0215.

Preferred Citation

Single "Aida" opera costume painting, C0474, Special Collections Research Center, George Mason University Libraries.

Historical Information

"Aida" is a four-act opera by Giuseppe Verdi that premiered in 1871. Set in the Old Kingdom of Egypt and sung in Italian, it tells the story of an enslaved Ethiopian princess, the titular Aida, who is brought to the ancient Egyptian court. Unbeknownst to the court, the Egyptian military commander Radames is in love with Aida, who also returns his love. Throughout the opera the couple struggles to assert their love, while also honoring their respective countries and dealing with the war that ensues between Egypt and Ethiopia. "Aida" was immensely popular when it premiered and is still considered one of the most beloved operas today.

"Aida" has a performance history of brown and blackface, with white singers often performing characters of another race. This occurred as recently as early 2020, though there has been more effort in the opera world to cast racially appropriate singers in these roles, particularly that of Aida.

Scope and Content

Single pen and watercolor painting on paper of a costume design from the opera "Aida," made circa early 1870s. The character is unlabeled, but based on other costume designs of the era, it may be the character Radames. There are two practice sketches of a figure's head in the upper right hand corner, as well as the artist's signature in the bottom right hand corner. The painting is likely French in origin.

Related Materials

The Special Collections Research Center also holds the and the , as well as other materials related to opera, costume design, and the performing arts.

Keywords

Art

Costume design

Opera

Verdi, Giuseppe, 1813-1901. (Title of work: Aïda.)

Bibliography

Groenert, Kaeli, "Blackface at the Met: An exploration of the casting of performers of color in the roles of Aida and Othello from 2007-2017" (2019). Music. 1.

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Holmes, Helen. "The Met Casts Anna Netrebko as 'Aida' Despite Her Past Controversy in the Role," February 13, 2020. Observer. <https://observer.com/2020/02/anna-netrebko-aida-met-opera-casting-2020-2021-season-details/>.

"Synopsis: Aida." The Metropolitan Opera. Accessed March 15, 2021. <https://www.metopera.org/user-information/synopses-archive/aida>.

Arrangement

This is a single item collection.