

VERDI'S OTELLO

A USC Libraries Exploration

To enrich your enjoyment of Giuseppe Verdi's *Otello*, the USC Libraries present a selection of resources related to the composer and one of best-loved operas. USC's **Visions and Voices** presents the LA Opera performance of *Otello* on **March 5th**, in the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in downtown Los Angeles.

Verdi (1813-1901) composed twenty-eight operas during his long career, including three based on plays by William Shakespeare. After composing *Macbetto* during his early period, Verdi returned to Shakespearean sources in his eighties. He composed *Otello* and *Falstaff*, based on Shakespeare's comedy, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. These Shakespearean operas are considered Verdi's final masterpieces.

Books about Verdi

Each of these books provides helpful background information about Verdi's life, compositions, and contributions to classical and operatic traditions.

Kimbell, David. *Verdi in the age of Italian romanticism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981. MUSIC LIBRARY ML410.V4K5

Martin, George Whitney. *Verdi: his music, life and times*. New York: Limelight editions, 1992. MUSIC LIBRARY ML410.V4M266 1992

Osbourne, Charles. *Verdi*. New York: Macmillan, 1978. MUSIC LIBRARY ML410.V4O65

Online Verdi Resource

You can also explore an **online study guide** to Verdi's *Otello* that includes the complete libretto in Italian and English with historical and musical analysis by Burton Fisher. (Note: You must be visiting this resource from a USC campus or proxy network connection.)

Verdi Recordings

There are nearly forty recordings of Verdi's *Otello*. I recommend the recent CD set on Deutsche Grammophon conducted by Whun Chung. The performance stars Placido Domingo and Cheryl Struder. MUSIC LIBRARY 6618MUS

Every opera buff should investigate the 1947 Toscanini recording (RCA) and the 1961 Von Karajan recording featuring Renata Tebaldi and Mario del Monaco (Decca).

Film Version of *Otello*

Franco Zeffirelli filmed his 1986 production of *Otello* for the Teatro alla Scala. MUSIC LIBRARY MUSDVD 100

Questions

For research assistance or additional information about Verdi and related topics, please contact philosophy and humanities librarian Ross Scimeca at scimeca@usc.edu.