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 Macbeth 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.


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 Whin Chung. The performance stars Placido Domingo and Cheryl Strudler. 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.