

Fondazione
ARENA DI VERONA

**This is the program booklet
in easy language for the opera
Aida by Giuseppe Verdi**



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Title

The title of the opera is **Aida**.

Opera is a way to tell a story with music, characters, lyrics and sometimes with dance.

Composer

The composer of Aida is **Giuseppe Verdi**.

A composer writes the music for an opera.

Libretto

Antonio Ghislanzoni wrote the lyrics of Aida.

The lyrics of an opera are called librettos and the writer is called a librettist.

Characters

The characters in an opera sing songs.

Some of the songs are for voices in a high pitch.

They are called sopranos and mezzo-sopranos.

Some are in low pitch for tenors, baritones and bass.

The characters in the opera Aida are:

- **Aida.**

Aida is a slave girl from Ethiopia.

She is the main character in the story.

Aida is a soprano.

- **Radamès.**

Radamès is the Captain of the Guard in Egypt.

He is a tenor.

- **Amneris.**

Amneris is the King's daughter.

She is a mezzosoprano.

- **The King**

The King is the Pharaoh of Egypt.

He is a bass.

- **Amonasro.**

Amonasro is the king of Ethiopia.

He is a baritone.

- **Ramfis.**

Ramfis is the High Priest.

He is a bass.

- **The High Priestess**

The High Priestess is a female priest.

She is a soprano.

- **The Messenger**

The Messenger brings messages.

He is a tenor.

Other characters in an opera or a play are called extras.

Extras are often in the background and they do not have names.

Some of the extras in Aida are:

- **Priests**
- **Priestesses**
- **Ministers**
- **Captains**
- **Soldiers**
- **Officials**
- **Ethiopian slaves and prisoners**
- **Egyptian people**

Photos from Aida

Here you will find some photos from the opera Aida.



In this photo you can see:

- **Ramfis, the High Priest**
- **Radamès, the Captain of the Guard in Egypt**
- **Priests and Priestesses**



In these photos you can see:

- The dancers



In these photos you can see:

- Radamès,
the Captain of the Guard
- Aida, the main character
of the opera





This is a photo of **Aida**.



In this photo you can see:

- Aida
- Amneris , the Egyptian King's daughter

The Story of Aida

The story of Aida has four acts.
An act is a part of an opera or a play,
like the chapter of a book.

Aida is a story about love and war.
It tells the story about a war between
the two countries Egypt and Ethiopia in Africa.
People living in Egypt are called Egyptians.
People living in Ethiopia are called Ethiopians.

It also tells the story about
the love between Radamès from Egypt
and Aida from Ethiopia.

Act 1

Egypt and Ethiopia were enemies.
Ramfis who is a High Priest
tells Radamès that the Ethiopians
want to start a war with Egypt.

Radamès loves Aida but Aida is Ethiopian.
She is the Princess of Ethiopia
and the daughter of King Amonasro.
Aida is Amneris's slave.
Amneris is the Princess of Egypt.
The war between the two countries begins.
King Amonasro is the leader of the Ethiopian army.
He is Aida's father.
Radamès is the leader of the Egyptian army.
Aida does not know what to do.

Should she support Egypt
since she loves Radamès?
Or should she support Ethiopia
and her father King Amonasro?

Act 2

Amneris tells Aida that Radamès is dead.
It makes Aida very sad.
She does not know that Radamès actually is alive.
Amneris had told her a lie.

Egypt wins the war
and all the Ethiopians are put in prisons.
The Egyptians have a big parade
to celebrate how they won the war.
The Ethiopian prisoners are participating
in the parade.
One of the prisoners is King Amonasro.
No one knows he is the King of Ethiopia
except his daughter Aida.
He pretends to be a soldier.

The King of Egypt decides that
Aida and Amonasro must stay
in Egypt as prisoners.
He says that Aida and Amonasro
are enemies of Egypt
since they are Ethiopians.

The King of Egypt also decides that his daughter Amneris should marry Radamès. Radamès won the war and is a hero. Amneris should marry a hero.

Act 3

The Egyptian princess Amneris prays in a temple. Aida and her father Amonasro also go to the temple. It is only Aida who knows that Amonasro is the King of Ethiopia.

Amonasro promises Aida to take her back home to Ethiopia. They need to leave before the soldiers see them. Aida must ask Radamès where the Egyptian soldiers are.

Radamès loves Aida so much that he tells her where the soldiers are.

When Aida is talking with Radamès her father tells Radamès that he is the King of Ethiopia and not a soldier.

Princess Amneris is in the temple and she hears this. Amneris tells everyone that Radamès is helping the Ethiopians. Radamès is arrested. Aida and Amonasro escape.

Act 4

Amneris is very jealous that Radamès was helping Aida and Amonasro.
She wants to marry Radamès.
and she needs to talk to him.
She asks her father to free Radamès from prison.

Radamès does not want to speak to Amneris.
He does not want to marry Amneris.
He does not love Amneris.
Radamès loves Aida
but Aida ran away.
He says he wants to die.

The priests are putting Radamès in a burial vault to die.
A vault is a room of stone with coffins.
Before the priests close the door
Aida secretly goes into the vault without anyone seeing her.
She loves Radamès
and she wants to die with him.

This is how the tragic love story of the opera Aida ends.
Radamès and Aida never had the chance to live a life together.

The Director

The director of this performance of Aida is **Stefano Poda**.

He is from the city of Trento in Italy.

Stefano Poda has directed many operas in many different countries around the world.

A director decides how an opera or a theater should be played.

The lyrics and music are still almost the same but the director can change parts of an opera. For example:

- the characters' costumes
- the scenography,
which is the décor and objects on the stage

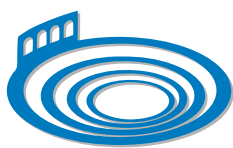
The opera Aida was written more than 150 years ago. When Aida is performed today it is a remake. Many directors have remade Aida.

Aida begins with war and ends with peace. Stefano Poda sees the opera Aida as a journey from hell to heaven. Hell and heaven are opposites. War and peace and black and white are also opposites.

In Stefano Poda's scenography there are many things that are opposite to each other.

For example:

- In the center of the stage
there is a big hand.
The hand is a symbol of both good and evil.
- On the sides of the big hand
there are black and white hands.
The black hands are symbols of war
and of destroying something.
The white hands are symbols of peace
and of building things.



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**This is the program booklet
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