



L'opéra dans le cyberspace : Médias, technologie et histoire /

Opera in the Web Age: Media, Technology and History

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Opera Fanaticism in the Web Age

The emergence and development of the Web, digital technologies and streaming media have apparently revolutionised the musical sphere since the late twentieth century. Opera makes no exception. In this paper, I will discuss the wide impact of digitisation and global computer network upon the presentation and reception of operatic music and culture, focusing on contemporary opera fanaticism in Italy. My enquiry is based on the field research that I have carried out – mainly in April and May 2019 – around some important Italian opera houses and their ‘noisy’ audiences, including the *loggione* of the Teatro alla Scala and an influential operatic weblog of the early 2010s (*Il corriere della Grisi*). Linking socio-historical considerations with different approaches coming from marketing studies, social media studies and performance studies, I will try to situate the long-lasting relation between opera singers, opera fanatics, (new) media and recording technologies in a broader perspective, both chronologically and sociologically. I argue that the ostensible success of opera in the Web age – as a musical genre, as a business and even as a passion – has a long cultural history that cannot be properly understood via the superficial dichotomy between the alleged operatic ‘obsolescence’ and the purportedly ‘amnesiac’ Web revolution.



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