

Lecture #2 - THE TROJAN WAR in OPERA

Monday 27th October at 4 pm



The foundations of all western literature are the Greek epic poems of **HOMER** (700 BCE) and the Roman latin poems of **VERGIL** (19 BCE) and **OVID** (8 CE). Until recently, the definition of being “educated” was to have a deep knowledge of these texts, although today this is rare.

Many opera composers have adapted their works from these stories. For example, Jacques Offenbach satirised **THE JUDGEMENT OF PARIS**, Gluck set the **SACRIFICE OF IPHIGENIA** (twice), and Berlioz depicted the ruse of the **TROJAN HORSE**.

As for the returns of the heroes after the war, Mozart set the return of **IDOMENEO** (to Crete), Strauss set the return of **AGAMENON** (to Mycenae) and Monteverdi set the return of **ODYSSEUS** (to Ithaka). Berlioz and Purcell both focused on the love of Trojan **AENEAS** with Carthaginian **DIDO**.