

But there are also thematic approaches to opera that, in some movies, project a representation of the diva and, more globally, of the world of the opera. Our paper will aim at analyzing and comparing these representations in three European films of the 1980s and 90s: *Diva* (Jean-Jacques Beineix, 1981), *E la nave va* (Federico Fellini, 1983), and *Meeting Venus* (István Szabó, 1991). What topics do these movies tackle? What is the prima donna's concept that they project? Are there exaggerated points of view based on stereotyped iconography?

SANTOS, Luís Miguel (Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal):

Opera and Physiognomy: Erminia Borghi-Mamo in Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro's caricatures

In the nineteenth century the prima donna assumed a central role in the history of opera. The prominence of the female singer in the period brought about a phenomenon of fascination for her figure, which was witnessed by the discourses surrounding her. The soprano Erminia Borghi-Mamo arrived in Lisbon in 1879, and her performances at the Teatro de S. Carlos instantaneously aroused great enthusiasm among the audiences in general. This paper explores the case of the Portuguese visual artist Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro, who conveyed his admiration for the singer through his caricatures. In fact, these caricatures are particularly noteworthy by the fact that they often emphasise one of her facial traits: the nose. Therefore, this paper aims, firstly, to clarify and understand the meaning of the nose, taking into account the physiognomic teachings of the age. Then, Bordalo's caricatures will be used as a starting point to explore aspects such as her reception, her qualities as a singer, and the construction of her success. This analysis will be complemented with information collected in other periodicals of the time, in a discussion that will lead us to consider some dimensions of her life as a prima donna.

WIDESTEDT, Kristina (University of Stockholm, Sweden)

A Diva to Die For—Kristina Nilsson in Stockholm, 1885

In September 1885, the famous opera-singer Kristina Nilsson made one of her rare visits to Sweden. Her stay in Stockholm was preceded by joyous press reports from other stops on her tour, raising public expectations and enthusiasm to all but hysterical level. On her arrival at Stockholm Central Station, the diva was greeted by thousands of cheering people. In response to their affection, Ms Nilsson promised to sing to the crowd from her hotel balcony after her last concert. The press reported this, and 30,000 people—men, women and children—gathered outside the Grand Hotel on the night of 23 September. When Ms Nilsson stopped singing and withdrew to her rooms, desperation and panic broke out in the crowd. Nineteen people—mostly women and children—were killed, and hundreds were injured in the turmoil.

My paper studies the press and their ambivalent construction of Kristina Nilsson as an internationally acclaimed diva with a heavenly voice and an angelic appearance, but also as a seductress of the masses, provoking chaos and ultimately casualties among the unruly public.