

### **'Aida' at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden**

On Thursday 17th March, JAGS Italian students visited The Royal Opera House for the production of 'Aida' by Giuseppe Verdi. Set during a time when war raged between Egypt and Ethiopia, Aida is the tale of forbidden love between the Princess of Ethiopia (Aida) and Egypt's Captain of The Guard (Radames). When Aida is forced to choose between the two things she loves most, her father and homeland, and her forbidden love, she has to decide where her loyalties lie. Her decision will affect the fate of both countries as well as the fate of her dear Radames.

For most of us, 'Aida' was our first Opera and we didn't really know what to expect. The opening introduction was eerie and everyone fell silent, waiting for the music to begin. When it did, the voices were incredibly powerful and much louder than I had expected them to be. The music flowed seamlessly and it was interesting to see how the Opera singers used their bodies and facial expressions to convey their emotions, as well as adjusting the tone of their voice. Not only was the music incredible, but the costumes were subtly beautiful and the set design was striking. There were a few strange scenes involving some questionable dancing that made us all laugh a lot, but everything else was stunning. My favourite scene was the 'Triumphal' Scene in which the entire cast took to the stage for the joyous victory march resulting in a feast for both the eyes and the ears.

The final scene was poignant and memorable, leading to huge applause when the light reappeared at the end. The fact that the setting for the production was the plush, gilded Royal Opera House made the experience even more enjoyable and gave us all a taste of Italian culture in a very British setting.

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