LA EMOCIÓN DE LA ÓPERA
ESCENARIOS Y PROTAGONISTAS DE EUROPA A MADRID

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• Comunidad de Madrid
• Fondo Social Europeo. Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad
• Teatro Real

• Sociedad General de Autores y Editores (SGAE)
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OUVERTURE

For several decades, a massive collection of opera scores lay forgotten in an apartment on Calle de la Bola, in the very centre of Madrid. The collection consisted primarily of thousands of printed and manuscript scores, many of masterpieces that are still popular today, others of operas that are now largely forgotten. The core of the collection was formed in the mid-nineteenth century, when it was housed in the offices of the impresarios Vidal y Roger and his son Andrés Vidal y Llimona in Barcelona. It was probably in the 1880s, with the definitive relocation of Andrés Vidal y Llimona in Madrid, that the collection was transferred to this city, where from 1895 Vidal y Llimona is associated with Antonio Boceta, causing the company to be called Vidal, Llimona y Boceta. The collection continued to grow well into the twentieth century.

Through the intervention of Emilio Casares, in 1992 the Instituto Complutense de Ciencias Musicales acquired this extraordinary collection, which is now housed in the Biblioteca Historica Marques de Valdecilla. The Fondo Vidal, Llimona y Boceta constitutes the main body of this exhibition, which is complemented by numerous items from the libraries of the Complutense University of Madrid and from various private collections. The vast majority of these materials are on public display for the first time.

The exhibition uses these fascinating materials not only to document the hectic activity of a group of impresarios who contributed in a fundamental way to the thriving operatic activities of Barcelona, Madrid, and many other cities, but also, and most importantly, to explore the numerous facets of the world of opera. The first part of the exhibition (showcases 1-10) traces the cultural webs to which opera belongs, from the connections between opera and literature to the use of theatrical masterpieces as sources for popular operas, the visual appeal of exoticism in opera of the 19th century, the rise of the Spanish translations, and the contribution of Spanish composers to the history of the genre.

The second part (showcases 11-20) pays homage to the places, the protagonists, and the professions that made opera come alive as an art form. Opera houses were not only performance venues, but also focal points of intense social and political activities. And composers, singers, conductors, repetiteurs, stage technicians, tailors, and many more contributed to bringing each opera, night after night, to the stage.

Throughout the exhibition, each object on display tells a compelling story of professionalism, passion, and tireless work, and sheds light onto the cultural context and the protagonists that allowed this art form to flourish from Europe to Madrid, bringing to the public gripping stories, dazzling sets and costumes, and above all, unending emotion.
The work desks of impresarios like Vidal, Llimona and Boceta were often chaotic. They could be literally covered with contracts, accounting books, scores, musical instruments, props, and much more. The objects gathered in this initial showcase want to convey a sense of that chaos, variety, and allure. We can see manuscript copies and early editions of some of the most popular Italian, French, and German operas of the 19th century, from Gioachino Rossini’s *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (1816) to Giuseppe Verdi’s *Macbeth* (1847), Richard Wagner’s *Tristan und Isolde* (1865), and Georges Bizet’s *Carmen* (1875). Several of these works will appear again in various parts of this exhibition. The different printing styles and conditions of each copy reveal something about the time in which they originated, and the purposes for which they were used. The beautiful multi-volume full score of Verdi’s *Aida* may well have been an archive copy; most of these scores are heavily worn out, displaying the marks of time and heavy usage.
EXHIBITION ITEMS

Giuseppe Verdi
*Macbeth.*
[After 1847]
UCM: BH MUS VB 53

Giuseppe Verdi
*Miserere de Il trovatore.*
[After 1853]
UCM: BH MUS VB 62

Giuseppe Verdi
*Rigoletto. Melodramma di Francesco Maria Piave.*
Milano, G. Ricordi & C., ca. 1880
UCM: BH MUS VB 2523

Gaetano Donizetti
*Lucia di Lammermoor: Dramma tragico in tre atti.*
Milano, G. Ricordi & C., late 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 1279

Richard Wagner
*Tannhäuser: Grande opera romantica in 3 atti. Traduzione di Salvatore de C. Marchesi.*
Milano, G. Ricordi e C., late 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 2690

Georges Bizet
Paris, Choudens, ca. 1880
UCM: BH MUS VB 845

Gaetano Donizetti
*Don Pasquale: Drama buffò in tre atti.*
[After 1837]
UCM: BH MUS VB 75

Giuseppe Verdi
*Aida.*
[After 1871]
UCM: BH MUS VB 10-1/4

Richard Wagner
Leipzig, Breitkopf & Härtel, 1914
UCM: BH MUS VB 2702

Richard Wagner
*Tristan und Isolde.*
Leipzig, Breitkopf & Härtel, 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 2708

Gioachino Rossini
*Il barbiere di Siviglia: Melodramma buffò in due atti.*
Milano, Gio. Ricordi e Francesco Larca, late 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 2204
Gaetano Donizetti
*L'Elisir d'amore: Melodramma in due atti.*
Milano, Ricordi, late 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 1214

Giuseppe Verdi
*Ernani.*
Milano, G. Ricordi, 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 2432

Vincenzo Bellini
*La Sonnambula.* Melodrama di Felice Romani.
Milano, Gio Ricordi, 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 1652

Richard Wagner
*Parcival: Festival sagrat en tres actes.* Traducció de Jeroni Zanné i Joaquim Pena.
Barcelona, Associació Wagneriana, 1929
Private collection

Richard Wagner
*Lohengrin: Opera romantica en tres actes.* Transcripció para piano y cant de Teodor Uhlig. Traducció
Xavier Viura y Joaquim Pena.
Lepzíg, Breitkopf; Barcelona, Associació Wagneriana, 1906
Private collection

Oboe
Paris, A. Lecomte & Cie.
19th century
Private collection

Teatro Real
“Temporada de invierno 1918-1919 y 1918-1919”.
Barcelona, tipografia La Académica, 1918-1919
Private collection

Repertory props: Hand fan and glass bottle
20th century
Teatro Real
2. LITERATURE AND OPERA

Opera is full of wonderful music. But there is so much more than music. The stories on which they are based, for one thing, contribute to making the theatrical experience powerful and deeply emotional.

Those stories are rarely, if ever, original. Throughout the history of the genre, librettists and composers drew on well known works of theatre and literature, including plays, novels, poems, short stories, and even other librettos.

The literary sources for many operas popular in the 19th century circulated in Spanish translation and were familiar to audiences who attended performances in Spain’s opera houses. This showcase displays some rare editions of works by the likes of Victor Hugo, Prosper Merimée, and Walter Scott, along with the scores of the operas they inspired, from Gioachino Rossini’s La donna del lago to Verdi’s Ernani and Bizet’s Carmen.
EXHIBITION ITEMS

Walter Scott

La dama del lago.
Sevilla, El Porvenir, 1857
UCM: BH FG 279 fut

Gioachino Rossini

La dama del lago: Opera seria en dos actos. Voces y bajo.
19th century, first half
UCM: BH MUS VB 148

Victor Hugo

Hernani, à El honor castellano. Traducción de Eugenio de Ochoa.
Madrid, José María Repullés, 1836
UCM: FA 143130

Giuseppe Verdi

Ernani.
Milano, G. Ricordi & C, 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 2430

Gioacchino Rossini

Il barbiere di Siviglia: Melodramma buffo in due atti.
Milano, Gio. Ricordi e Francesco Lucca, 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 2303

Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais

El barbero de Sevilla, à La inútil precaucion. Traducción de Juan Eugenio Hartzenbuch.
Madrid, José María Repullés, 1840
UCM: FA 143133

Georges Bizet

Paris, Choudens, ca. 1880
UCM: BH MUS VB 861

Prosper Mérimée

Carmen.
Madrid, Compañía Ibero-Americana de Publicaciones, 1931
UCM: FIL A577

Georges Bizet

Paris, Choudens, ca. 1870
UCM: BH MUS VB 813
The theatre of William Shakespeare became increasingly popular during the course of the nineteenth century. Spanish translations of his plays circulated widely, and by the time such masterpieces as *Romeo and Juliet* and *Othello* arrived in Spain, audiences were familiar with their plots, and could detect some key differences with the originals. In some instances, operas believed to be based on Shakespeare, such as Vincenzo Bellini’s *I Capuleti* and *i Montecchi*, were actually derived from other sources, but in the middle and late part of the century composers were increasingly drawn to the work of the English Bard. Giuseppe Verdi’s passion for Shakespeare is well known, and led to the creation of three operas: *Macbeth*, *Otello*, and *Falstaff*. This showcase includes Spanish editions of Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* and *Othello* along with piano-vocal scores of Verdi’s operatic setting. Verdi’s *Macbeth* exists in two versions -1847 and 1865 - and both are presented here in their first editions.
EXHIBITION ITEMS

William Shakespeare
*Macbeth*. Traducción de José García de Villalta
Madrid, José María Repullés, 1838
UCM: FA 1433

William Shakespeare
*Dramas de Guillermo Shakspeare: El mercader de Venecia, Macbeth, Romeo y Julieta, Otelo*. Traducción de Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo
Barcelona, C. Verdaguer, 1881
UCM: FA 15706

William Shakespeare
*Tragedia en cinco actos: Otelo, o el moro de Venecia*. Traducción de L.A.C.A.L.L.E.
Valencia, Ildefonso Mompié, 1846
UCM: BH FOA 2181

William Shakespeare
*Los grandes dramas de Shakespeare*. 
Barcelona, La Enciclopedia Ilustrada de Francisco Nacente, 1875
UCM: FA 16877

Giuseppe Verdi
*Macbeth*. First version. Riduzione per canto e piano di E. Muzio.
Milano, Giovanni Ricordi, 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 2196

Giuseppe Verdi
Paris, Léon Escudier, 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 2195

Giuseppe Verdi
Milano, G. Ricordi & C., 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 2194
4. FAUST AND THE SPANISH IMAGINATION

Few stories in the nineteenth century captured the public imagination as much as the myth of Faust, the disillusioned aging scholar who enters into a pact with the devil as he pursues a dream of youth and love, and is ultimately damned. The story as told in Goethe’s 1808 tragedy circulated in numerous translations, some of them illustrated, and two of them are displayed here.

And several operatic settings of the story exist; many are now forgotten, but French composer Charles Gounod’s 1859 Faust has withstood the test of time and remains popular to the present day; it is in fact the opera that opens the 2018-19 season at the Teatro Real. The work is currently performed in French; in the nineteenth century, however, this and other French and German works were routinely performed in Italian.

One of the manuscript scores displayed here shows the famous jewel song for Marguerite in Act III with Italian words.
EXHIBITION ITEMS

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe  
*Fausto*. Traducción de Teodoro Llorente.  
Barcelona, Biblioteca ‘Arte y Letras’, 1882  
UCM: BH FLL 49212

Charles Gounod  
*Faust ballet*. Composé et ajouté pour les représentations de l’Académie Impériale de Musique.  
Paris, Choudens, 19th century  
UCM: BH MUS VB 1452

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe  
*Fausto*.  
Barcelona, Juan Oliveres, 1865  
UCM: BH REC 4796

Charles Gounod  
Milano, F. Lucca, 19th century  
UCM: BH MUS VB 1469

Charles Gounod  
*Fausto*.  
[After 1859]  
UCM: BH MUS VB 376-2

Charles Gounod  
*Fausto*.  
[After 1859]  
UCM: BH MUS VB 376-3

A. Marlon  
“Mr. Faure dans Faust, rôle de Méphistophélès”.  
Paris, Martinet, 19th century  
Private collection
As European composers sought to engage with new subject matter, they often turned to Spanish theatre as a source of inspiration. The story of Don Juan, as told in Tirso de Molina's *El Burlador de Sevilla*, long held the public's fascination, and merged with other literary sources inspired the creation of many operas, including Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (1787).

In the nineteenth century Giuseppe Verdi, in particular, was drawn to the plays of Antonio García Gutiérrez and Ángel de Saavedra and Ramírez de Baquedano, Duke of Rivas. *El trovador* (1836) and *Simon Boccanegra* (1843) by Gutiérrez were the sources for operas by similar titles, premiered in 1853 and 1857 respectively (Verdi subsequently revised *Simon Boccanegra* in 1884). And the Duke of Rivas' *Don Alvaro, o La Fuerza del sino* morphed into *La forza del destino* (1862, revised 1869).

These operas by Verdi contributed greatly to popularize the tales born of Spanish imagination. And Verdi himself visited Madrid for the Spanish premiere of *La forza del destino* in 1863. The libretto printed on that occasion, on display in this showcase, puts into prominence the Duke of Rivas's play on the title page.
EXHIBITION ITEMS

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
*Don Giovanni*.
[19th century?]
UCM: BH MUS VB 368-4

Antonio García Gutiérrez
*Obra escogidas*.
Madrid, M. Rivadeneyra, 1866
UCM: BH FLL 4363

Francesco Maria Piave
*Simon Boccanegra: Melodramma in un prologo e tre atti*. Musica di Giuseppe Verdi
Milano, G. Ricordi, [ca. 1910]
UCM: LIB 783

Francesco Maria Piave
*La forza del destino: Ópera en cuatro actos*. Música del célebre maestro Verdi. Poesía del Sr. Piave tomada del drama original conocido con el nombre d. Álvaro ó la fuerza del sino, proprio del Duque de Rivas.
Madrid, Imprenta Española, 1863
UCM: FA 46297

Tirso de Molina
*Comedias escogidas de Fray Gabriel Tellez (El Maestro Tirso de Molina).*
Madrid, M. Rivadeneyra, 1850
UCM: BH FLL 43723

Molina, Tirso de
*Comedias escogidas de Fray Gabriel Tellez (El Maestro Tirso de Molina).*
Madrid, M. Rivadeneyra, 1850
UCM: BH FLL 43978

Antonio García Gutiérrez
*El trovador: Drama en cinco jornadas*.
Salamanca, Círculo Literario Comercial, 1868
UCM: TEA 578

Giuseppe Verdi
*Il trovatore: Dramma in quattro parti di Salvadore Cammarano*.
Milano, Gio. Ricordi, 1853
UCM: BH MUS VB 2561

Giuseppe Verdi
*La forza del destino: Melodramma in quattro atti di F. M. Piave*.
Milano, G. Ricordi & C., After 1869
UCM: BH MUS VB 3477
Countless operas of the nineteenth century are set in Spain. Whether they are based on Spanish literary sources (such as the works displayed in the previous showcase) or on the work of French or German authors, the visual appeal of the locations in which the stories unfold, from the Seville of Il barbiere and Carmen to the Cathedral of Valladolid in Giuseppe Verdi’s Don Carlos, is immense.

Monuments, items of clothing, and depictions of historical figures found in a variety of printed sources can provide inspiration to set and costume designers and stage directors. And the portrayal of Ernani, wearing his characteristic hat, on the cover of a late nineteenth-century edition of Verdi’s opera, could not be more revealing.

In a subsequent showcase, the visual depiction of scenes from Cervantes’ Don Quixote for Massenet’s opera of 1910, explore this topic further.
EXHIBITION ITEMS

Luis Cabrera de Córdoba
*Filipe Segundo, Rey de España.*
Madrid, Luis Sanchez, 1619
UCM: BH FLL 11530

Francisco de los Santos
*Descripción breve del Monasterio de S. Lorenzo el Real del Escorial.*
Madrid, Imprenta Real, 1657
UCM: BH FLL 10035

Francisco de los Santos
*Descripción breve del Monasterio de S. Lorenzo el Real del Escorial.*
Madrid, Imprenta Real, 1657
UCM: BH FG 824

Antonio Ponz
*Viage de España, en que se da noticia de las cosas más apreciables, y dignas de saberse que hay en ella*. Tomo undécimo.
Madrid, Joachin Ibarra, 1783
UCM: BH FLL 34394

Friedrich Schiller
*Don Carlos, infante de España: Poema dramático.*
Madrid, Biblioteca Universal, 1881
UCM: FH 3955

Giuseppe Verdi
Milano, Gio Ricordi, 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 2442

Giuseppe Verdi
*Ernani: Dramma lirico in quattro parti di Francesco Maria Piave.*
Milano, G. Ricordi & C., 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 2449

Repertory props: Golden Crown and Silver jewelry box.
20th century
Teatro Real
7. DISTANT LANDS AND EXOTICISM

The representation of distant lands goes even further than the exoticisation of Spain in some nineteenth-century operas. Exoticism pervades the world of opera during the second half of the nineteenth century and beyond.

French operas like Bizet’s *Les pecheurs de perles* (1863) and Meyerbeer’s *L’africaine* (1865) contributed to set a trend that was subsequently developed in celebrated masterpieces like Verdi’s *Aida* (1871) and lesser known works such as Bottesini’s *Ali Babà* (also 1871).

Two scores of Giacomo Puccini’s *Madama Butterfly* (1904) in this showcase demonstrate how the visual appeal and decorative taste of Japan informed not only the staging of this opera, but also the ways in which it was published, with butterflies and fans decorating covers and title pages.
EXHIBITION ITEMS

Giacomo Meyerbeer
*L'Africana.*
[After 1865]
UCM: BH MUS VB 153-1

Giovanni Bottesini
*Ali Baba: Ópera en tres actos.*
[After 1871]
UCM: BH MUS VB 791

Giacomo Puccini
Milano, G. Ricordi y Comp, 1907
UCM: BH MUS VB 2138

Georges Bizet
*Les pécheurs de perles: Opéra en 3 actes.*
Paris, Choudens Père & Fils, ca. 1880
UCM: BH MUS VB 864(2)

Giacomo Puccini
Milano, G. Ricordi & C., 1907
UCM: BH MUS VB 2137

G. Marichal
“Paisaje a orillas del Nilo. Decoración en el acro tercero de la ópera Aida, del maestro Verdi”
In: *La Ilustración Española y Americana. Año XVIII, nº XLVI, 15 de diciembre de 1874*
Private collection V. Sánchez

Repertory props: Feline mask.
20th century
Teatro Real
8. OPERA IN SPANISH

The Italian language was the lingua franca for opera in Spain through the end of the nineteenth century. Italian operas were routinely given in the original language, and French and German works were typically translated into Italian. Even Spanish composers, who aimed to establish themselves on the international stage, wrote operas in Italian. Printed librettos, such as that for Verdi’s Aida in this showcase, typically provided the original text with facing Spanish translation.

Individual and institutional efforts to produce operas in Castillian and in Catalan developed considerably during the second half of the nineteenth century. The performance of Bizet’s Carmen in Spanish, presented as a “zarzuela”, is a particularly intriguing example.

It is not uncommon, in the Fondo Vidal Llimona y Boceta, to find printed scores such as those of Les pêcheurs de perles and of Tannhäuser displayed in this showcase, which contain not only French or Italian words, but also a singable Spanish text underlaid by hand. Printed scores in Spanish, such as that of Lehár’s celebrated operetta, Die lustige Witwe (La viuda alegre), became increasingly common at the turn of the twentieth century.
EXHIBITION ITEMS

Georges Bizet
*Les pêcheurs de perles: Opéra en 3 actes de M. Carré & Cormon.*
Partition chant et piano transcrit par l'auteur.
Paris, Choudens Père & Fils, ca. 1880
UCM: BH MUS VB 832

Francesco Maria Piave
*El trovador: Drama lírico en cuatro actos. Música de G. Verdi.* Traducción de M. Capdepón.
Madrid, Sociedad de Autores Españoles, 1907
UCM: LIB 1431

Franz Lehar
*Die lustige Witwe: Operette in drei akten von Victor Léon u. Leo Stein.*
Ien, Ludwig Doblinger, 1905
UCM: BH MUS VB 1655

Franz Lehar
*La viuda alegre. Die Lustige Witwe: Célebre opereta en 3 actos.* Edición para canto y piano con la versión rítmica española de Roger Junoy.
Barcelona, Musical Emporium, 20th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 1654

Leo Stein
Madrid, Casa editorial de “La Ultima Moda”, 20th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 861

Franz Lehár
*La viuda alegre.*
[1905?-1925?]
UCM: BH MUS VB 578

Bedrich Smetana
*La novia vendida: Ópera cómica en un acto.*
[1910-1925?]
UCM: BH MUS VB 1

Giuseppe Verdi
*Aida.*
Milano, G. Ricordi y Compa., 19th century.
UCM: BH MUS VB 2395

Antonio Ghislanzoni
*Aida: Ópera en cuatro actos. Música de J. Verdi.* Traducción de Antonio Arnao.
Milán, Ricordi, After 1872
Private collection

Richard Wagner
*Tannhäuser.*
Milano, G. Ricordi e C., 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 2687
Richard Wagner

*Loehengrin: Ópera romántica en tres actes*. Transcripción para piano y cant de Teodor Uhlig.
Traducción catalana de Xavier Viura y Joaquim Pena.
Leipzig, Breikopf & Härtel; Barcelona, Associació Wagneriana, 1906
UCM: BH MUS VB 2616

Eduardo de Bray

*Carmen: Zarzuela en 4 actos y en verso basada en la ópera del mismo nombre*. Música del maestro Georges Bizet.
Barcelona, José Cunill, 1890
Private collection

Georges Bizet

*Carmen: Parte de apuntar en español*. [1872-1905]?
UCM: BH MUS VB 444-1
9. CREATING OPERA IN SPAIN

Throughout history, Spain has generated an immense and varied operatic legacy, consisting of *tonadillas*, *zarzuelas*, operettas and operas.

To this day, around 800 operas have been created in Spain. Opera established an important social presence, and also had the ability to divulge Spanish music and culture beyond national boundaries.

Since the reign of Carlos IV and the opening of the Teatro de los Caídos del Peral, more than 200 Spanish composers have devoted themselves to opera successfully, starting with Vicente Martín y Soler and Manuel García, admired throughout Spain and internationally; subsequently, Ramón Carnicer, Baltasar Saldoní, Emilio Arrieta and Valentín Zubiaurre thrived, and later still the last great opera composers of the nineteenth and twentieth century, including Tomás Bretón, Ruperto Chapí, Emilio Serrano, Isaac Albéniz, Enrique Granados, Felipe Pedrell, Manuel de Falla, José María Usandizaga, Jesús Guridi or Conrado del Campo. Some protagonists of this rich history are shown here.
EXHIBITION ITEMS

Emilio Arrieta
La conquista de Granada.
[After 1850]
UCM: BH MUS VB 528-1

Emilio Serrano
Gonzalo de Córdoba. Partes instrumentales de viola y violoncello.
Ca. 1858
SGAE: MMO/1236

Tomás Bretón
Farinelli. Parte de maestro director y libreto.
1902
SGAE: MMO/1232

Ruperto Chapí
Circe. Parte de típles primeras, parte de apuntar y libreto.
1902
SGAE: MMO/1240

Federico Chueca
La Gran Vía. Parte de apuntar, 3 partes vocales y libreto.
1886
SGAE: MMO/1709

Antonio Nicolau
Un rapto: Ópera cómica en tres actos. Letra de Conrado Colomé.
Barcelona, Andrés Vidal y Roger, ca. 1887
Handwritten dedication from Antonio Nicolau to Andrés Vidal y Llimona.
Private collection

Tomás Bretón
Guzmán el Bueno: Ópera española en un acto. Preludio.
Madrid, Andrés Vidal hijo, 1876
Private collection

Carlos Fernández Shaw
La vida breve: Drama lírico en dos actos y cuatro cuadros. Música de Manuel de Falla.
París, Max Exchig; Madrid y Buenos Aires, Renacimiento, 1914
Handwritten dedication from Manuel de Falla to Carlos Fernández Shaw.
Private collection

Le Théâtre Illustré: Revue des succès lyriques et dramatiques.
Paris, 5e. année, n° 7, 1896.
Monographic number dedicated to La Gran Vía, by Federico Chueca.
Private collection

Ruperto Chapí
Curro Vargas: Drama lírico en tres actos. Partitura para canto y piano.
Madrid, Pablo Martín Editor, 1899
Private collection
Real Academia Española
Convocatoria de la junta pública para dar posesión de plaza de número a Francisco Asenjo Barbieri.
Madrid, 7th March 1892
Private collection

Teatro Partenope (Naples)
Announcement of the representation “La gran vía de Federico Chueca”, on 6th October 1900.
Napoli, Tipi Prete, 1900
Private collection

Blanch
"Personajes y decoraciones de la ópera del maestro Nicolau, Un rapto".
In: La Ilustración Musical, Año I, nº 6, 15 de febrero de 1888
Private collection
O pera as a genre contributed a number of titles of value. It was also the subject of a great deal of theorization and discussion about the essence of Spanish-language lyric theatre, a recurring theme for generations of authors until the late 20th century. Numerous controversies, manifestos, conferences and more developed around Spanish opera. Furthermore, various operatic societies were established, an opera was at the centre of the first important attempts to systematise Spanish music history - by musicologists Antonio Peña y Goñi and Luis Carmena y Millán.

These discussions concerned the essence of Spanish opera, the dependence on, and liberation from Italian hegemony. Spanish as an operatic language, the need for Spanish history to provide the foundation of a national opera, collaboration with Spanish dramatists, and the prominence of historical and popular music as fundamentals of the genre. Thus emerged treaties and singing schools, specialized magazines - *El Manifesto* -, and important training centres for Spanish singers, of which the mythical tenor Julián Gayrre was a student.
EXHIBITION ITEMS

Peña y Goñi, Antonio  
*La ópera española y la música dramática en España en el siglo XIX: Apuntes históricos.*  
Madrid, Imp. y Estereotipia de El Liberal, 1881  
UCM: FA 3807

Antonio Cordero  
*Escuela completa de canto en todos sus géneros y principalmente en el dramático español e italiano.*  
Madrid, Beltrán y Viñas, 1858  
Private collection

Hilarión Eslava  
*Método completo de solfeo (sin acompañamiento).*  
Madrid, B. Eslava, 1893  
Private collection

Tomás Bretón  
*Más en favor de la ópera nacional.*  
Madrid, Gregorio Juste, 1885.  
Private collection

Luis Carmena y Millán  
*Cronica de la ópera italiana en Madrid desde el año 1738 hasta nuestros días.*  
Madrid, Manuel Minuesa de los Ríos, 1878.  
Private collection

José Rius  
*Ópera española: Ventajas que la lengua castellana ofrece para el melodrama demostradas con un ejemplo práctico en la traducción de la ópera italiana El Belisario arreglada a la letra y música del original.*  
Barcelona, Joaquín Verdaguer, 1840.  
Private collection

*El anfión matritense: Periódico filarmónico-poético de la asociación musical.*  
Madrid, Imprenta del Panorama Español, 1843.  
Private collection
11. COMPOSERS

Opera typically came to life in performance, in specific locations and thanks to the work of countless individuals. The creation of an opera is normally the result of collaboration, first and foremost between a librettist who writes the lyrics and a composer who writes the music.

In the nineteenth century, composers increasingly took most of the credit, and it became common practice to acknowledge them in large print on playbills and on the covers of manuscript and printed scores. Their portraits were often included on the covers or in whole-page images at the beginning of printed piano-vocal scores, and sometimes were complemented by biographical information (as in the scores of Vincenzo Bellini’s *Norma* and Giacomo Meyerbeer’s *Les Huguenots* on display here). The semblance of these composers, like Gioachino Rossini, Giuseppe Verdi, or Richard Wagner, became iconic.

Portraits of prominent Spanish composers appeared regularly in periodicals of the time, such as *Illustración Española y Americana*. Portraits of Emilio Arrieta, Francisco Barbieri, and Tomás Bretón (of whom we also display a rare photograph from a private collection) are displayed here along with those of their colleagues from other parts of Europe.
EXHIBITION ITEMS

Vincenzo Bellini
Milano, G. Ricordi & C, 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 1018

Vincenzo Bellini
*Norma: Tragedia lirica in due atti*. Opera completa per canto e pianoforte.
Milano, Ricordi, 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 1019

Gaetano Donizetti
*Lucia di Lammermoor: Dramma tragico in tre atti di Salvadore Cammarano.*
Milano, G. Ricordi & C., 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 1280

Giuseppe Verdi
*I trovatore.*
Milano, G. Ricordi & C., 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 2562

Richard Wagner
Milano, G. Ricordi e C, 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 2700

Giacomo Puccini
Milano, G. Ricordi, 1899
UCM: BH MUS VB 2158

Gioachino Rossini
*Guglielmo Tell: Opera in quattro atti.*
Milano, G. Ricordi & Co., 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 2232

Giacomo Meyerbeer
*Gli Ugonotti: Opera in cinque atti.*
Milano, G. Ricordi & C., 19th century
UCM: P-78MEYhug(pia)

Portrait of Tomás Bretón. Photography.
Madrid, J. Sánchez, ca. 1880
Private collection
Arturo Carretero Sánchez
“El maestro D. Tomás Bretón, autor de la aplaudida obra Los amantes de Teruel”
In: La Ilustración Española y Americana. Año XXXIII, nº VI, 15 de febrero de 1889
Private collection

Joaquin Diéguez
“Arrieta”, “Barbieri”.
In: La Ilustración musical: Periódico semanal ilustrado. Año I, nº 38, 22 de diciembre de 1883
Private collection
Today, opera performances can be experienced in many contexts, from outdoor venues to cinemas that show live HD broadcasts from opera houses around the world. Soon after the birth of the art form in the early seventeenth century, however, theatres were built for the purpose of operatic performance. It is not an overstatement to say that opera and theatrical architecture developed in parallel.

By the time Diderot and D’Alambert published their *Encyclopédie*, theatres across Europe normally conformed to a well-established model, with a large proscenium arch, a characteristic horseshoe floor plan, and boxes arranged in several rows. This structure is described in numerous tables in the *Encyclopédie*, offering various floor plans and prospectuses of important opera houses in Europe. The opening on display here shows the Teatro di San Carlo in Naples.

Opera houses in big cities were not used exclusively for opera performances. They could also host concerts, various forms of entertainment, banquets, and masked balls, as seen in a remarkable illustration of the Teatro del Liceo in Barcelona.
EXHIBITION ITEMS

Marcos Jesús Bertrán
*El Gran Teatro del Liceo de Barcelona 1837-1930.*
Barcelona, Instituto Gráfico Oliva de Vilanova, 1931
Private collection

L’Encyclopédie
*Recueil de planches, sur les sciences, les arts libéraux, et les arts mécaniques, avec leur explication.*
Volume 10 de planches.
Paris, Briasson, 1772
Engraving: “Salles de spectacles. Coupe du Théatre Royal de St. Charles à Naples”.
Private collection
13. A TEMPLE OF OPERA AND POLITICS

In central Madrid, there is a metro station named “Ópera”. It is located next to the Teatro Real, one of the most prestigious opera houses in the world. The theatre’s location, opposite the Royal Palace, is a clear indication of its origins as a court theatre. Despite several stages of renovation, until its reopening in its present form twenty years ago, the interior preserves the architectural structure described in the previous showcase.

Illustrations published in books and periodicals document not only the performance, but also the social practice of attending the theatre. In this showcase we can see audiences crowding the main entrance of the Teatro Real, sitting in various parts of the house, and even attending a formal sit-down dinner. An image in L’Univers illustré shows an important political gathering taking place in a box, while a performance of Auber’s La muette de Portici unfolds in the background.

The excitement and pride of attending performances in the Teatro Real is documented by a vivid image of a box printed on a chocolate wrapping. To access the Teatro Real, those individuals used tickets and subscription cards such as those on display here.
EXHIBITION ITEMS

Manuel Juan Diana
*Memoria histórico-artística del Teatro real de Madrid.*
Madrid, Imprenta Nacional, 1850
Lithography: “Vista interior del Teatro Real”, de Urrabieta.
Private collection

Manuel Alcázar
“Teatro Real. El vestíbulo principal o Foyer”.
In: *La Ilustración Española y Americana.* Año LII, n° VII, 22 de febrero de 1908
Private collection

Manuel Alcázar
“Aniversario CCCXCI del descubrimiento de América. Banquete conmemorativo celebrado en el Teatro Real, el 12 del corriente”.
In: *La Ilustración Española y Americana.* Año XVII, n° XXXIX, 22 de octubre de 1883
Private collection

Adolfo Lozano Sidro
“Del Teatro Real. Un entreacto en noche de segundo turno”.
In: *Blanco y Negro.* Año 25, n° 1241, 28 de febrero de 1915.
Private collection

Bernardo Rico y Francisco Ortego
“Un palco del Teatro Real en un día de baile”.
In: *El Museo Universal.* Año III, n° 5, 1 de marzo de 1859
Private collection

Miranda y Charles Maurand
“Évenements d’Espagne. Une représentation au Théâtre de l’Orient, a Madrid. Tamberlick chantant l’Hymne de Riego”.
In: *L’Univers illustré.* 1re. année, n° 720, 31 octobre 1888
Private collection

Teatro de la Ópera
Season ticket: “Entrada de favor Sr. D. José Inzenga”.
Between 1878 and 1891.
Private collection

Teatro Real
Single ticket: “Primera fila de palco, n° 20”.
Between 1920 and 1925.
Private collection

“En el Teatro Real”
Card printed to Chocolates Matías López.
Paris, F. Champenois, between 1874 and 1892.
Private collection

Jean Laurent
*Teatro Real de Madrid*
Photography from the Ruiz Vernacci Archive
UCM: BHI AP u1-25
The publisher and the distributor are very relevant figures in the opera world of the nineteenth century. The publisher was not only for copying and publishing sheet music, but also stored and distributed music scores to companies and opera houses around the world. The rental and sale of sheet music made available the necessary copies for the performers. This involved intense commercial activity and branding, documented by stamps, labels, and contracts between publishing companies and theater companies.

This showcase displays labels and stamps of the different stages through which the Italian publisher Ricordi operated, and of the main Spanish publishers and distributors, including Vidal Llimona y Boceta—who served as representatives of Ricordi and of Choudens in Spain. They constituted the main intellectual property agency in the field of music of Spain between the nineteenth and the twentieth century.
EXHIBITION ITEMS

Giuseppe Verdi
Un ballo in maschera.
[1859-1925]
UCM: BH MUS VB 13-2

Giuseppe Verdi
I Lombardi alla prima crociata.
[AFTER 1843]
UCM: BH MUS VB 29-2

Giuseppe Verdi
Nabuccodonosor.
[AFTER 1842]
UCM: BH MUS VB 39-1

Contract established between Mr. Vidal Llimona y Boceta and Mr. Luis Paris, for the rental of the orchestra material of Siegfried opera, for the season 1900-1901.
Madrid, 2nd March 1901
UCM: BH MUS VB

Contract established between Mr. Vidal Llimona y Boceta and Mr. Luis Paris, for the rental of the orchestra material of Carmen opera, for the season 1913-1914.
Madrid, 18th November 1913
UCM: BH MUS VB

Giuseppe Verdi
Ernani.
[AFTER 1844]
UCM: BH MUS VB 52-1

Gaetano Donizetti
La favorita.
[1840-1925]
UCM: BH MUS VB 80

Gaetano Donizetti
Lucrezia Borgia.
[1833-1925]
UCM: BH MUS VB 105
One of the most iconic figures in the world of opera is the conductor. Standing on a podium overlooking the orchestral pit and facing the stage, the conductor leads all musical aspects of an operatic performance, overseeing preliminary rehearsals with singers and orchestra, and bringing the various components of the performance together in ensemble rehearsals, all the way to the premiere performance.

This type of figure is a relatively modern development, however, which emerged mostly during the second half of the 19th century. Prior to that, the orchestra was not lowered into a pit, and was often led by the “violino principale”, who played the violin and directed the performance using a special score containing not only his part, but also cues for other instruments and for the vocal parts. One such score for Saverio Mercadante’s *La vestale* is displayed in this showcase.

As operas became more complex the figure of the modern conductor developed. Numerous scores used by conductors are present in the Fondo Vidal Llimona y Boceta. Some are piano-vocal reductions, whereas most contain the full score of the opera, with all of the orchestral and vocal parts presented vertically. Conducting scores are clearly identified on the title page and contain abundant annotations that reveal how individual conductors subdivided bars into beats, provided cues to the performers, and highlighted specific details of the music.
EXHIBITION ITEMS

Alphons Czibulka
Hamburg, Aug. Cranz, 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 1176

Giuseppe Verdi
Milano, Giovanni Ricordi, 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 2443

Vincenzo Bellini
Norma.
Barcelona, D. Joaquin Ferrer de Climent, [1831?–1925?]
UCM: BH MUS VB 138-1/2

Saverio Mercadante
La vestale.
Ricordi, Milano, [1840?–1925?]
UCM: BH MUS VB 317-1/2
When the great Spanish tenor Julian Gayarre died prematurely in Madrid in January 1890, he was given the honour of an official funeral. A large crowd was in attendance, and the orchestra of the Teatro Real played from under the theatre’s arches as the coffin went through the Plaza de Oriente.

This kind of pomp and public participation for a singer might seem extraordinary, and is a powerful reminder that the operatic artists who rose to stardom and fame were idolized, much like pop stars or sports icons today.

Images of great opera singers such as those shown in this showcase became increasingly common in the nineteenth century and are now prized collectibles.

These images reveal much more than the physical appearance of individual singers. They tell us a great deal about stage costumes, props, and about the stylised postures and gestures that they performed on stage. A tenor standing proudly, a soprano impersonating a Valkyrie holding a spear, an arm gently raised as if to hand particularly expressive passages to the audience are familiar views for anyone who is passionate about opera, and, even in the absence of the voice, seem to evoke a theatrical and musical performance.
EXHIBITION ITEMS

Juan Comba
“El entierro de Julian Gallarre”.
In: *La Ilustración Española y Americana*. Año XXIV, n° I, 8 de enero de 1890
Private collection

Barberis
“Julián Gallarre”.
In: *La Ilustración musical: Periódico semanal ilustrado*. Año I, n° 38, 22 de diciembre de 1883
Private collection

“Mme. Gueymard-Lauters dans don Juan, role de dona Elvire”.
Paris, Martinet; Londres, S. Miller, 19th century
Private collection

Santiago Llanta y Guerín.
“Selva”.
Madrid, Lit. de J. Donon, 19th century
Private collection

Portrait of Miguel Fleta. Photography.
Caracas, Ramirez y Co., 20th century
Private collection

Madrid, Fotografía Calvet, 19th century
Private collection
17. THE PROFESSION OF OPERA SINGER

Opera singers are not merely individuals gifted with extraordinary voices, wearing fancy costumes and performing conventional or stylised gestures on stage. Their profession is immensely challenging, and those who rise to international stardom are very few.

For all singers, the pursuit of a career in opera means constant travel, practicing, learning new roles, intense rehearsal schedules, and of course facing the judgement of the audience and critics. Behind each performance there is not only talent and passion, but an enormous amount of discipline and hard work.

Many of the scores in the Fondo Vidal Llimona y Boceta offer glimpses of the work of opera singers. Part books with the names of individual characters, such as those for Donizetti’s *La favorite*, Bellini’s *La sonnambula*, and Verdi’s *Aida* in this showcase, were given to singers so that they could learn or review their parts, which they needed to memorise before going on stage. These part books often contain fascinating annotations—from added embellishments and cadenzas to phonetic spellings for the benefit of artists who did not master the language in which they were singing (this is the case of an opening of *Il barbiere di Siviglia* displayed here). Some scores were used for added or replacement arias; for example, in the mid-nineteenth century it was not uncommon to introduce an aria from Donizetti’s *Rosmonda d’Inghilterra* into *Lucia di Lammermoor*. 
EXHIBITION ITEMS

Santiago Llanta y Guerín.
“Tamberlik”. Madrid, Lit. de J. Donon, 19th century
Private collection

Vincenzo Bellini
La sonnambula.
Napoli-Milano, Cottrau-Ricordi, 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 1053

Gaetano Donizetti
La favorita.
Milano, G. Ricordi & C., 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 1937

Gaetano Donizetti
La favorita.
Milano, G. Ricordi & C., 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 1928

Gaetano Donizetti
La favorita.
Milano, G. Ricordi & C., 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 1929

Gioachino Rossini
Il barbiere di Siviglia.
Milano, Gio. Ricordi, 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 2207

Gioachino Rossini
Il barbiere di Siviglia. Ridotta per pianoforte solo da G. B. Croff.
Milano, Ricordi, 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 2208

Giuseppe Verdi
Aida.
Milano, G. Ricordi y Compa., After 1871
UCM: BH MUS VB 2394

Gaetano Donizetti
[After 1835]
UCM: BH MUS VB 190

Gaetano Donizetti
L’elisir d’amore. Duetto Elisir fra due buffi.
[After 1832]
UCM: BH MUS VB 181

Charles Gounod
Faust. Romanza “Quando a te lieta”.
[After 1859]
UCM: BH MUS VB 386

19th century
Private collection
18. BACKSTAGE WORKERS

The work of conductors and singers is supported by numerous professionals who are not as visible but still contribute substantially to the preparation of any opera performance.

In order to produce an opera, it is now clear, one needs musical scores. In the nineteenth century, at a time when printing was expensive and not financially viable, copyists prepared manuscript scores. Many scores in the Fondo Vidal Llimona y Boceta were sent from abroad (mostly from Italy and France), but others were copied here in Spain, and this is easily detected when the instrumentation at the beginning of a piece is written in Spanish, as in the excerpt from Verdi’s Il trovatore displayed here.

Chorus masters train the chorus during the early part of the rehearsal process, using special scores containing only the choral excerpts, and then assist the conductor leading up to the premiere.

Repetiteurs and diction coaches help the singers prepare for their performances, marking scores with performance indications and cuts, sometimes growing frustrated with singers who are in a bad mood for futile reasons. An annotation in the score of Verdi’s La traviata displayed here contains a curious remark about this.
EXHIBITION ITEMS

Charles Gounod
*Faust ballet*. Composé et ajouté pour les représentations de l'Académie Impériale de Musique.
Paris, Choudens, 19th century.
UCM: BH MUS VB 1451

Charles Gounod
*Faust.*
Milano, F. Lucca, 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 1454

Gioachino Rossini
*Il barbiere di Siviglia.* Ridotta per pianoforte solo da G. B. Croff.
S.l., s.n., 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 2205

Gioachino Rossini
*Il barbiere di Siviglia.*
Milano, Gio. Ricordi e Francesco Lucca, 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 2206

Giacomo Meyerbeer
*Gli Ugonotti: Guión para el baile.*
[1836?–1926?]  
UCM: BH MUS VB 158

Giuseppe Verdi
*La traviata.*
[AFTER 1854]  
UCM: BH MUS VB 12

Giuseppe Verdi
*Il balen del suo sorriso: escena ed aria nell Trovatore.*
[AFTER 1853]  
UCM: BH MUS VB 63
A massive amount of work goes also into preparing the visual elements of a performance. Stage machinery, some of which is described in detail in the plates devoted to “machines de théâtre” in Diderot and d’Alembert’s *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (1772), is essential to perform a variety of tasks, from raising and lowering the curtain to changing the sets rapidly and producing a variety of special effects. This kind of machinery is manufactured and operated by expert and creative technicians who can adapt to the changing needs of individual shows.

Set and costume designers produce detailed sketches that are used to prepare the staging of an opera; here we can see original colour designs used in preparation for the premiere of Jules Massenet’s opera *Don Quichotte* (1910). And tailors and artisans realise those designs at a hectic pace in special labs within the opera house.

The staging of an opera requires accurate timing, so that all visible actions are coordinated with the music. Some scores in the Fondo Vidal, Llimona y Boceta used by stage directors and managers are richly annotated, indicating the spot where the curtain raises, the entrance and exit of different characters, lighting effects, and numerous other visible aspects of the performance.
EXHIBITION ITEMS

L’Encyclopédie
Recueil de planches, sur les sciences, les arts libéraux, et les arts mécaniques, avec leur explication.
Volume 10 de planches.
Paris, Briasson, 1772
Engraving: “Machines de Théatres, Coupe des deux planchers du dessous avec la pente du théâtre, et constructions des assemblages développés garnis de leurs ferrures”.
Private collection

Samuel Urrabieta Vierge
“Teatro Real. De telón adentro”.
In: La Ilustración Española y Americana. Año XV, n° XLIII, 22 de noviembre de 1881
Private collection

Manuel Alcázar y Muñoz de Baena
“Teatro Real. En los telares”, “El Teatro Real por dentro. En los fosos”. “El teatro Real por dentro”.
In: La Ilustración Española y Americana. Año LII, n° VII, 22 de febrero de 1908
Private collection

Charles Gounod
Faust.
Milano, G. Ricordi e C., 19th century
UCM: BH MUS VB 1453

Georges Bizet
Paris, Choudens, ca. 1870
UCM: BH MUS VB 812

“The knighting of don Quixote”
Set design for the opera Don Quichotte. Oil on board. Taller de Alexandre Bailly (1866-1947)
Colección Carmen y Justo Fernández

"Sancho's entry on the isle of Barataria". Set design for the opera Don Quichotte. Oil on board.
Taller de Alexandre Bailly (1866-1947)
Colección Carmen y Justo Fernández

"The theft of Sancho's donkey"
Set design for the opera Don Quichotte. Oil on board. Taller de Alexandre Bailly (1866-1947)
Colección Carmen y Justo Fernández

Repertory props: Red thread bobbin.
20th century
Teatro Real
After training, planning, weeks of rehearsal, collaboration, and often some drama, the day of the premiere arrives. Hairdressers and make-up artists crowd the dressing rooms of singers and choristers, orchestral players tune their instruments, ushers check tickets and show members of the audience how to get to their seats.

During the show, everyone is on high alert. Although everyone has trained and rehearsed extensively, things can and sometimes do go wrong. One key figure is that of the suggeritore (prompter), who used to sit in the wings or in a small pit at stage front and provide singers with cues, so that any memory lapses could be prevented or minimised in real time. It is one of the professions that, due to new technologies and changing standards and methods of production, are now disappearing. But the scores in the Fondo Vidal Llimona y Boceta marked “per suggerire” are another reminder of what it took to take an opera to the stage.

One of the most iconic moments in all of opera is the end of act 2 of Giacomo Puccini’s Tosca. Desperate and pushed to her limits, Tosca stabs the evil Scarpia to death. The magnificent cover of a Ricordi piano-vocal score offers a powerful rendition of that moment. Just as powerfully, what we are displayed throughout the twenty showcases of this exhibition shows the extraordinary complexity of the art form known as “opera”, fuelled by professionalism, creativity, and indeed passion.
EXHIBITION ITEMS

Giacomo Puccini  
Milán, G. Ricordi y Comp., 1911  
UCM: BH MUS VB 2150

Vincenzo Bellini  
19th century  
UCM: BH MUS VB 1015

Giuseppe Verdi  
*Ernani: Dramma lirico in quattro parti di Francesco Maria Piave.* Riduzione per canto con accompagnamento di Pianoforte del maestro L. Truzzi.  
Milano, Giovanni Ricordi, After 1844  
UCM: BH MUS VB 2451

Gaetano Donizetti,  
*La Favorita.*  
[After 1840]  
UCM: BH MUS VB 89

Repertory props: Dagger and Candlestick.  
20th century  
Teatro Real

COSTUME

Producción: *La vida breve.* Acto II.  
Personaje: Señorita moderna nº 4.  
Intérprete: Ana Díaz.  
Grupo: Coro.  
Acto II.  
Teatro Real: ID VESTUARIO 9798020027

Producción: *La vida breve.* Acto II.  
Personaje: Tío Sarvao  
Intérprete: Alfonso Échevarría.  
Grupo: Solista.  
Teatro Real: ID VESTUARIO 9798020089

Producción: *La vida breve.* Acto II.  
Personaje: Flamenc@ nº 1  
Intérprete: Cristina Guadaño.  
Grupo: Ballet.  
Teatro Real: ID VESTUARIO 9798020069
THIS EXHIBITION IS PART OF THE ACTIVITIES OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS:

MadMusic: Espacios, géneros y públicos de la música en Madrid, ss. XVII-XX

MUTE: Música teatral en España, géneros, continuidades e interacciones (1680-1914)