

Inkle and Yarico: An Opera in Three Acts

Inkle and Yarico is an opera in three acts by Samuel Arnold, with a libretto by George Colman the Younger. It is based on the 1766 novel *The History of Inkle and Yarico* by Richard Ligon. The opera tells the story of Inkle, an English trader, and Yarico, a Caribbean woman.

The opera premiered on 4 August 1787 at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, London. It was a great success and was performed regularly for many years. The opera was revived in 2002 by the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

- Inkle, an English trader (tenor)
- Yarico, a Caribbean woman (soprano)
- Wowski, Yarico's father (bass)
- Trudge, Inkle's servant (baritone)
- Sir Christopher Curry, a governor (bass)
- Betsey Blossom, a chambermaid (soprano)

Act 1



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★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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The opera opens on a beach in the Caribbean. Inkle and Trudge are shipwrecked. They are rescued by Yarico and her father, Wowski. Yarico falls in love with Inkle and agrees to marry him.

Act 2

Inkle and Yarico are married. However, Inkle soon tires of Yarico and decides to sell her as a slave. Yarico is heartbroken and curses Inkle.

Act 3

Inkle and Trudge are shipwrecked again. They are rescued by Sir Christopher Curry, who is the governor of the island. Sir Christopher Curry recognizes Inkle and orders him to be arrested. Inkle is found guilty of selling Yarico into slavery and is sentenced to death.

Yarico arrives and begs for Inkle's life. Sir Christopher Curry is moved by Yarico's compassion and pardons Inkle. The opera ends with Inkle and Yarico reunited.

The opera contains the following musical numbers:

Act 1

- Overtura
- "Hark! the vessel's in distress" (Inkle, Trudge)
- "Sweet child of nature" (Yarico)
- "My fetter'd limbs are free" (Yarico)
- "The midnight bell" (Trudge)
- "The sun has kiss'd the mountain's brow" (Inkle, Yarico)
- "The vows we made" (Inkle, Yarico)

Act 2

- "The merchant's song" (Trudge)
- "See the ship that sails so gaily" (Yarico)
- "Oh cruel man!" (Yarico)
- "The storm is over" (Chorus)

Act 3

- "The tempest rages" (Chorus)
- "Hear me, hear me, gracious Heaven" (Yarico)
- "I'm not afraid of death" (Inkle)
- "Oh, spare him, spare him!" (Yarico)
- "The smiling seraph" (Yarico)

Inkle and Yarico was written during the period of the slave trade. The opera reflects the ambivalent attitudes of the time towards slavery. On the one hand, the opera condemns the practice of slavery. On the other hand, the opera also portrays Yarico as a stereotypical noble savage.

The opera also reflects the growing popularity of the Caribbean as a setting for literature and music. In the late 18th century, the Caribbean was seen as a place of exoticism and adventure. This is reflected in the opera's music, which incorporates elements of Caribbean folk music.

Inkle and Yarico was a great success with audiences and critics. The opera was praised for its beautiful music, its engaging story, and its strong characters. The opera was also praised for its condemnation of slavery.

However, some critics found the opera's portrayal of Yarico to be problematic. They argued that the opera presented Yarico as a stereotypical noble savage. This criticism is still valid today.

Inkle and Yarico is still performed today. The opera is a valuable historical document that provides insight into the attitudes of the late 18th century towards slavery and the Caribbean. The opera is also a beautiful and entertaining work of art.

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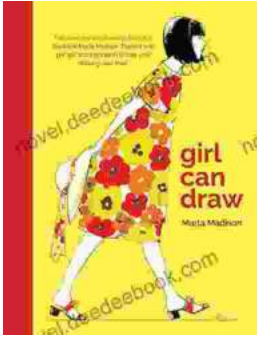
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