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Great Opera Houses



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MATERIALS

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On [7th December](#), [La Scala](#) in Milan, one of the most famous Opera Houses in the world, reopened its doors after a three-year closure for renovation. What follows is dedicated to this theatre and to other [famous Opera Houses](#).

Concentrating first on the Milan Opera House, we can tell you that the renovation work, which has caused controversy, has been done with the objective of increasing the range of productions it could offer and improving the acoustics. For the latter, they engaged the Catalan [Higini Arau](#), who was in charge of the acoustics for the new Liceu in Barcelona.

In fact, the renovations have taken longer than the actual construction of the theatre, which opened on 3rd August 1778 after two years of work, with a production of the opera '[Europa Riconosciuta](#)' (Europe Revealed), by the composer [Antonio Salieri](#); this opera had not been staged again at La Scala until... 7th December this year.

The La Scala Opera House, in the heart of the capital of Lombardy, right next to the cathedral, or Duomo, was reopened once before; almost sixty years ago, in 1946. This was after suffering severe bomb damage in an air raid in 1943 during the Second World War (1939-1945); that reopening was celebrated by a concert conducted by the Italian conductor [Arturo Toscanini](#).

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Versió imprimible

Envia'n còpia

Opera Centres of Europe...



+ Opera developed around the turn of the 16th-17th centuries.

Apart from La Scala, surely the most prestigious musical theatre in the world, Europe can boast a collection of renowned Opera Houses. Without doubt, the operatic genre was born on the continent of Europe around the turn of the 16th-17th centuries, specifically in Italy. In that country, the most outstanding are the [San Carlo Opera House](#) in Naples, which dates from 1737, and [La Fenice](#) in Venice, reopened in December 2003 after the 1996 fire. Away from the Italian Peninsula, the most important are: Covent Garden in London, dating from 1732 and the oldest of them all (becoming the [Royal Opera House](#) in 1892); the [Bolshoi](#) in Moscow; the [Opera National](#) in Paris; the [State Opera](#) in Vienna...

...and the Rest of the World



+ Sydney Opera House is a symbol of the Australian city.

If we move away from Europe, we also find musical theatres of great renown. For example, there is the [Metropolitan Opera](#) in New York, popularly known as the Met, which has had great conductors, such as Arturo Toscanini and the Austrian, [Gustav Mahler](#). Apart from the Met, the [Colón](#) in Buenos Aires and the [Sydney Opera House](#) deserve a mention; the latter, true symbol of the Australian city, has a most spectacular roof, which evoke the billowing sails of a sailing ship.

The Liceu



+ The new Liceu opened in 1999.

The [Gran Teatre del Liceu](#) in Barcelona forms part of the circle of the most internationally prestigious opera centres. Opened on 4th April 1847 and situated on the Rambla, this symbol of the country's musical culture has had more than a few ups and downs. In 1861, a fire destroyed the auditorium and the stage, which were reconstructed the following year, in 1862; in 1893, a bomb thrown into the stalls by the anarchist Santiago Salvador killed twenty people; and in 1994 it was once again consumed by flames. Reopened in 1999, the Liceu is no longer exclusively for the haute-bourgeoisie and has opened its doors to a younger public from varied backgrounds.