

Sets and costumes for *Alessandro nelle Indie* by Pietro Metastasio, 1970

Directed by Vittorio Sermonti, produced by RAI Radiotelevisione Italiana.

Television play, RAI Radiotelevisione Italiana, aired nationally, Autumn 1970.

“An early work by Pietro Metastasio, *Alessandro nelle Indie* became one of the most frequently performed melodramas of the Italian Settecento. It was first performed in 1729, and has had some fifty orchestrations.

The entire performance, which was later transferred to video, was shot in Bosco Parrasio (the name is inspired by ancient Greece), a Roman park located along Via Garibaldi, where the meetings of the Arcadia took place beginning in 1724 (the Arcadia was an Academy founded in 1690 by Giovanni Mario Crescimbeni after the death of Queen Christina of Sweden). Metastasio entered the Arcadia and wrote the opera during the period when this small group of intellectuals was meeting in the ‘Bosco’. To create the sets, Paolini brought interior furnishings into an outdoor space, thereby using the woods as architecture. [...] The very heart of the set is made up of two marble piers that enclose a tombstone. Paolini identifies the structure as being an ideal backdrop, and covers it with a panel that both conceals the stone, and doubles as a set painting, reproducing the nature that lies behind it as well” (L. Cherubini, in *Sipario. Balla, De Chirico, Savinio, Picasso, Paolini, Cucchi*, exhibition catalogue, Rivoli, Castello di Rivoli Museo d’Arte Contemporanea [Milan: Edizioni Charta, 1997], p. 255, revised translation).



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