



## Press release – Special program for the celebration of Auguste Mariette’s 200th anniversary and Verdi’s Opera « Aïda »’s 150th anniversary

**Celebrating the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Egyptologist’s Auguste Mariette’s birthday and the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of Aïda – Giuseppe Verdi’s opera, the French Institute in Egypt presents you with an exploration of the links, sometimes even unknown ones, between the great Egyptologist and the most emblematic Opera in Egypt.**

### An outstanding exhibition at the French Institute

The French Institute in Egypt reunited around 30 copies of drawings of costumes and decors from Aïda’s first representation, played in Cairo on December 24<sup>th</sup> 1871. Drawn by Mariette himself, or stamped by him, they show us that the Egyptologist was looking to reach the most accurate result possible in the realization of the Opera he was writing.

Aïda is the 6<sup>th</sup> most-played-Opera around the world each year. Mariette is the one who proposed the intrigue at Khadive Ismael, after having written it in his house in Serapeum.

All the drawings displayed in the exhibition were taken from collections of the Opera’s Library, bequeathed by Mariette’s son and transferred through the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. Some of them were drawn by Mariette himself and others by some of his assistants. That is the case for those of Jules Marre and Henri de Montaut. A copy of the latter is actually displayed in the permanent collection of Cairo’s Opera.

### A special program lasting until 19<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Until February 19<sup>th</sup> 2022, several cultural events will take place on the subject of Mariette and Aïda including:

- December 2<sup>nd</sup> : a conference at the IFAO offering a dialogue between two Museum directors: Dr Sabah Abdelrazek, director of Cairo’s Museum and Elikya Kandot, director of Boulogne-sur-Mer’s Museum. They will have an unprecedented talk about the crossed inheritance of the two museums.
- December 10<sup>th</sup> : a talk at the French Institute with Winoc, cartoonist of the graphic novel “Sur les pas de Mariette”
- In January : several conferences and screenings for the reopening of the French Institute – around the orientalist costumes (19<sup>th</sup>), with researcher Khemais Ben Lakdar Rezgui; a talk with Dr Ahmed Youssef around the figure of colonel Bouchard who discovered the Rosetta Stone (28<sup>th</sup>), and many more surprises

## CONTACTS

Laura Khassouf  
Head of Communications – Institut français d’Egypte  
[laura.khassouf@ifegypte.com](mailto:laura.khassouf@ifegypte.com)  
0122 968 8669