



Dante Today: Gustave Doré Illustrations In Modern Music

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Introduction

Dante Today is an archive of modern renditions of Dante Alighieri and his *Divine Comedy*. *Dante Today* hosts many examples of modern media reiterating the famous words written over 700 years ago. The work on *Dante Today* allows a look into the impact the *Divine Comedy* has had across all forms of media. The postings are each categorized by topic and then further tagged by their thematic characteristics. Then, they are posted to the site where viewers can search for Dante in contemporary culture to draw their own ideas and conclusions. One particular rendition of the poem is the artist Gustave Doré's illustrations, which since their creation in the 19th century have become almost synonymous with the poem itself. These illustrations, alongside the poem, have made their way into a plethora of modern cultures. They are especially prevalent in the music industry with Doré's drawings being used in countless instances as album covers and art, while the Dantean themes are being worked into the titles, lyrics, or even feelings of the music. This study contributed its research by showing examples of how one singular piece of work, the *Divine Comedy*, can now influence so much media around the entire world over 700 years after publication.

Methods

- Access the site's Google Sheet of recorded Dante references to scan through the list of references that need to be posted to *Dante Today*. When the item is found, scan through the site itself to make sure the item does not already have an existing post.
- Create a descriptive title that does not do any form of interpretation.
- Select what category/ies the item would fit in. Categories include Written Word, Visual Art & Architecture, Performing Arts, Consumer Goods, Music, Digital Media, Places, Dining & Leisure, Image Mosaic, and Odds & Ends.
- Find pertinent quotes that best show the connection the item has to Dante. Also include the title and a link to the source that it came from.
- Use an image (often directly from the source) that shows what the item is and also how it relates to Dante. Link the image to the source that it is from. Also, use this image as the "Featured Image" that will be showcased on the front page of the site when it is first published.
- Tag the post with any identifiers that the item has in relation to Dante. Some examples are the year, what canto of the poem, cities, media relations, etc.
- Then post the item to the site so that it will be shared to the public.

Gustave Doré



Paul-Gustave Doré was a French illustrator who lived from 1832-1883. During his lifetime he was most famous for producing almost 10,000 illustrations for hundreds of books, including *The Bible*, *Paradise Lost*, *The Tempest*, *The Raven*, *Don Quixote*, and all three poems in the *Divina Commedia*. Specifically, to illustrate Dante's work, Doré produced a collection of 135 plates to bring the *Divina Commedia* to life. Through his decades of work, creating thousands of pieces, Gustave Doré creating many notable pieces. Namely, his place in the Dantean community for the illustrations of the *Divina Commedia*.

Illustrations vs. Albums

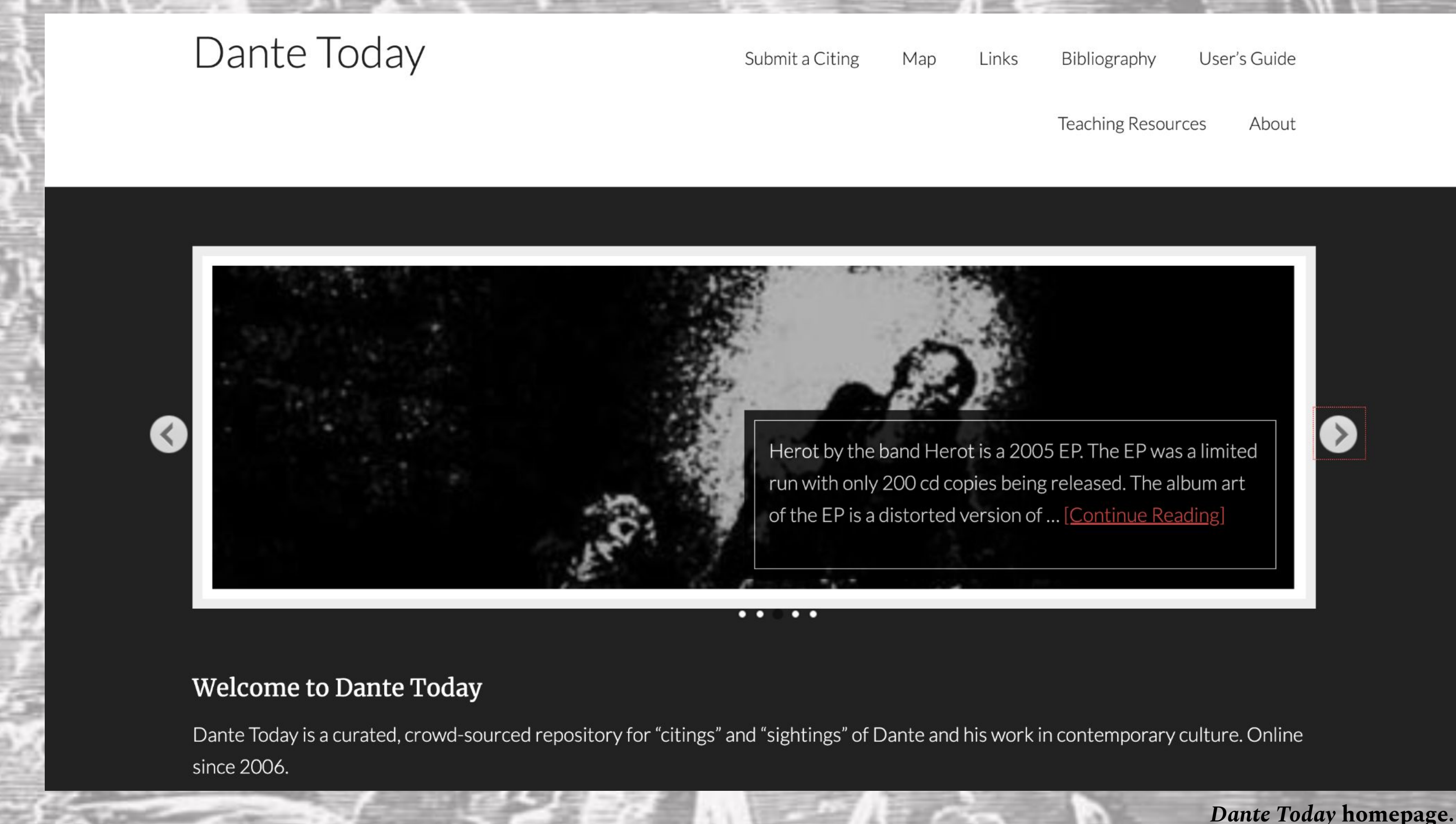


The Path of Sorrows (1993) by Christian Death (Left) and Doré's *The Avaricious* (Right) from *Purgatory* 19.

Demo 2005 by Chord of Souls (Left) and Doré's *Paramours and Flatterers* (Right) from *Inferno* 18.

Summoning Curses (2016) by Atel and Suðri (Left) and Doré's *Ugolino and Gaddo* (Right) from *Inferno* 33.

Dante Today



Conclusion

The goal of research for *Dante Today* is to provide a wealth of information for both the scholar and the enthusiast of Dante and his works. Through the creation and upkeep of the site, we are able to create a database full of the references to Dante in contemporary culture. It helps show how applicable and transmittable these ideas from a 700-year-old text are to the majority of cultures around the entire world. The range of Dantean references is truly something to marvel at and to continue to dig deeper into the influences that they have had. For example, the way in a single series of works, being Gustave Doré's illustrations, have taken a life of their own and are currently being used as album art for hundreds of albums. Each of these albums are deserving of being archived on the site, alongside the thousands of other posts.

References

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