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Origin: Culver Pictures Inc Old# Print BW  
Montez, Lola (1818-61), Irish dancer and adventuress

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#### Lola Montez: Stories Found in Collections

The CMP's recently acquired Culver Pictures collection which has thousands of images of celebrities ranging from the late 19th C all the way up to the 1980s. Stumbling upon stories like this one is one of the privileges and joys of interning in collections. The fascinating Lola Montez who was labeled as an "adventuress and Irish dancer" certainly doesn't seem the part here with her sleepy Cavalier king Charles Spaniel.

Unlike many archival finds, Lola Montez was pretty easy to research. Like all terribly interesting 19th C women, she had five names and used none of them, while known as Lola Montez, she was: Marie Dolores Eliza Rosanna Gilbert, Countess of Landsfeld.

Despite the sleepy appearance of her dog, she did in fact lead many adventures. Lola grew in popularity as a dancer of “irish” and “spanish” styles in courtly circles in Europe where she was a courtesan, and mistress of King Ludwig I of Bavaria who gave her the title of Countess of Landsfeld.

She is said to have invented the risqué “spider dance” in which the dancer flings a fake spider off of herself by waving her skirts about. The dance toed the line between impropriety, burlesque and comedy. She is speculated to have been an influence for Arthur Conan Doyle’s character Irene Adler, who appears in *A Scandal in Bohemia*, due to her political influence and captivating qualities as a performer. Lola Montez traveled the world from Europe, Australia, and eventually to Sacramento, California performing and teaching this dance.

During her time on stage she was considered quite the diva and is rumored to have whipped a stage hand, dancers and engaged in duels with other dancers. One of these duels notably involved both her and another dancer taking two pills, one which was poisoned and one which was harmless. As with any celebrity, the real challenge to uncovering her story is often separating nearly unbelievable facts from fantastic fictions. #LolaMontez, #19thCenturyHistory, #biography

Devany & Lindsey,

I know the quality of these two images is not superb, I had taken them myself when I was cataloging these images. Since it's new to our collections no scanned images of it exist.

I’m not quite sure how you’ll do the credit line but you certainly don’t need give my bad iphone photo any dues. In the past we have simply used:

Credit line for photo: UCR/California Museum of Photography, University of California, Riverside

Sources/ notes:

There’s so much to say about Lola, but i tried to remove some of the details that were definitely not family friendly:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ulUutKDy7hU>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lola\\_Montez](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lola_Montez)

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Lola-Montez>

<https://allthatsinteresting.com/lola-montez>