

STATE OPERA SOUTH AUSTRALIA
PRESENTS

Bohème

LA BOHÈME
ON THE BEACH



26 MARCH 2022
GLENELG BEACH

LA BOHÈME
AN OPERA IN 4 ACTS

Composer Giacomo Puccini
Libretto Luigi Illica & Giuseppe Giacosa

Based on *Scènes de la vie de bohème* (1851)
by Henri Murger

Rodolfo, a poet	<u>Rosario La Spina</u>
Mimi, a seamstress	<u>Cathy-Di Zhang</u>
Marcello, a painter	<u>Samuel Dundas</u>
Musetta, a singer	<u>Desiree Frahn</u>
Schaunard, a musician	<u>Jeremy Tatchell</u>
Colline, a philosopher	<u>Pelham Andrews</u>
Benoît, landlord	<u>Douglas McNicol</u>
/Alcindoro, councillor	
Parpignol, a toy vendor	<u>Jiacheng Ding</u>
Sargeant	Alex Roose
Customs Officer	Daniel Goodburn

CONDUCTOR	<u>Simon Bruckard</u>
DIRECTOR	<u>Stuart Maunder AM</u>
SET & COSTUME DESIGNER	<u>Simone Romaniuk</u>
LIGHTING DESIGNER	<u>Christopher Petridis</u>
SOUND DESIGNER	<u>Jim Aitkins</u>
CHORUS MASTER	<u>Anthony Hunt</u>

STATE OPERA CHORUS
STATE OPERA CHILDREN'S CHORUS

ADELAIDE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Duration
2 hours 30 minutes
including 30-minute interval



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WELCOME OPERA LOVERS ONE AND ALL.

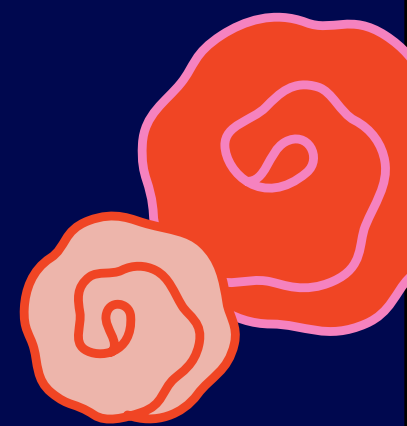
If you are reading this in the days and hours before the “curtain” goes up on State Opera’s one-night-only spectacular production of *La bohème*, I trust you will join me in my earnest whispers to the weather gods. If you are reading this only moments before the show, then we are here and we made it! Our prayers have been answered!

This production has been a labour of love for so many of us at State Opera; it is the brilliant collaborative outcome of a creative and ambitious team. I am unspeakably proud of where this Company is now, and I can’t wait to share our even grander plans for the future. I can’t think of a better way to kick off 2022 than by showcasing what I consider to be the twin jewels in South Australia’s crown. her stunning beaches and her iconic Opera Company.

I hope this evening fills your heart with music, and lives long in your memory. To all the friends, patrons, audiences, supporters, sponsors, donors, Board Members and our incredible Artistic Director Stuart Maunder – thank you for making dreams come true.



Yarmila Alfonzetti
Executive Director



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Since its premiere in 1898 *La bohème* has been the most performed and popular opera of the operatic canon. And from Giacomo Puccini, arguably the most loved of operatic composers. *La bohème* is quite simply a masterpiece with a soaring score that embraces the gamut of emotions from happiness to despair.

Puccini's artistic manifesto, 'Great sorrows in little souls', is especially apt in the case of *La bohème*. It depicts young people juggling their joys, sorrows, loves and ideals as they grapple with maturing experience. As such, it rings true with each new generation of opera goers. Audiences are unfailingly moved by the poetry of *La bohème*. This doesn't preclude us from revelling in one of the great celebrations of youthful enthusiasm ever written. Despite the constant threats of hunger, poverty, and illness each act of *La bohème* is dominated by the feeling that love conquers all; youthful, optimistic, and eternal.

Here's to youth with all its joy, pain, and passion.



Stuart Maunder AM
Artistic Director



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ACT I

It is Christmas Eve. Rodolfo, a poet, and Marcello, a painter, are freezing in their studio. Marcello is painting The Crossing of the Red Sea. Colline, a philosopher, arrives as the fire Rodolfo has lit with one of his manuscripts, flickers and dies. Schaunard brings reinforcements – food, wine, and fuel for the fire, bought with unexpected money from his earnings as a musician.

A knock at the door and Benoit, the landlord, arrives demanding the rent. The four Bohemians ply him with wine and then bundle him off. Marcello, Colline and Schaunard go off to join the celebrations at the Café Momus. Promising to join them soon, Rodolfo settles down to finish an article he is writing.

There is another knock. This time it is a neighbour, Mimi – a beautiful young seamstress, holding her key and an unlit candle. She begs a light and Rodolfo obliges. Mimi departs and drops her key. Together they search for the key, and their hands touch. They tell each other about themselves, and Rodolfo passionately declares his love. The new lovers then set off into the night to join the others.



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ACT II

The square in which the Café Momus is situated is the Bohemians' favourite haunt, bustling with shoppers and hawkers. Rodolfo buys his new love a bonnet. At the café, Marcello's old flame, Musetta, appears with a new admirer, Alcindoro. To attract Marcello's attention, Musetta bursts into her famous waltz song. Marcello responds and Musetta, pretending that her shoe is pinching, dispatches Alcindoro to a cobbler. She joins in the revelry with Marcello and his friends. When they depart they leave a momento for the hapless Alcindoro on his return – a huge bill!

INTERVAL (30 mins)

ACT III

It is daybreak just inside a tollgate. Snow lies on the ground. Mimi emerges from the throng of workers. She is looking for Marcello at a nearby inn where he and Musetta have been living for the past month. Pale and agitated, she tells him of Rodolfo's jealousy which has made their life together impossible. Mimi hides as Rodolfo suddenly appears. He declares her to be unfaithful, but then confides to Marcello that Mimi is very ill and blames himself and his poverty for not being able to help her. Mimi's sudden coughing betrays her presence and the lovers sadly decide it is best that they part. Their parting duet is interrupted by the sounds of a fierce quarrel between Marcello and Musetta. Mimi and Rodolfo decide to stay together until spring returns.



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ACT IV

The studio, months later. Both pairs of lovers now parted. Mimi and Musetta have found wealthy admirers. Rodolfo and Marcello feign indifference, but neither can forget the memory of their respective lovers. Schaunard and Colline arrive with meagre food and the four sit down to a mock 'banquet'.

While they are acting the fool, Musetta rushes in with news that Mimi is desperately ill and has asked to be brought back to Rodolfo to die. Musetta explains that the Viscount has discarded Mimi and she has been living on the streets for weeks sinking further into poverty and desperation. The Bohemians rally to the cause. Musetta pawns her earrings and Colline his beloved coat to buy medicine for Mimi.

Alone for a short time, Mimi and Rodolfo recall the past, reliving their short spell of happiness and their dreams together. Mimi, seized by a coughing fit, falls back, exhausted. When the others return, she weakly thanks them for their kindness and falls asleep. It is Schaunard who first notices that Mimi is dead. Rodolfo is the last to realise, by seeing the truth on his friends' faces.



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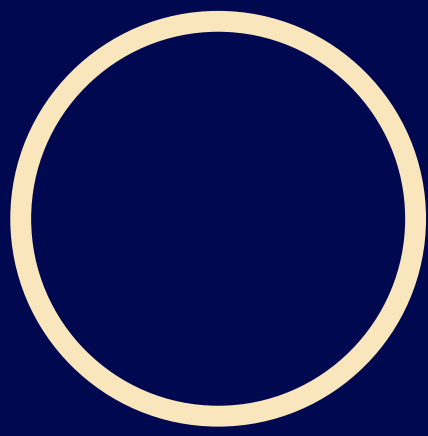


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