



LA BOHÈME

Composed by Giacomo Puccini
Libretto by Luigi Illica & Giuseppe Giacosa

Logos to add to marketing materials:

Please make sure you incorporate the necessary partner logos on any printed or digital communications from your venue. This includes: website listings, flyers, posters, printed schedules, email blasts, banners, brochures and any other materials that you distribute.

Logos for this production: Rising Alternative + Taormina Arts Festival

Opera in four acts
Sung in Italian

Recorded LIVE from the Taormina Opera Festival

July 5, 2017 at 8:30pm (local time)

Running Time by Act TBA

Conductor | Li Xincao
Director & Set Designer | Enrico Castiglione
Costumes | Sonia Cammarata

Mimi | Karen Gardeazabal
Rodolfo | Massimo Giordano
Musetta | Bing Bing Wang

Chorus and Orchestra of Taormina Opera Festival

PRESENTATION

One of opera's most popular and enduring classics, Giacomo Puccini's *La Bohème* memorializes the ardent passions of young Bohemian artists struggling to love, create and survive in mid-19th century Paris.

Living together in a small Parisian garret, Rodolfo writes, Marcello paints, Schaunard composes and Colline philosophizes. When Rodolfo meets the delicate Mimi, he is immediately struck by her beauty and the two sing the famous duet, "O soave fanciulla" ("Oh lovely maiden"). Still, the passionate love of Rodolfo and Mimi struggles to survive the brutal and unforgiving reality of poverty.

Puccini's opera ultimately honors that tragic struggle – the struggle to create, to love and to live the Bohemian life. For over one hundred years, audiences have shared the hopes, the joys and the passions of these young artists, celebrating the bohemians' unyielding commitment to seizing each new day with fervor.

Directed by Enrico Castiglione, *La Bohème* will be staged on the magnificent outdoor stage of the Ancient Greek Theater of Taormina, overlooking Mount Etna and the picturesque Sicilian coast. This production features costumes by Sonia Cammarata and is conducted by Li Xincao.

SYNOPSIS

ACT I

Paris: A garret in the Latin Quarter

As they vainly try to keep warm, the poet Rodolfo and the painter Marcello are joined by the philosopher Colline in front of the stove. Another friend, the musician Schaunard, has had good luck and arrives with food and firewood, but suggests saving the food and eating out instead, since he has money and it is Christmas Eve.

The landlord Benoit demands the rent. They pay but ply him with drink and steal it back again, and when he admits to being unfaithful to his wife they pretend moral indignation and throw him out. They set off for the Cafe Momus, except for Rodolfo, who has an article to finish and will join them shortly. Mimì knocks at the door, in search of a light for her candle. She faints, and Rodolfo is struck by her beauty and pallor.

He relights her candle, but now she has lost her key. As both candles go out they search for the key by the moonlight. Rodolfo finds it and quietly pockets it. He offers to warm Mimì's cold hand. He tells her that he is a poet and she tells him of her life as a seamstress. As they prepare to join his friends they admit their strong mutual attraction.

ACT II

The Cafe Momus

Christmas revelers and hawkers mill around the cafe. Rodolfo buys Mimì a bonnet and they join the other bohemians at an outside table. A shrill laugh announces the arrival of Musetta, Marcello's former lover, with an elderly admirer, Alcindoro. Marcello tries to ignore her, but she is determined to attract his attention, and her exuberant behavior soon does the trick. She gets rid of the embarrassed Alcindoro by sending him to have her shoe fixed, and falls into Marcello's arms. She tells the waiter to add the Bohemian's bill to Alcindoro's and leaves with them.

ACT III

One of the city gates, with a customs posts and an inn nearby, the following February

Mimì arrives at the inn where Marcello and Musetta are living. Learning from Marcello that Rodolfo is there, she refuses to come inside out of the snow, explaining that Rodolfo's jealousy is spoiling their relationship. She agrees with him that it would be better for them to part.

She hides as Rodolfo comes outside, and listens as he confesses that she is dying and he cannot bear to watch helplessly. She is unable to suppress a cry and Rodolfo runs to her as Marcello, hearing Musetta's laugh, runs inside to see who she's flirting with. Mimì bids Rodolfo farewell, but then they decide to stay together for a while and part in the spring. Meanwhile Marcello and Musetta are fighting, and she leaves after an exchange of insults.

ACT IV

The garret, some months later

Mimì and Rodolfo have separated. Rodolfo is attempting to write and Marcello to paint, but they are distracted by thoughts of their absent lovers. Schaunard and Colline arrive with meagre provisions and all sit down cheerfully to their spartan feast, enlivening the occasion with horseplay.

Musetta appears, explaining that Mimì is with her, but too ill to climb the stairs. She had found her wandering in the streets, wanting to return and die with Rodolfo. Mimì is carried in and made comfortable. She and Rodolfo are absorbed in one another, but the others are concerned by the lack of medicines and comforts. Musetta gives her earnings to pay for medicines and goes with Marcello to buy a muff for Mimì, to warm her hands. Colline prepares to pawn a much-loved old coat. Left alone, Mimì and Rodolfo relive their meeting and past happiness. The others return with medicines and a muff. Mimì is delighted with the muff, but dies quietly shortly afterwards.