



PUCCINI'S

# La Bohème

Libretto by Luigi Illica & Giuseppe Giacosa

## La Bohème, English Synopsis:

**Setting:** The Bohemian quarter of Paris, France around 1830.

**Act 1:** In an old attic apartment a group of young artists are living together in poverty. On the night of Christmas Eve, they all intend to go to a bar, but Rodolfo wants to finish writing a poem. He promises to join the others soon and is left alone. A neighbor, the seamstress Mimi, knocks on Rodolfo's door seeking a light for her candle and introduces herself. The two of them fall in love.

**Act 2:** Rodolfo and Mimi join his friends at the Café Momus. The singer Musetta comes along accompanied by her elderly rich lover, Alcindoro. She spies her former lover, Marcello and abandons Alcindoro sending him off to buy her a new pair of shoes so she can join Marcello. The group enjoy a Christmas Eve meal then ditch the scene leaving the bill to be paid by Alcindoro for all of them.

**Act 3:** Time has passed, and it is now a cold winter morning. Mimi has lived with Rodolfo, but they quarrel because of his apparent jealousy. Mimi seeks out Marcello asking him why Rodolfo is recently so cold to her. The two hear Rodolfo coming, and Mimi hides. Rodolfo tells Marcello, "I love Mimi, but she has tuberculosis. I'm poor and feel like I'm killing her because I can't take care of her properly. I should say goodbye to her." Mimi, upon hearing this, begins sobbing and draws the attention of Rodolfo who tries to comfort her. Although they love each other they decide to live separately.

**Act 4:** After some time, the poor Bohemian artists once again live together in the old attic apartment. Musetta runs into their room bringing with her the dying Mimi whom they try to comfort. Mimi wants to die at Rodolfo's side. His friends go out to try to come up with the money to buy her medicine. Rodolfo and Mimi reminisce about their times together. Their friends come back with medicine but in vain. Mimi dies in Rodolfo's arms of the consumption that has racked her.