



THE ROYAL OPERA

Music Director JAKUB HRŮŠA
Director of Opera OLIVER MEARS

La bohème

OPERA IN FOUR ACTS

Music GIACOMO PUCCINI
Libretto GIUSEPPE GIACOSA and LUIGI ILLICA
after Henri Murger's novel *Scènes de la vie de Bohème*

Conductor
LORENZO PASSERINI

Director RICHARD JONES
Revival Director SIMON IORIO
Designer STEWART LAING
Lighting Designer MIMI JORDAN SHERIN
Movement Director SARAH FAHIE
Revival Movement Director DANIELLE URBAS

ROYAL OPERA CHORUS
Chorus Director WILLIAM SPAULDING

ORCHESTRA OF THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE
Concert Master MAGNUS JOHNSTON

A co-production with TEATRO REAL, MADRID and
LYRIC OPERA OF CHICAGO

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The Youth Opera Company is generously supported by
YVONNE AND BJARNE RIEBER

MONDAY 29 JUNE 2026 AT 11.30AM
General Rehearsal

Approximate Timings

The performance lasts about 2 hours 35 minutes, including one interval.

ACT I: 40 minutes
ACT II: 20 minutes
INTERVAL: 30 minutes
ACT III: 30 minutes
ACT IV: 35 minutes

Language

Sung in Italian with English surtitles

Guidance

Suitable for age 5+

Children under the age five are not permitted into our theatres. Children over age five must have their own ticket and sit next to an accompanying adult.

Cast

Marcello LUCA MICHELETTI
Rodolfo FREDDIE DE TOMMASO
Colline GIANLUCA BURATTO
Schaunard MODESTAS SEDLEVIČIUS
Benoît EDDIE WADE
Mimi JULIANA GRIGORYAN
Parpignol ANDREW MACNAIR
Musetta MARINA MONZÓ
Alcindoro FREDDIE TONG
Customs Officer ROBERT WINSLADE ANDERSON
Sergeant CHARBEL MATTAR

Solo Voices MADELEINE MITCHELL,
RENATA SKARELYTE, OLLE ZETTERSTRÖM,
DAWID KIMBERG, TIMOTHY PARKER-LANGSTON

Christmas Eve revellers, Bohemians, waiters, street sweepers,
milkmaids, peasant women and children

Extra Chorus
Sopranos CELESTE GATTAI, BERNADETTE LORD,
ALISON RAYNER, ROSALIND WATERS
Mezzo-sopranos TAMSIN DALLEY, MARIA JONES,
JENNIFER WESTWOOD
Tenors JONATHAN ENGLISH, ANDREW FRIEDHOFF,
JAMES GEER
Basses JAMES BIRCHALL, GAVIN HORSLEY,
SIMON PREECE, JONATHAN WOOD

Actors LUCY BRENCHLEY, KIERAN DEE,
PAUL DENNISON, RICHARD GITTINS, SIMON JAYMES,
ANTHONY KURT-GABEL, TOM LEVERMORE,
LAURA CANELA QUERALT, DAVY QUISTIN,
CHARLIE VENABLES, ADDIS WILLIAMS,
TIMO WILLMAN

Children's Chorus YOUTH OPERA COMPANY
Music Director PATRICK BARRETT

Synopsis

The opera is set in Paris

ACT I: AN ATTIC IN THE LATIN QUARTER, CHRISTMAS EVE

Rodolfo and Marcello complain about the bitter cold. They need to light their stove: Marcello suggests using a chair, but Rodolfo offers the manuscript of the play he is writing. Colline arrives and the remaining acts of the play are burnt.

Schaunard arrives with wood, food and wine. He explains that an Englishman engaged him to play his violin to hasten the death of a parrot. The friends decide to go and eat in the Latin Quarter but are interrupted by Benoît, their landlord, who has come for the rent. They ply him with wine and Benoît boasts of his sexual prowess. The bohemians pretend outrage at Benoît's immorality and push him out.

Marcello, Colline and Schaunard head to Café Momus, leaving Rodolfo behind to finish an article. There is a knock at the door. It is a girl who asks for a light for her candle. She feels faint from climbing the stairs. As she is leaving her candle flickers out again and she realizes that she has lost her key. Rodolfo's candle also goes out and they search for her key in the moonlight. Rodolfo takes the girl's icy hand and tells her of his life as a poet. The girl tells him her name, Mimì, and describes her simple life as a flower embroiderer. Schaunard, Colline and Marcello shout up to Rodolfo to hurry. Mimì asks if she may join them at the Café Momus. Rodolfo suggests they might stay in, but eventually they leave together singing of their love.

ACT II: THE LATIN QUARTER

Rodolfo and Mimì wander through the Christmas Eve crowds. Rodolfo introduces Mimì to his friends. When Mimì shows her new friends the bonnet Rodolfo has brought her, Marcello expresses cynicism about romance.

As they propose a toast, Marcello's ex-girlfriend Musetta appears, accompanied by Alcindoro, her rich admirer. Agitated at being ignored by Marcello, Musetta launches into a song – to provoke and seduce him. She complains of a painful foot and dispatches Alcindoro to buy new shoes. The bill for supper arrives, but the bohemians have already spent their money. Musetta places their bill on Alcindoro's plate. A marching band arrives, and the bohemians leave with Musetta. Alcindoro returns and is presented with the bill.

INTERVAL

ACT III: OUTSIDE THE BARRIÈRE D'ENFER

Workers arrive from out of town to enter the city. From inside a tavern comes the voice of Musetta. Mimì enters, ill and racked with coughing. She asks for Marcello. He tells her that he and Musetta are now living at the inn and that Rodolfo turned up in the night. Mimì explains that Rodolfo's jealousy is destroying their relationship and he wants to leave her. Marcello advises Mimì to go, but she hides nearby.

Rodolfo comes out of the tavern and says he will break up with Mimì: her flirting has incensed him. Eventually, however, he reveals the real reason for their separation: she is so ill that his miserable poverty offers her nothing but the prospect of death. They hear Mimì crying and coughing. As Rodolfo hurries to her, Musetta's laugh is heard and Marcello goes to see what she is doing. Mimì says farewell

to Rodolfo and asks him to send on her possessions. She proposes that he keep her bonnet as a memento of their love. Marcello and Musetta quarrel and separate. Rodolfo and Mimì decide to postpone their separation until the spring.

ACT IV: THE ATTIC, AUTUMN

Marcello and Rodolfo taunt each other about their ex-lovers: Rodolfo has seen Musetta in a fine carriage and Marcello has seen Mimì dressed like a queen. They pretend not to miss the girls but then admit that they do. Schaunard and Colline arrive with bread and a herring and the four eat and amuse each other.

Suddenly Musetta enters. She has brought Mimì, who is desperately ill: Musetta explains that she met her in the street and that Mimì begged to be taken to Rodolfo. Mimì rallies and greets the friends. Musetta instructs Marcello to sell her earrings to pay for medicine and a doctor. Colline leaves to pawn his coat. Mimì, alone with Rodolfo, expresses her boundless love for him. He shows her the bonnet and they reminisce about their first meeting. The others return with a muff and medicine, promising that a doctor will come. Mimì dies unnoticed while they are preparing her medicine. Colline arrives with money from the pawnbroker, but it is too late.

Production

Music preparation CHRISTOPHER WILLIS,
SUSANNA STRANDERS, NICK FLETCHER,
ALEKSANDRA MYSLEK, MARK PACKWOOD,
ELIZABETH ROWE
Assistant Director TALIA STERN*, ASHLEY PEARSON
Language Coach FRANCESCA MATTA

*Jette Parker Artist

The Royal Opera

Patron HM THE KING
Music Director JAKUB HRŮŠA
Director of Opera OLIVER MEARS
Director of Casting PETER MARIO KATONA
Associate Director NETIA JONES
Administrative Director CORMAC SIMMS

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