

La Traviata

GIUSEPPE VERDI | 1853

SUNG IN ITALIAN
APPROXIMATE RUNNING TIME: 135 minutes

Where does the huge popularity of this masterpiece come from? One might argue it is due to the gutting plot telling the story of an inappropriate and undignified love, or more likely to the extreme complexity of the vocal score and to the strength of the images, perhaps to its majestic arias or more simply to the genius composer? Most likely to a combination of all the above.

La Traviata is part of Verdi's popular trilogy (alongside with Rigoletto and Il Trovatore) and nowadays it is one of the most often staged opera in the world. This veritable and romantic opera has violently moved all audiences and it is considered an important part of the worldwide musical heritage. Its arias owe a big portion of their popularity to the magnificence of interpreters such as Maria Callas, Renata Scotto, Ileana Cotrubas, Monserrat Caballé, or more recently, Angela Gheorghiu, Patrizia Ciofi, Anna Netrebko or Diana Damrau.



Alynn Pérez in *La traviata*
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MAIN CHARACTERS

Violetta Valery – courtesan -soprano

Alfredo Germont – young bourgeois -tenor

Giorgio Germont – Alfredo's father- Baritone

Annina- maid- soprano

Baron Douphol - Violetta's lover and Alfredo's rival- baritone

THE PLOT

The opera is set in 1850 Paris and tells the love story between courtesan Violetta Valéry and young bourgeois Alfredo Germont. Violetta picks Alfredo over her high-society lifestyle. However, Alfredo's father is worried that his son's choice to marry a former courtesan could throw shame on his family, which leads him to ask the lady to reconsider and give up on Alfredo. Torn by the tuberculosis and generally unable to react, Violetta will not live through this incident.

Act 1

Curtains open on Lady Violetta's fancy house where a party is going on to celebrate her recovery. One of the guests, Count Gastone, came along with a friend: young bourgeois Alfredo Germont, who fancies Violetta. She learns from Gastone that Alfredo visited her every day during the recovery which makes her think he might be the right one. After telling off her lover, Baron Douphol, for not showing that much of affection to her she proposes a toast to her health, and her guests sing a song for her.

Act 2

Scene 1:

Violetta leaves Paris and moves in Alfredo's house in the countryside while Violetta's maid, Annina, stays in Paris to try and sell the old house in order for Violetta to be able to maintain the lifestyle she is used to. When Alfredo finds it out he rushes to Paris to stop the mad plan. Alone in the countryside, Violetta is joined by Alfredo's father, who implores her to split up with his son as her reputation is being detrimental for the family, to the extent he is actually struggling to marry off one of his daughters. Violetta agrees with the man and after writing a letter for her beloved she returns to Paris.

Scene 2:

The couple's breaking up comes as a shock for everyone and the former couple meets again during a party Violetta is partaking with Douphol. Alfredo confronts her former girlfriend and forces her to admit she still loves Douphol. When she does, Alfredo throws some money at her thanking for her favours. In the meantime, Giorgio, who is after his son, makes it to the party and realises what has happened. At the end of this act Alfredo and the Baron challenge each other to a duel.

Act 3

Alfredo's father sends a letter to Violetta saying the Baron got lightly wounded during the duel and that he finally told his son about her immense sacrifice. Alfredo runs to Violetta who had fallen prey of the tuberculosis again and ultimately dies in her lover's arms.

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