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# The Metropolitan Opera Presents: Puccini's La Bohème: Libretto, Background, And Photos



## Synopsis

There's a reason La Boheme has been staged at the Met more often than any other opera: Puccini's enticing music perfectly conveys the enchantment of new young love and the anguish that comes with loss and death. La Boheme, the passionate and timeless story of love among impoverished young artists in Paris, can stake its claim as the world's most popular opera. It has a marvelous ability to make a powerful first impression (even on those new to opera) and to reveal unexpected treasures after dozens of hearings. At first glance, La Boheme is the definitive depiction of the joys and sorrows of love and loss; on closer inspection, it reveals the deep emotional significance hidden in the trivial things (a bonnet, an old overcoat, a chance meeting with a neighbor) that make up our everyday lives. This touching story of tenderness and tragedy never fails to move audiences and melt hearts. This gorgeous souvenir libretto includes extensive background notes and photos from productions through the years.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The quality of the actual book itself is excellent. It is printed on good paper and the array of photos from different Metropolitan Opera productions of La Bohème provides some nice visuals. Overall, though, I found the book disappointing. Despite the title "Libretto, Background, and Photos" the background is rather sparse. (Only 12 pages). While I completely understand that this is not intended as an "academic book" I still thought that background/analysis could have been more

substantial, without burying the reader in music theory, etc. Essentially, the book is mostly the libretto -- in Italian, followed by a literal word-for-word English translation, followed by a more "comprehensible" version. For example (page 116) In Act 2, at the Cafe Momus Marcello, Schaunad, Colline Quella folla serrata il nascondiglio appresti! That crowd packed the hiding place will provide! (Let's hide in that packed crowd!) Frankly, that type of translation seems like it would be more useful in a score to a newer singer maybe not fluent in Italian who wants to know which word might be better to emphasize. If you are just reading the libretto go get the "gist" (or maybe following along while listening) that's rather distracting! Frankly, the Metropolitan Opera Classics Library Giacomo Puccini La Boheme ISBN: 0-316-56839-2 is a better buy. The notes included all the MET La Boheme performances/casts to date (at time of printing), a discography (at time of printing), a less distracting libretto format, color photos from the classic Zeffirelli production, a 27 page intro, a 25 page summary (with some light analysis), and a 35 page novelization/adaptation/much-condensed of the original novel by Henri Murger.

Very nice book about Puccini's La Boheme, past singers and interesting pictures fill this book. If you are a Puccini lover buy this book!

I bought this to take on airline flights to follow along with the headphones. Now I wish I'd waited and got one that includes the musical score as well as the libretto. Of course it would be much bulkier and far more costly, but I am on the lookout for one of La Boheme and of The Marriage of Figaro.

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