

# OPERA

MAGYAR ÁLLAMI OPERAHÁZ  
HUNGARIAN STATE OPERA

2018  
19



**PUCCINI** 2019

FESTIVAL

18 MAY – 10 JUNE

ERKEL  
SZÍNHÁZ  
THEATRE

EIFFEL ART STUDIOS  
EIFFEL

MŰHELYHÁZ

## MAY CELEBRATION

At the end of its Puccini's Italy season, the Hungarian State Opera organises its traditional end-of-the-year festival at the turn of May and June. The three-week Puccini Festival aims to do what no institute has ever done before: to showcase all Puccini's stage and vocal works. Apart from his 11 operas, audiences get the chance to hear a different Puccini: songs, arias, special events, and spectacular productions will feature the best Hungarian artists along with international guest stars.



## MANON LESCAUT

Puccini's imagination was captivated by the love story of Manon Lescaut and the Chevalier des Grieux, in which the protagonists defy social norms and the accepted moral law in order to be with each other, as a similar tale of passion had taken place in the composer's own life: his affair with Elvira Bonturi, a liaison that stirred enormous emotions in him but which, owing to the strictness of Italian law, could not become an official marriage, filled his life. More than one associate tried to talk him out of using the subject, not only because of his own personal proximity to it, but because of the tremendous success of Massenet's own Manon as well. Fortunately, however, Puccini could not be swayed, and his first nationwide success was born, which was soon conquering stages all over the world.

Director | **MÁTÉ SZABÓ**

Set designer | **BALÁZS HORESNYI**

Costume designer | **ANNI FÜZER**

Cast | **GABRIELLA LÉTAY KISS / SAE-KYUNG RIM,  
MARCELLO GIORDANI / GERGELY BONCSÉR , CSABA SZEGEDI / LEVENTE MOLNÁR,  
ANDRÁS PALERDI / ISTVÁN RÁCZ**

Conductor | **BALÁZS KOCSÁR**

18, 21, 25, 28, 30 MAY 2019 | ERKEL THEATRE

## LA RONDINE

*La rondine* is the only late work of Puccini's in a lighter genre and was commissioned by the director of a Viennese theatre. Composed during World War One, the lyric opera was premiered in the neutral territory of Monte-Carlo in the spring of 1917 and won the approval of the Cote d'Azur audience. Although its atmosphere evokes the world of Viennese operetta, its plot set in Paris and on the Riviera is more reminiscent of *La bohème* and *La Dame aux Camélias*. With virtuosic ease he weaves into his remarkably scored symphonic composition elements of contemporary dance music, including the waltz, tango polka and foxtrot.

Director | **ANGER FERENC**  
 Set and costume designer | **GERGYEL ZÖLDY Z**  
 Featuring | **the artists of the CLUJ-NAPOCA HUNGARIAN OPERA**

Conductor | **JÓZSEF HORVÁTH**



26 & 27 MAY 2019 | ERKEL THEATRE

# PUCCINI LATE NIGHT

## EDGAR

Puccini's second opera, *Edgar*, composed early in his career after the success of *Le Villi*, is also his most rarely performed one. Known primarily for its requiem, the work is rich in dramatic effects and attests to a high level of musical maturity. Set in 14th-century Flanders, its characters are allegorical figures with revealing names, whose relationships transform the story into a moral parable. This work, which has only been presented in Hungary once, in a semi-staged concert version a decade ago, is now returning to the Opera, this time in a fully staged co-production with Hungary's arts academies, as part of the LateNight series.

Director | **ÁDÁM TULASSAY**  
 Set designer | **BALÁZS CZIEGLER**  
 Costume designer | **MÓNIKA SZELEI**  
 Cast | **HECTOR LOPEZ MENDOZA, ISTVÁN KOVÁCS, ZSOLT HAJA, BEATRIX FODOR, GABRIELLA BALGA**

Conductor | **KÁLMÁN SZENNAI**

1 & 6 JUNE 2019 | EIFFEL ART STUDIOS



Photo by Václav Běrež



Photo by Péter Hákosy

Balázs Szálinger

## CHRYSANTHEMUMS, OR THE DEATH OF LIÙ

Chamber piece with lots of music –  
world premiere

Although Puccini was well known as an admirer of the fair sex, this is something that his wife, Elvira, found less and less tolerable. Falling victim to the woman's jealousy was their maid, Doria Manfredi, who eventually killed herself after first being hounded with suspicions and later ejected from the Puccini household. The girl's innocence was proved at the autopsy. Fifteen years later, the composer immortalised Doria's memory in the character of the self-sacrificing servant girl in *Turandot*: Liù's swan song comes on the last page of Puccini's original score, which was completed after his death. The Opera has engaged the Attila József Award-winning poet/playwright Balázs Szálinger to create a dramatic piece, inspired by Puccini's *Crisantemi* string quartet and melodies from *Turandot*, about the tragic story of the young maid.

Director | **BÁLINT SZILÁGYI**

Visual designer | **SÁNDOR MÁRKUS**

Cast | **ERIKA TANKÓ, NATASA STORK, ANNA MÉSZÖLY, LILI BAJOR**

Featuring | **LILLA HORTI, GERGELY BONCSÉR**

Musical director, conductor | **GÉZA KÖTELES**

8 & 9 JUNE 2019 | EIFFEL ART STUDIOS

## LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST

After watching David Belasco's play *The Girl of the Golden West* on his 1907 visit to New York, Puccini resolved to set this somewhat unusual love story of the Wild West to music on the opera stage. The dramatic material proved to be a good choice, with an effectively moving plot that takes viewers to the denouement with a sure hand. The character of Minnie is also a highly suitable addition to Puccini's ranks of heroines: driven by love and passion, she thus has no fear of risking even her own life.

Director | **VASILY BARKHATOV**

Set designer | **ZINOVY MARGOLIN**

Costume designer | **OLGA SHAISHMELASHVILI**

Cast | **ÉVA BÁTORI, GASTON RIVERO, CSABA SZEGEDI**

Conductor | **BALÁZS KOCSÁR**

22 & 24 MAY 2019 | ERKEL THEATRE



Photo by Pál Csillag

## TOSCA

In June of 1800, the air in Rome is crackling with tension: With Austrian oppression having replaced French oppression, the fate of the Roman Republic now depends on Napoleon. Politics and political terror have become essential parts of Roman life, and the might of authority even extends to the love between a painter and a celebrated opera diva, who find that life can produce situations that are more dramatic than those on the stage. One of Puccini's most shocking operas, *Tosca* deals with love, power, violence and the limits of human nature.

Director | **VIKTOR NAGY**  
Set designer | **TAMÁS VAYER**  
Costume designer | **NELLY VÁGÓ**

Cast | **ESZTER SÜMEGI,**  
**NAJMIDDIN MAVLYANOV,**  
**ANYTOLY FOKANOV**

Conductor | **ÁDÁM MEDVECZKY**

19 & 29 MAY 2019 | ERKEL THEATRE

## MADAMA BUTTERFLY

The tale of Cio-Cio san and Pinkerton stands out as one of the finest romantic tragedies ever written. Convinced that her 'temporary marriage' is not only legally binding, but also founded on reciprocated feelings, *'Madama' Butterfly loses every last shred of hope, until death offers the only possible escape. 'Had it not been set in an exotic locale far from here,'* went the commentary on the play that inspired the libretto, *'the suffering would be unbearable.*' For opera lovers, Puccini's wonderful music elevates tragedy to the heights of catharsis.

Director | **KERÉNYI MIKLÓS GÁBOR**  
Set designer | **KENTAUR**  
Costume designer | **ILONA VÁGVÖLGYI**

Cast | **ANDREA ROST,**  
**ANDREA ULBRICH, BOLDIZSÁR LÁSZLÓ,**  
**ANATOLY FOKANOV**

Conductor | **PIETRO RIZZO**

23 & 25 MAY 2019 | ERKEL THEATRE



Photo by Attila Nagy

## LA BOHÈME 2.0

A story can be told in different ways and in different settings. It is precisely for this reason that the Opera maintains two quite different productions of *La bohème* in its repertoire: Kálmán Nádasdy's famous staging from 1937 and Damiano Michieletto's 2012 interpretation.

The internationally known Italian opera director presents before us a map of modern Paris: its bohemians are the impetuous and lovable youths of today, and the windows of their rented flats glow with their love.

Director | **DAMIANO MICHIELETTO**  
Set designer | **PAOLO FANTIN**  
Costume designer | **CARLA TETI**

Cast | **ISTVÁN HORVÁTH,**  
**CSABA SÁNDOR, ZSOLT HAJA,**  
**KRISZTIÁN CSER, ORSOLYA SÁFÁR,**  
**RITA RÁCZ**

Conductor | **GERGELY VAJDA**

2 & 5 JUNE 2019 | EIFFEL ART STUDIOS



Photo by Attila Nagy



Photo by Vera Éder

## TURANDOT

Carlo Gozzi's stage play about the remarkable love between a beautiful but icy-hearted Chinese princess and the Tatar prince who conceals his name has inspired more than one artist. One of them was Giacomo Puccini, whose final and perhaps most wonderful opera is *Turandot*. The composer, nevertheless, was not able to finish his last work: Franco Alfano completed the final act after his death.

Director | **KOVALIK BALÁZS**  
Set designer | **SZENDRÉNYI ÉVA**  
Costume designer | **JÁNOSKÜTI MÁRTA**

Cast | **SZILVIA RÁLIK, JOSÉ CURA,**  
**CRISTINA PASAROIU,**  
**LÁSZLÓ SZVÉTEK**

Conductor | **BALÁZS KOCSÁR**

7 & 9 JUNE 2019 | MARGARET ISLAND OPEN-AIR THEATRE

## IL TRITICO

Three one-acts. Three masterpieces. *Il tritico* was Puccini's penultimate work. Conceived during World War One, it appeared around the end of a long period of dormancy for the maestro, and was followed only by the unfinished *Turandot*, after yet another long hiatus, one lasting eight years. Three separate operas, which are not organically linked to one another: *Il tabarro* tells the tale of a love triangle set in the oppressive atmosphere of a boat rocking along the banks of the Seine. Set at Easter time, *Suor Angelica* relates a tragedy unfolding at a convent, while the comic *Gianni Schicchi* was inspired by a mediaeval Florentine whose sly means of enriching himself were described by Dante himself in *Inferno*.

Director | **FERENC ANGER**  
Set and costume designer | **GERGELY ZÖLDY Z**  
Cast

**IL TABARRO** | KÁROLY SZEMERÉDY,  
CSILLA BOROSS, ATTILA FEKETE

**SUOR ANGELICA** | ZITA VÁRADI,  
ILDIKÓ KOMLÓSI, ÉVA BALATONI

**GIANNI SCHICCHI** |  
GIUSEPPE ALTOMARE, ORSOLYA SÁFÁR,  
BERNADETT WIEDEMANN

Conductor | **GERGELY KESSELYÁK**

3 & 4 JUNE 2019 | ERKEL THEATRE



Photo by Attila Nagy



Photo by Attila Nagy



Photo by Attila Nagy

## MESSA DI GLORIA / LE VILLI

No retrospective Puccini festival can be complete without *Messa di Gloria*, an excellent work from the younger days of Puccini, *Messa di Gloria*. The second part of the programme will be the concert performance of Puccini's opera *Le villi*. Between the two pieces, ballet scenes will be performed as it was a very interesting moment of music history when an opera was composed to the story of a formerly successful ballet, namely that of *Giselle*.

*Giacomo Puccini*

### MESSA DI GLORIA

(Mass for soloists, a four-part choir and orchestra in A Major)

Featuring | **BOLDIZSÁR LÁSZLÓ, KELEMEN ZOLTÁN, THE HUNGARIAN RADIO CHORUS** (chorus director: **ZOLTÁN PAD**)

*Leonid Lavrovsky / Adolphe Adam*

### GISELLE (excerpts)

Featuring the artists of the **HUNGARIAN NATIONAL BALLET**

*Giacomo Puccini*

### LE VILLI (opera in two acts)

Director | **ANDRÁS ACZÉL**

Cast | **ADRIENN MIKSCH, ZOLTÁN KELEMEN, BOLDIZSÁR LÁSZLÓ**

Featuring | **THE HUNGARIAN RADIO CHORUS** (chorus director: **ZOLTÁN PAD**)

Conductor | **LEONARDO SINI**

20 MAY 2019 | ERKEL THEATRE



Photo by Zsófia Pályi

# PUCCINI, THE BARD

The great Italian composer's art was about melody – he would have been a born song-composer had his dramaturgic talent not predestined him to compose music for stage. Although his oeuvre was not as rich in works as Verdi's, he did compose songs in addition to his ten operas and a few symphonic pieces and church music. These were composed for special occasions, some were the fruits of his student years, while others were drafts for his later operas: in this case all the two dozen songs will be sung on the stage of the Eiffel Art Studios.

Featuring | BEATRIX FODOR,  
BEÁTA MÁTHÉ, LÚCIA MEGYESI SCHWARTZ,  
GERGELY BONCSÉR (vocals),  
BÁLINT ZSOLDOS (piano)



Opera Archives

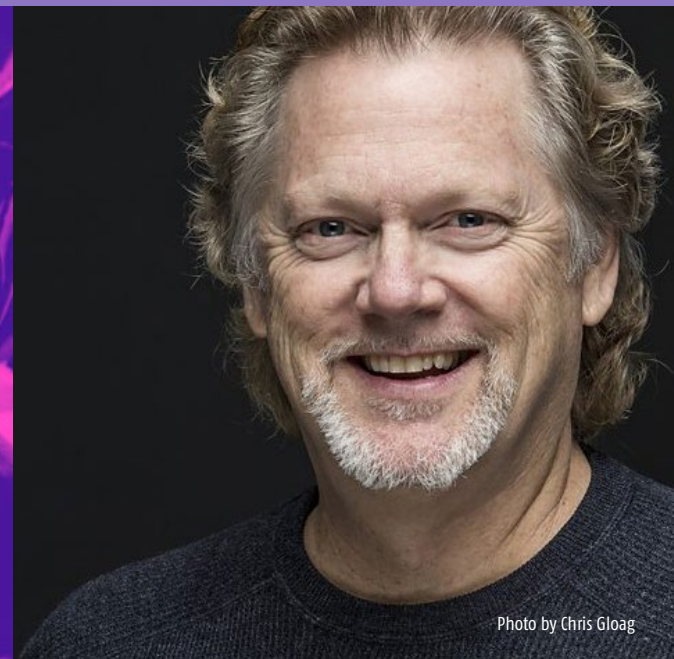


Photo by Chris Gloag

# CLOSING CONCERT – GREGORY KUNDE'S ARIA CONCERT

To close and crown both the Puccini Festival and the Puccini's Italy season, there will be an aria concert by American tenor Gregory Kunde. One of the most skilled singers on the international opera scene, Kunde is a regular guest at major opera houses around the world and collaborates with leading conductors and orchestras. This will be his first visit to Hungary. Joining Kunde as guests will be the Opera's soloists, who will sing the loveliest melodies written by Puccini's contemporaries.

Conductor | PÉTER HALÁSZ

# PROGRAMME OF THE PUCCINI FESTIVAL

**MANON LESCAUT** (18, 21, 25, 28, 30 May, Erkel Theatre)

**TOSCA** (19, 29 May, Erkel Theatre)

**MESSA DI GLORIA / LE VILLI** (20 May, Erkel Theatre)

**LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST** (22, 24 May, Erkel Theatre)

**MADAMA BUTTERFLY** (23, 25 May, Erkel Theatre)

**LA RONDINE** (26, 27 May, Erkel Theatre)

**EDGAR** (1, 6 June, Eiffel Art Studios)

**LA BOHÈME 2.0** (2, 5 June, Eiffel Art Studios)

**ILL TRITTICO** (3, 4 June, Erkel Theatre)

**TURANDOT** (7, 9 June, Margaret Island Open-Air Theatre)

**PUCCINI, THE BARD** (4 June, Eiffel Art Studios)

**CHRYSANTHEMUMS, OR THE DEATH OF LIÙ**  
(8, 9 June, Eiffel Art Studios)

**GREGORY KUNDE'S ARIA CONCERT**  
(11 June, Erkel Theatre)

*The Hungarian State Opera reserves the right  
to make amendments to the programme.*

**PUCCINI**<sup>2019</sup>  
FESTIVAL