



Fondazione
ARENA DI VERONA

**This is the program booklet
in Easy English
for the opera La Traviata
by Giuseppe Verdi**



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Title

The title of this opera is La Traviata.
La Traviata is Italian
and it means the misguided,
the one who has made wrong decisions.

Opera is a way to tell a story
with music, actors singing lyrics
and sometimes with dancing.

La Traviata has 3 acts.
An act is a part of an opera or a play,
like the chapter of a book.

Composer

The composer of La Traviata
is **Giuseppe Verdi**.
A composer writes music for an opera.

Giuseppe Verdi was an Italian composer
during the 19th century.
He composed La Traviata in 1853.

Libretto

Francesco Maria Piave

wrote the lyrics of La Traviata.

The lyrics of an opera are called librettos
and the writer is called a librettist.

Francesco Maria Piave was an Italian librettist.
He wrote librettos to many of
Giuseppe Verdi's operas.

Characters

The characters in an opera sing songs.

Some of the songs are for voices in a high pitch.

They are called sopranos, mezzo-sopranos and altos.

Some are in low pitch for tenors, baritones and bass.

The characters in the opera La Traviata are:

- **Violetta Valéry**

Violetta is a rich prostitute in Paris.

A prostitute is a woman who sells sex to men.

She is very ill.

Violetta is a soprano.

- **Flora Bervoix**

She is Violetta's friend.

Flora is a mezzo-soprano.

- **Annina and Giuseppe**

They are Violetta's servants.

Annina is a mezzo-soprano.

Giuseppe is a tenor.

- **Alfredo Germont**

Alfredo is a young man who lives in the town.

He is in love with Violetta.

Alfredo is a tenor.

- **Giorgio Germont**

He is Alfredo's father.

Giorgio is a baritone.

- **Gastone**

Gastone is a viscount.

A viscount is a title of nobleman,
like a baron or a marquise.

Gastone is a tenor.

- **Barone Douphol**

He is a nobleman.

Baron Douphol is a baritone.

- **The Marquise of Obigny**

He is a nobleman.

The Marquise is a bass.

- **Doctor Grenvil**

He is a medical doctor.

Grenvil is a bass.

Other characters in La Traviata are:

- **Ladies and Gentlemen**

They are friends of Violetta and Flora.

- **The Matadors**

A group of bullfighters
who perform at Flora's party.

- **The Picadors**

A group of men working at bullfights.
They also perform at Flora's party.

- **The Gypsies**

A group of women dressed as gypsies.
They entertain at Flora's party.

- **The Servants of Violetta and Flora**

- **The Masked Persons**

Friends of Violetta and Flora
who wear masks at the party.

Photos from La Traviata

In this photo you can see an example of the **scenography** of La Traviata. Scenography is the decor and all the objects on the stage during a performance.



In this photo,
you see a scene
inspired by a famous place in Paris,
the Moulin Rouge.
In the background, there are many city buildings
with lights on in the windows.
At the centre is a small stage
with many lights.
To the left there is a large sculpture
of an elephant.
To the right there is a red windmill

with the sails lit up.

In front, there are small tables, chairs
and a gate with a sign “**Entrée**”.

Entrée means entrance in French.

This photo is from the second act.



It shows a large garden inside a **greenhouse**.
A greenhouse is a structure
with walls and a roof made of glass.
It is used to grow plants.
Inside there are many plants and trees.
In front, there is a table, two chairs, and a lounge.
The atmosphere is bright and peaceful.

This photo is from the third act.
It shows Violetta's room.



The room is dark.
There are large windows with dark curtains.
To the left, there is a wooden crate, a coat stand
and a small table with a mirror.
At the centre, there is a broken mirror,
a red couch, a chair,
and a small table with a plant on it.

The story of La Traviata

The opera La Traviata takes place in the city of Paris in France in the 1800's.

The opera has 3 acts.

Here is a summary of what happens in the different acts.

Act 1

We are in Paris.

Violetta throws a party at her house.

She is ill with the disease tuberculosis.

But her illness does not stop her from living a life of luxury with lots of parties.

At the party

Violetta meets Alfredo Germont.

Alfredo tells Violetta

that he is in love with her.

Violetta says no to Alfredo at first.

But then she changes her mind.

She wants to start

a new life together with Alfredo

and they leave Paris.

Act 2 - Part 1

It is 6 months after
Violetta's party in Paris.
Violetta and Alfredo now
live together in the countryside.
They love each other
and are very happy.

One day Giorgio arrives
when Alfredo is not at home.
Giorgio is Alfredo's father.
He has found out
about their relationship
and wants Violetta to end it.

He says that Violetta must leave Alfredo.
Her background as a prostitute
ruins the good reputation
of Alfredo's family.

Violetta writes a letter to Alfredo
and then she returns to Paris.
In the letter she writes that she
does not want to be with him anymore.
When Alfredo reads the letter
he gets very angry.

Act 2 - Part 2

The same evening,
Flora throws a party at her house.
Alfredo, Giorgio, Violetta
and Baron Douphol are at the party.

Alfredo is very angry with Violetta
for writing the letter and for leaving him.
Baron Douphol wants to protect Violetta
and challenges Alfredo in a card game.

They play cards and Alfredo wins.
He throws the money he has won
at Violetta's feet and leaves the party.
Violetta leaves too.

Act 3

It is one month after the party
at Flora's house.
Violetta has returned to her old life
as a prostitute.
But she is very ill.
The doctor has told her friend Annina
that Violetta is going to die soon.

Giorgio writes a letter to Violetta.
In the letter he says
that Alfredo now knows
the reason why Violetta
does not want to be with him.

Alfredo goes to Violetta to apologize
and to make peace.
But Violetta is too sick.
She dies in Alfredo's arms.

Director's Notes

La Traviata is an opera by **Giuseppe Verdi**.

La Traviata is inspired by the play called
“The Lady of the Camellias”

by Alexandre Dumas.

The story of La Traviata takes place
in Paris in 1890.

Paul Curran is the **director**
of this version of La Traviata.

A director decides
how the actors should act, what to do
and how they should stand and walk
on the stage.

Juan Guillermo Nova is the **scenographer**.

He designs the **scenography**.

This means all of the objects on the stage.

In this version of La Traviata,
the scenography reminds us
of the “Moulin Rouge”,
which means red windmill in French.
The Moulin Rouge is a music-hall
in the city of Paris.

For example, the main objects in the scenography
are the large elephant and the red windmill.

Stefano Ciammiti is the **costume designer** for this show.

The costume designer creates all the clothes, wigs and accessories for the actors.



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You can find the online version of this booklet
on the website of the “Arena for All” project
[https://www.arena.it/en/arena-verona-opera-festival/
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