



# *La bohème*

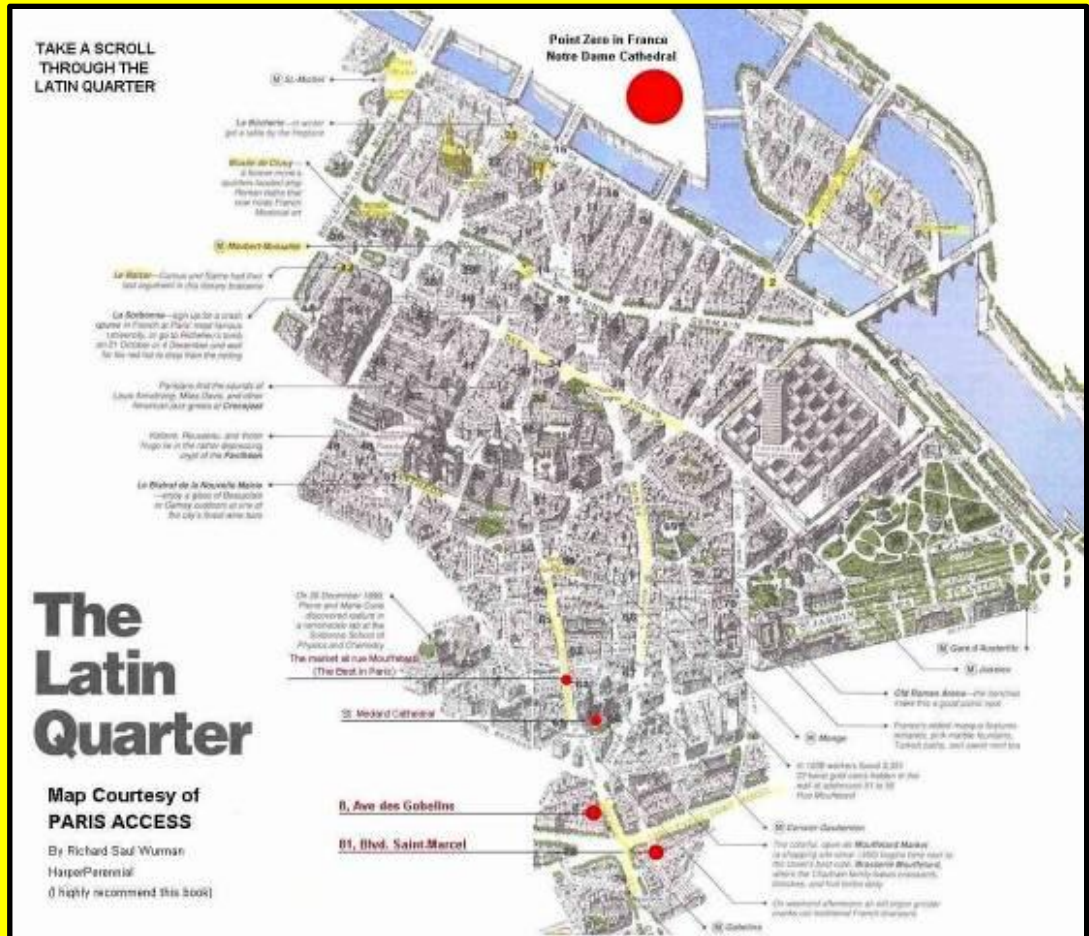
**An Opera by Giacomo Puccini**

# Characters

Rodolfo	[roh-DOHL-foh]	poet
Mimi	[mee-MEE]	seamstress
Marcello	[mar-CHEHL-loh]	painter
Musetta	[moo-ZET-tah]	flirtatious coquette
Colline	[koh-LEEN-eh]	philosopher
Schaunard	[shoh-NAHR]	musician
Benoit	[ben-WAH]	their landlord
Alcindoro	[ahl-cheen-DOH-roh]	Musetta's admirer

# Latin Quarter of Paris

## *Le Quartier Latin de Paris*



# Act I



It is Christmas Eve in Paris. Two poverty-stricken young bohemians, Marcello, a painter, and Rodolfo, a poet, attempt unsuccessfully to work in their freezing garret; in desperation, they burn one of Rodolfo's dramas to keep warm.



Their two roommates, Colline, a philosopher, and Schaunard, a musician, return home. Even though Schaunard has brought home some food, the bohemians decide to take their holiday dinner in the Latin Quarter.



Just then, Benoit, their landlord, arrives to demand his overdue rent. The men ply him with drink, and when he boasts of marital indiscretions, they throw him out with feigned indignation.

Marcello, Colline, and Schaunard leave for the Latin Quarter. Rodolfo promises to join them after finishing some work, but a knock at the door interrupts him.





Mimì, a young neighbor, enters, wishing to relight her candle. Obviously ill, she nearly faints, and drops her room key.

Rodolfo is instantly attracted to her and manages to detain her by concealing her key after he secretly finds it.



He also snuffs out his own candle, and as the two search in the darkness for her key, their hands touch.

Spontaneously, they pour out their love for one another.



## Act II



A festive crowd celebrates Christmas Eve in the Latin Quarter. At the Café Momus, Rodolfo introduces Mimì to his roommates. Their carefree mood changes abruptly when Musetta, Marcello's former lover, makes a noisy entrance on the arm of the elderly but wealthy Alcindoro.



Musetta attempts to attract the attention of Marcello, who deliberately ignores her, but then finally succumbs to her charms. Musetta shrewdly gets rid of Alcindoro, and instructs the waiter to give him all of their bills. She and the bohemians escape through the crowd.

## Act III



Early one snowy February morning at the Barriere d'Enfer, a tollgate in Paris, Mimì arrives seeking Marcello, who is painting a mural at the local tavern. She tells him that she and Rodolfo have separated, driven apart by his jealousy.



Earlier that morning, Rodolfo had arrived at the inn himself, and when he now emerges to speak with Marcello, Mimì conceals herself and overhears their conversation.

Rodolfo tells Marcello that he wants to leave Mimì because of her flirtatious behavior. Finally, he confesses that she is mortally ill and admits his guilty feelings; he knows that the harsh conditions of their life together have undoubtedly worsened her health.



Hearing Mimì's coughing, Rodolfo suddenly realizes that she has overheard everything.

The two lovers pledge to stay together until spring, while Marcello and Musetta argue viciously and separate.

## Act IV



Rodolfo and Marcello, now separated from Mimì and Musetta, again attempt to work in their garret.

Schaunard and Colline arrive with supper, and the four fantasize about attending a fancy ball and then enact a mock duel. Suddenly, Musetta enters with Mimì, who is near death and wants to be with Rodolfo.



Musetta and Marcello leave to sell some of their possessions in order to buy Mimì medicine and a muff, and to summon a doctor. Colline also departs to sell his coat for needed money.

Left alone for a few moments, Mimì and Rodolfo reminisce about their first meeting and their love.





The others return, but before the doctor can arrive, Mimì dies.



# Interpretations of “The Garret”



Designer - Franco Zeffirelli for The Metropolitan Opera



Designer - Francesca Zambello for Royal Albert Hall



Designer - Cameron Anderson for San Francisco Opera Center



Designer - Stephen Wickham for Opera Australia



Designer - Peter Dean Beck for Arizona Opera





Designer - Peter Dean Beck for Opera Carolina



Designer - Wolfram Skalicki for Canadian Opera Company



Designer - Ercole Sormani for Seattle Opera



Designer - Gerald Howland for Los Angeles Opera



Designer - R. Keith Brumley for Lyric Opera of Kansas City



Designer - Boyd Ostroff for Opera Company of Philadelphia



Designer - Claude Girard for Opéra de Montréal



Designer - John Conklin for San Diego Opera Association

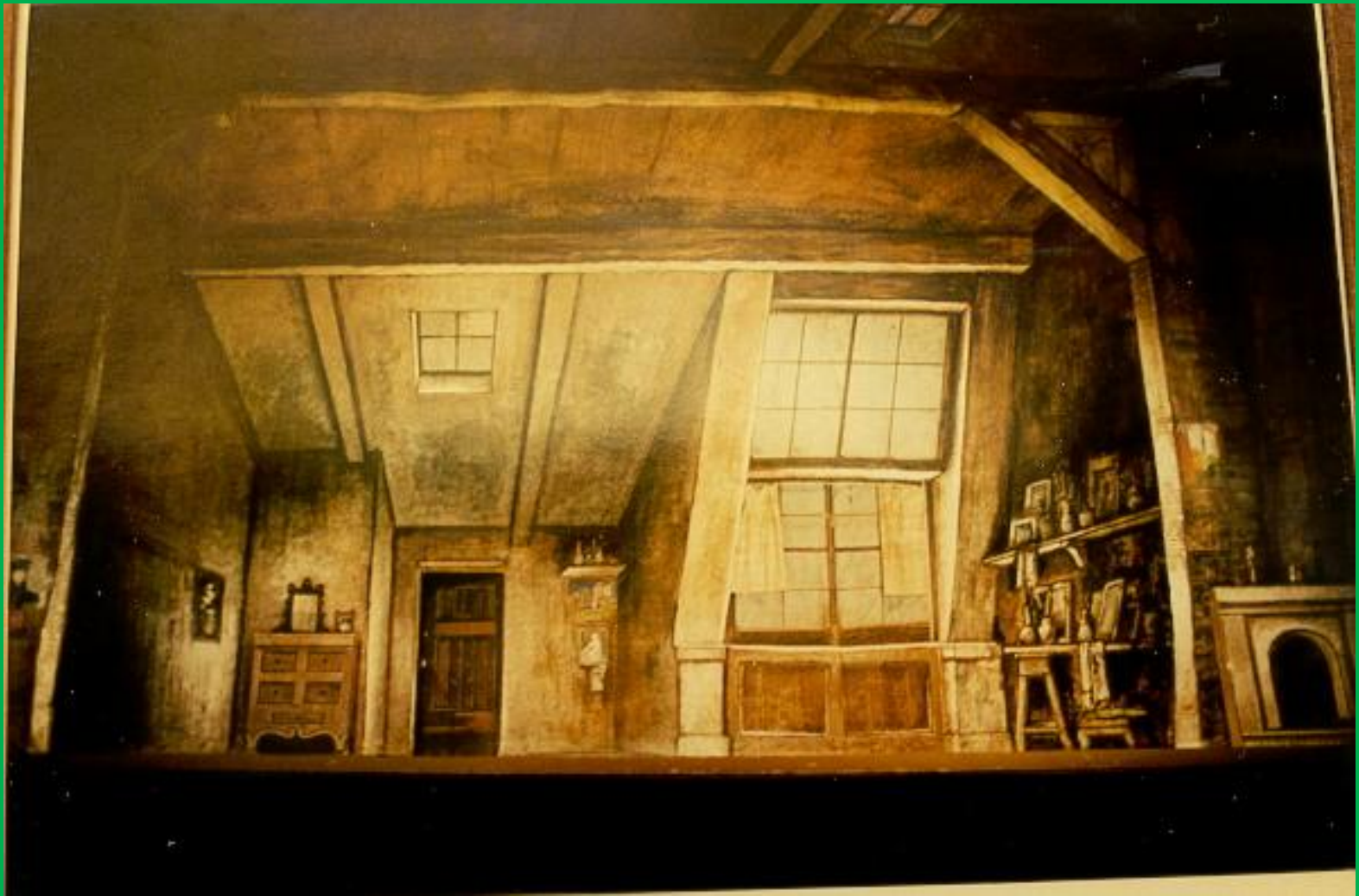




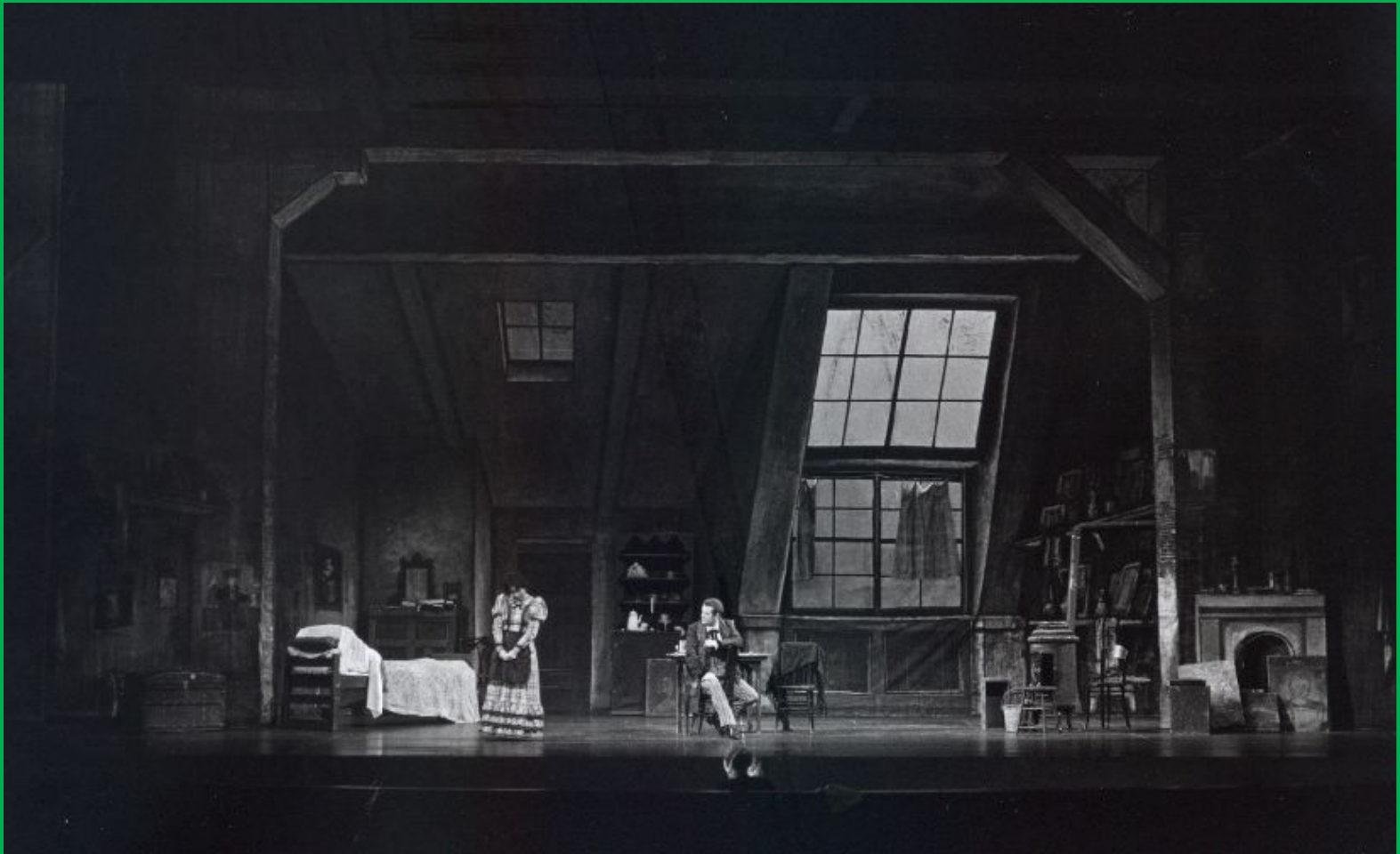
Designer - Lisa Hashimoto for Seattle Opera



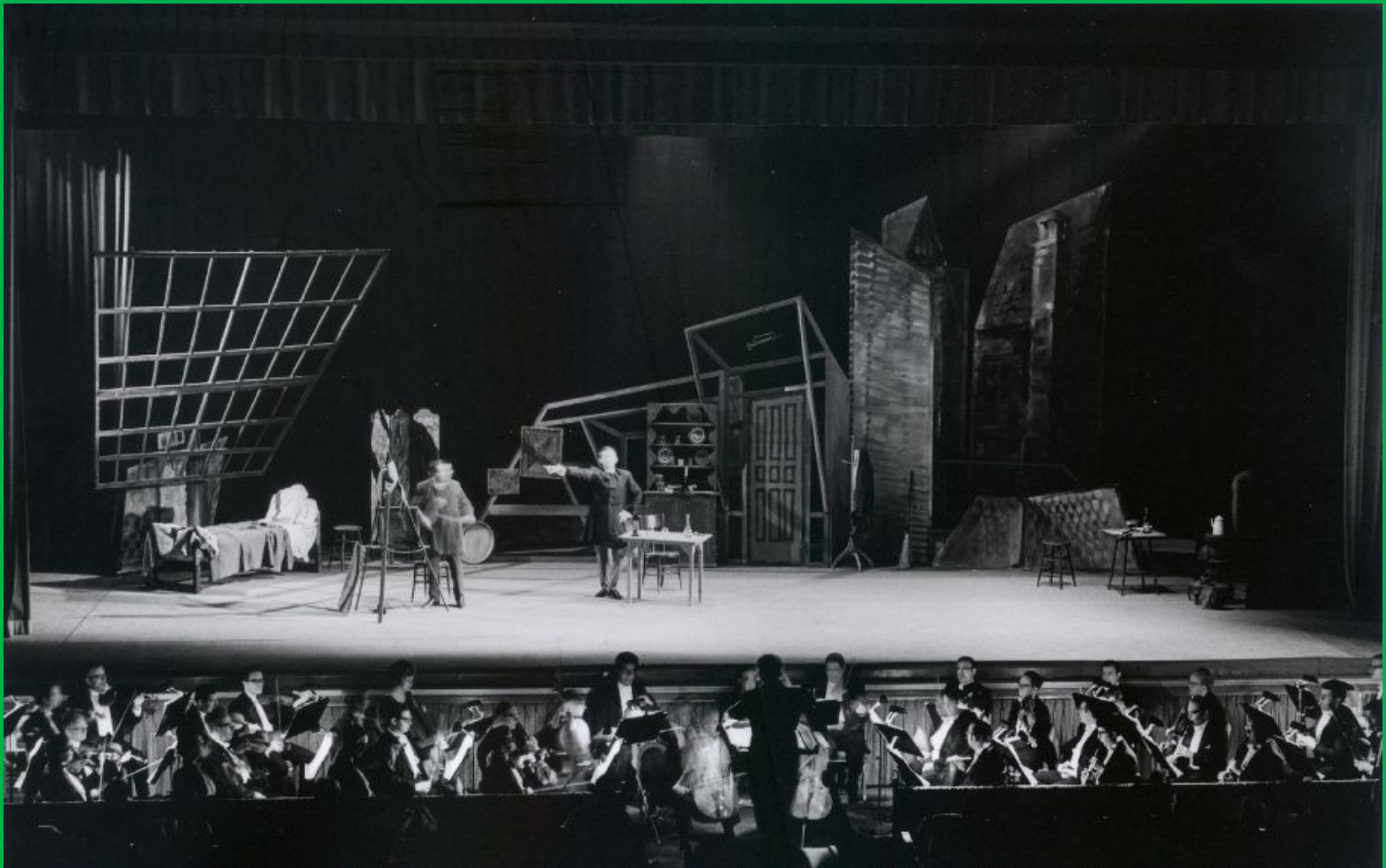
Designer - Ercole Sormani for Stivanello Costume Co. Inc



Designer - Ercole Sormani for Stivanello Costume Co. Inc.



Pittsburgh Opera production in 1975



Pittsburgh Opera production in 1965



Designer - Michael Yeargan for Florida Grand Opera

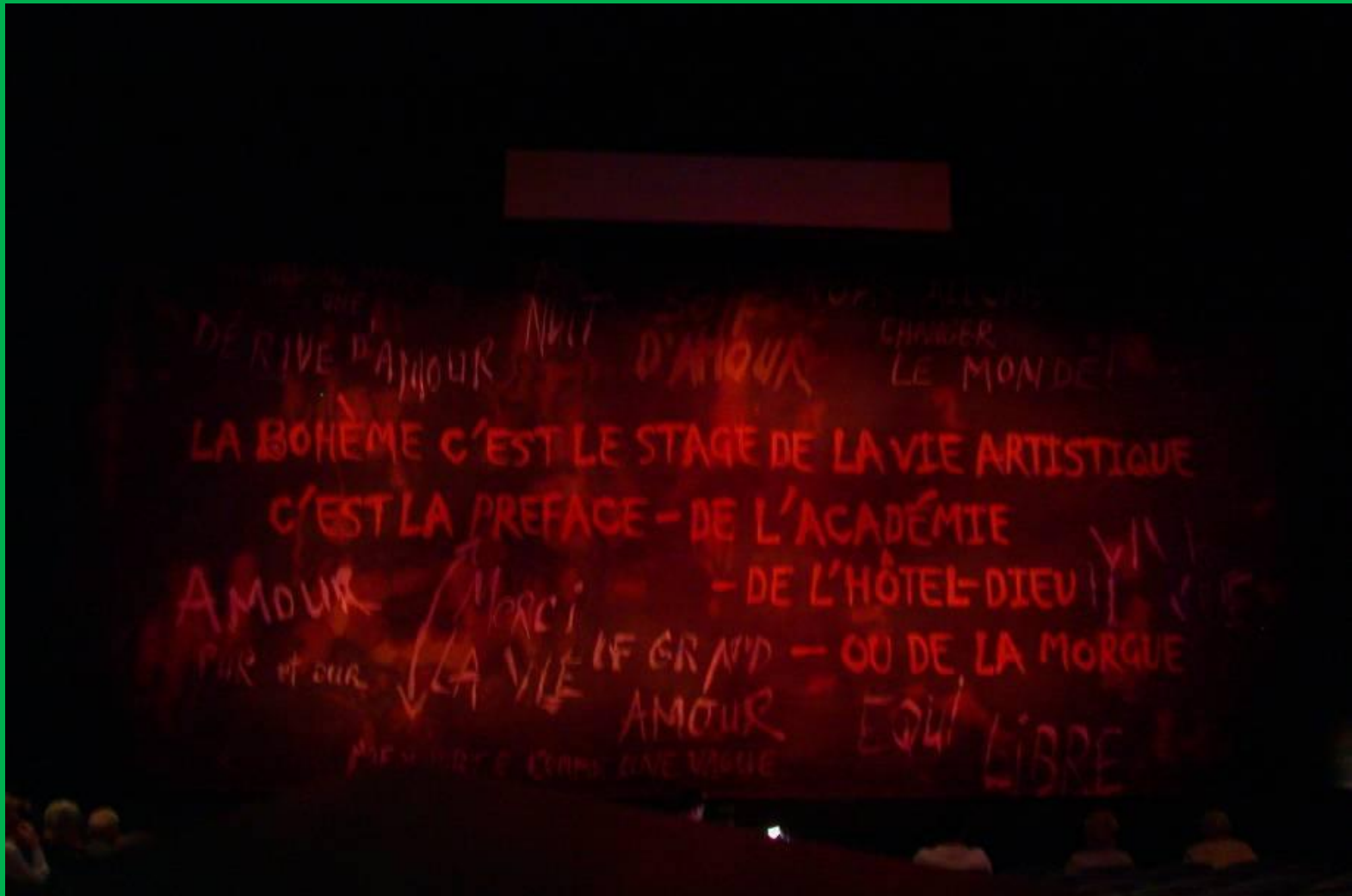


Designer - Michael Yeargan for Florida Grand Opera



Designer - Michael Yeargan for Florida Grand Opera

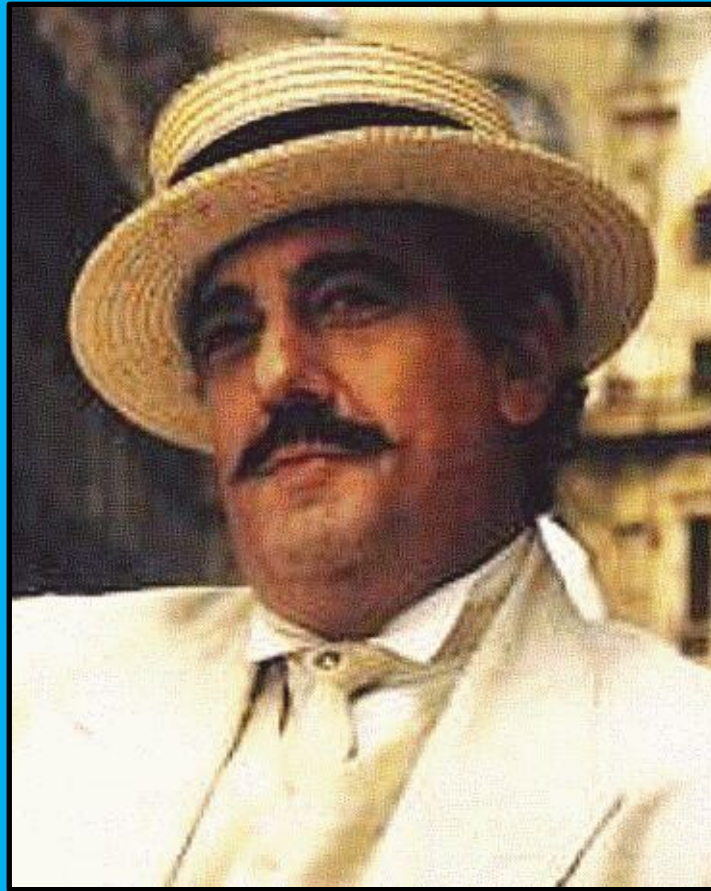




Designer - Michael Yeargan for Florida Grand Opera



# Giacomo Puccini



(1858 – 1924)

# Where he lived...

Five generations of the Puccini family held the position of church composer and organist at Lucca's San Martino Cathedral before Giacomo Puccini was born.



# Who helped him...

Puccini's mother wrote to Queen Margherita to beg for a scholarship for him to attend the conservatory in Milan.



# Where he studied...



Queen Margherita granted the scholarship, and in 1880 Puccini began his course of study at the music conservatory in Milan, a city that was the center of Italian musical life and the home of its greatest opera house, *La Scala*.

# Who he knew...

Giulio Ricordi not only published Puccini's operas, but he also became a fatherly friend and guide to the young composer.



# Where he lived...



In 1891 Puccini bought a house in the small village of Torre del Lago. There he could compose and also indulge his passion for hunting waterfowl.



# Where he lived...



Villa Puccini

In this villa, he finished his successful *Manon Lescaut*, and composed *Madama Butterfly*, *La bohème*, *Tosca*, *La Fanciulla del West*, *La Rondine*, and *Il Trittico*.

# Where he lived...



The villa is now a museum open to the public.

# How he died...



When Puccini died of throat cancer in 1924, Arturo Toscanini and the company of *La Scala* performed the Requiem music from Puccini's opera, *Edgar*.



**1858**

**Giacomo Puccini is born**

# 1858

Giacomo Puccini is born on December 22<sup>rd</sup>, 1858 in Lucca, Italy. He is the fifth in a line of well-respected church musicians. However, it is his operas that seal his legacy.

He is the last Italian composer whose operas became staples of the international repertory.



Giacomo Puccini

1858



H. Vittorio Romano's 1862 painting of the assassination attempt

Italian nationalist Felice Orsini attempts to assassinate  
French emperor Napoleon III on January 14th.

1858

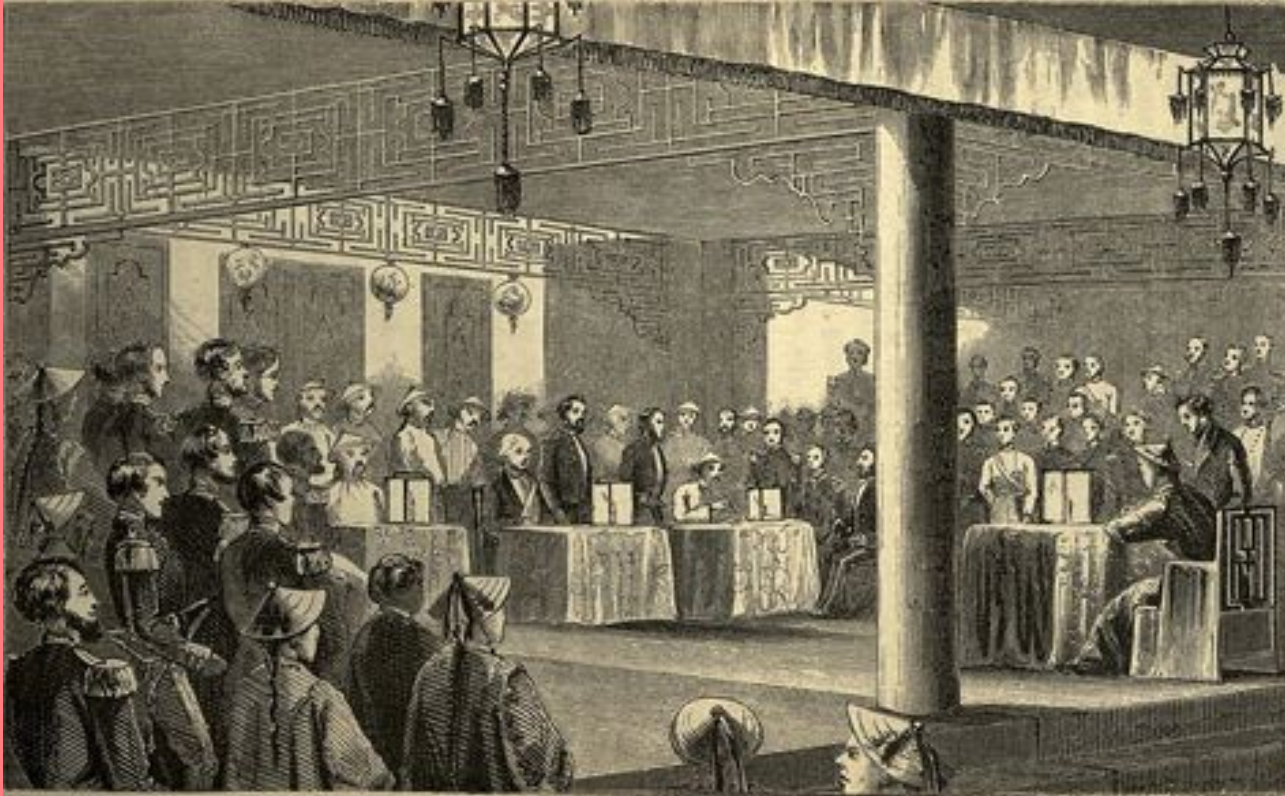


The inauguration of British Columbia on November 19<sup>th</sup>, 1858

British Columbia is founded as Britain's newest colony in Canada.



1858



Britain and China signing the Treaty of Tientsin

The Treaty of Tientsin ends the Arrow War, or Second Opium War, between China, Britain, and France. Russia and the United States also sign the treaty.

1858



The Minnesota state flag

Minnesota becomes the 32<sup>nd</sup> state in the Union.

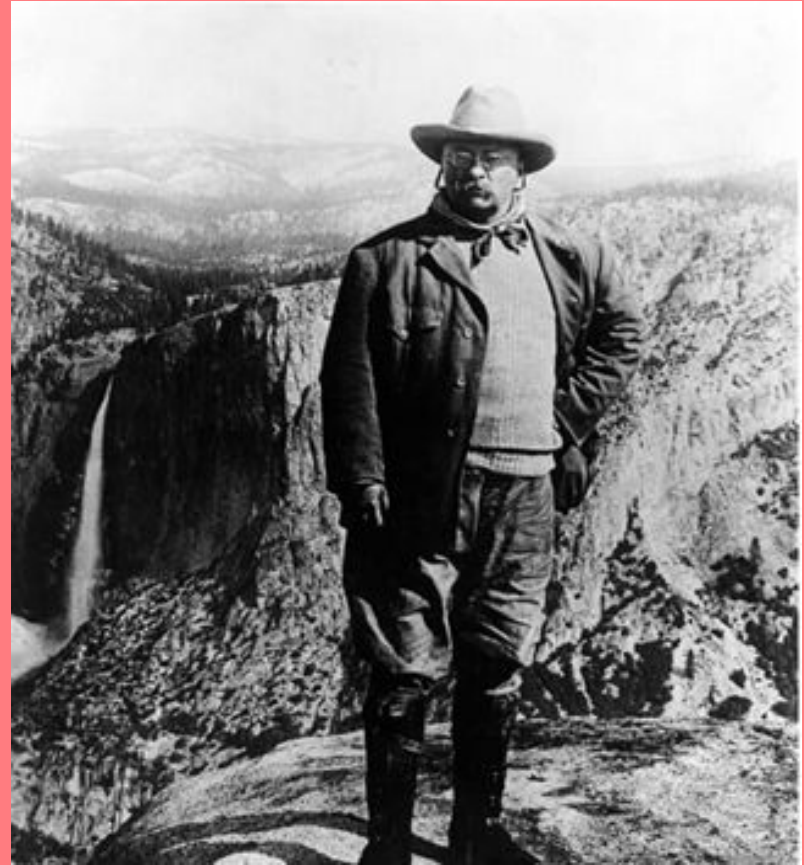
1858



Federal troops trapped in a snowstorm on the way to Utah Territory

Federal troops force Mormon surrender and restore order to the Utah Territory.

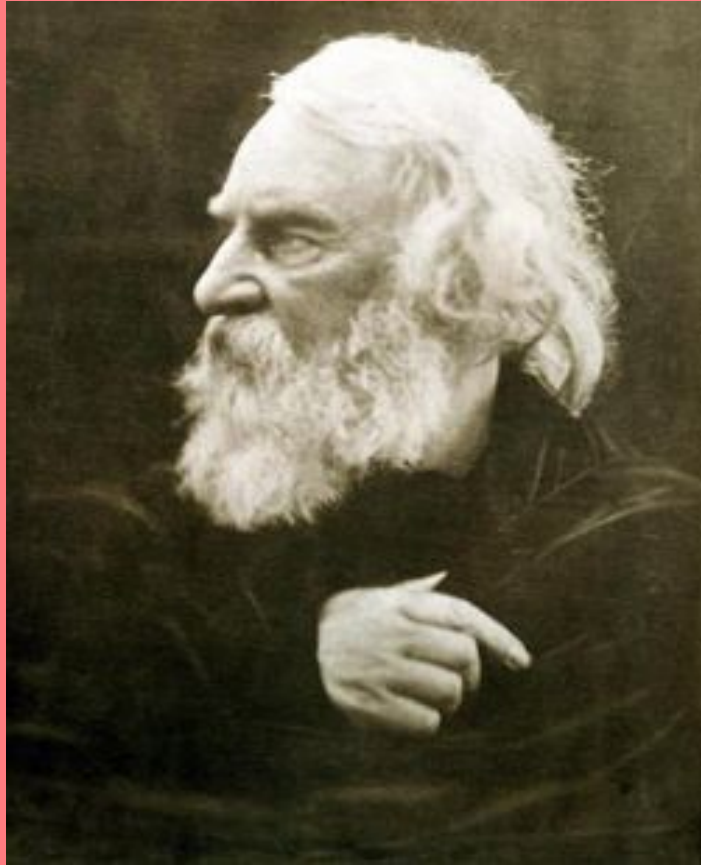
1858



“Teedie” at age 4 and the grown-up President at Yosemite National Park

Theodore Roosevelt, 26<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, is born on October 27<sup>th</sup> in New York.

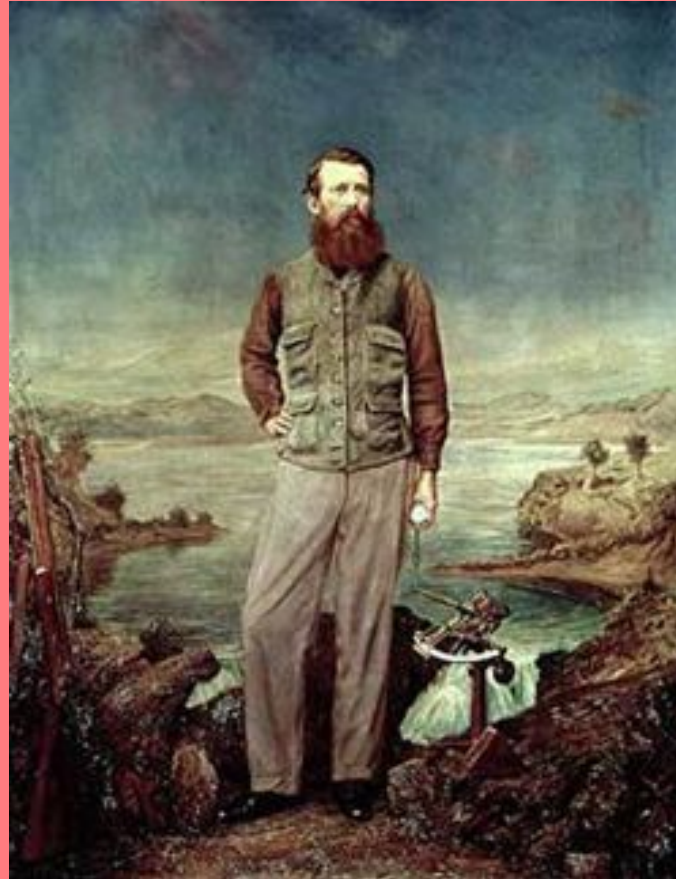
1858



Longfellow & “*Priscilla, The Courtship of Miles Standish*” by Laslett John Pott, 1885

“*The Courtship of Miles Standish*” by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow is published.

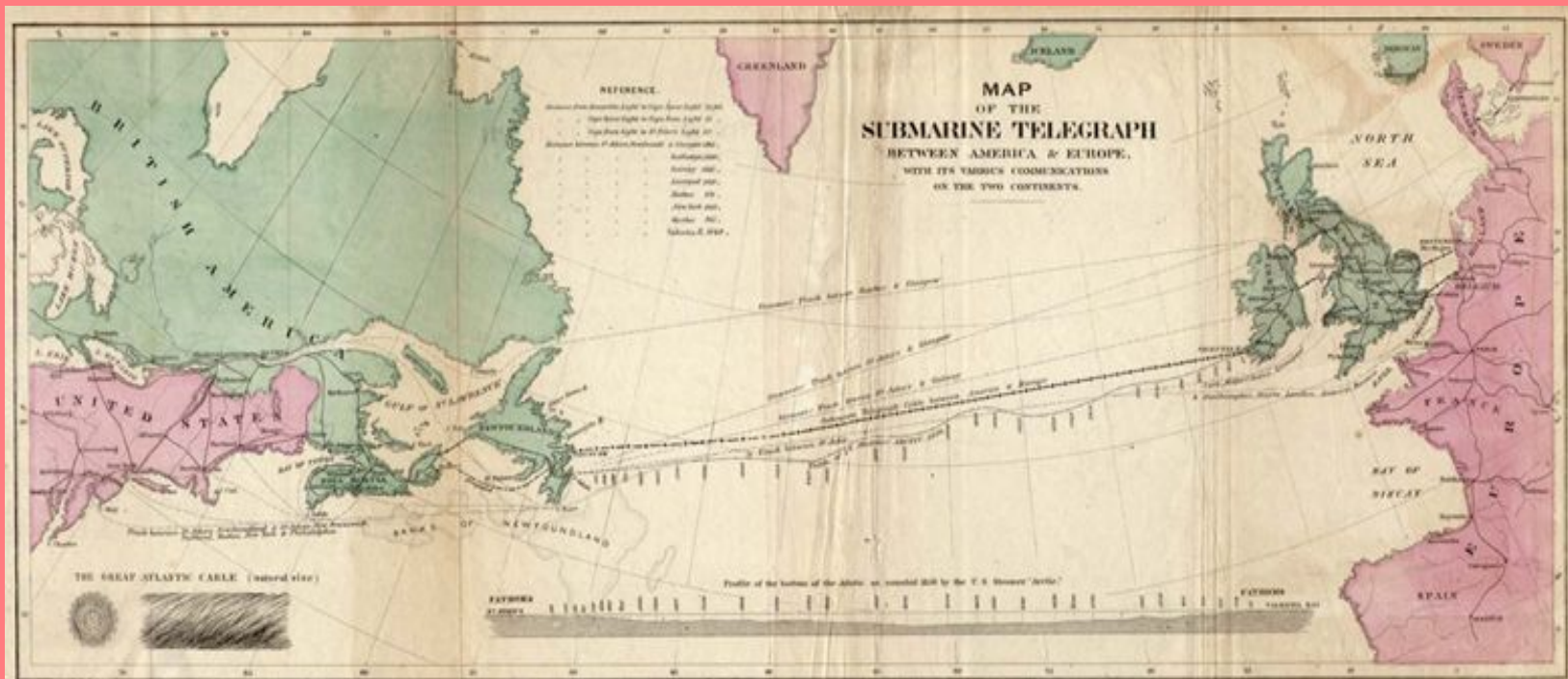
1858



John Speke

Lake Victoria Nyanza and Lake Tanganyika in Africa are discovered by Richard Burton and John Speke.

1858



A map of the 1858 Atlantic cable route

The first transatlantic telegraph cable is laid by Cyrus W. Field and Charles Bright. The first official telegram is a letter of congratulations from Queen Victoria to President James Buchanan. The cable stops working three weeks later.

1858



Florence Nightingale at work

*Notes on Matters Affecting the Health, Efficiency and Hospital Administration of the British Army* by Florence Nightingale is published.



1858



The grotto of Massiabelle, the site of Bernadette's visions

Bernadette Soubirous sees 18 visions of the Virgin Mary in Lourdes, France. The town becomes a popular pilgrimage spot, and Bernadette becomes a saint.

1858



An American revival camp meeting in the 18<sup>th</sup> century

A religious revival, known as the Awakening of 1858 or the Businessmen's Revival, begins in New York City.

1858



Macy's Herald Square flagship store in 1907

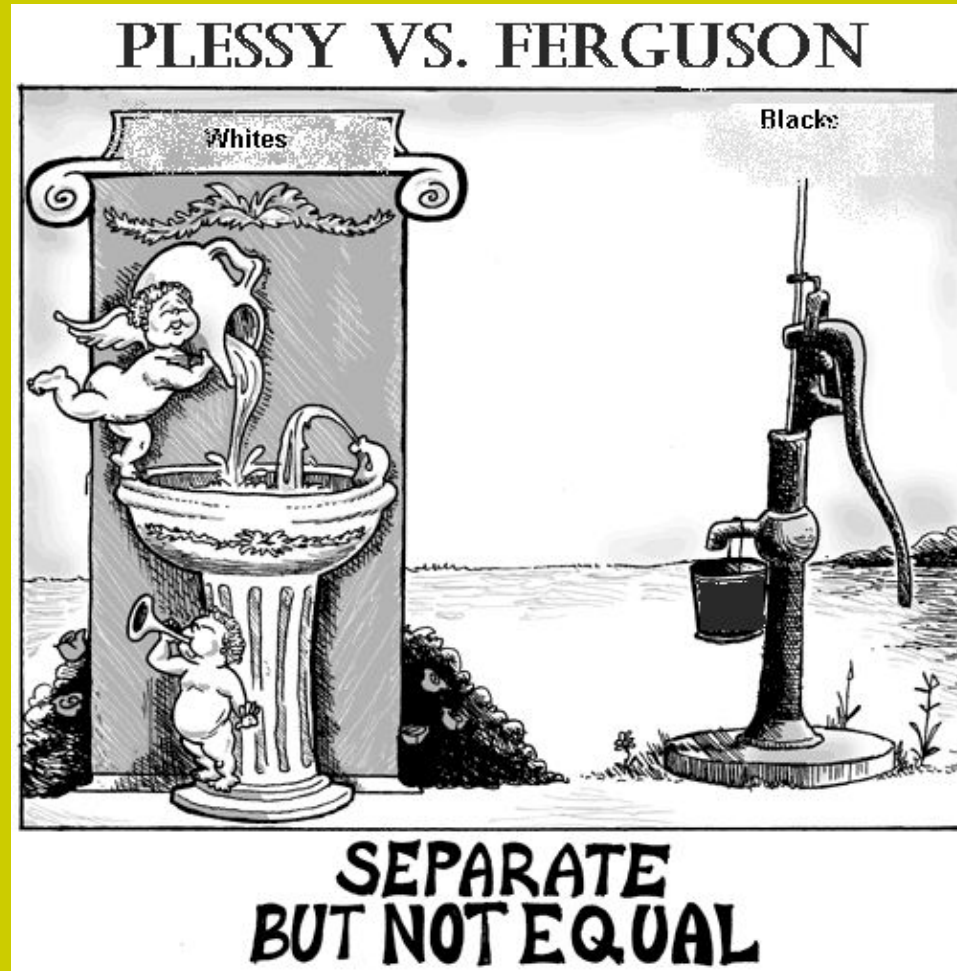
Rowland Hussey Macy establishes a fancy dry goods store, R.H. Macy & Co., in New York City, which evolves into Macy's department stores.



**1896**

***La bohème* premières**

1896



Political cartoon depicting the decision

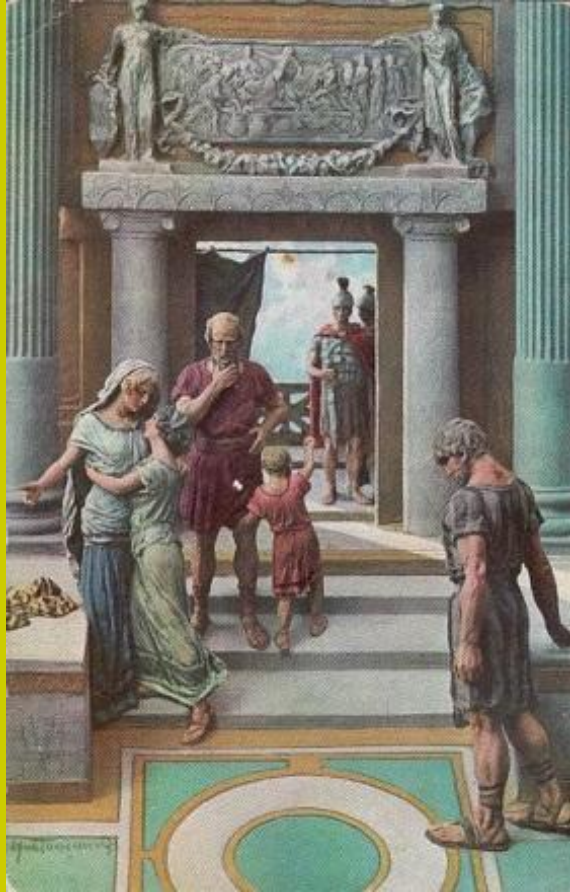
Start of the "Jim Crow" era legalizing segregation.

1896



President William McKinley  
and his Vice President, Garret Hobart

1896



The historical novel,  
*Quo Vadis*, is published.

Later, it was adapted for  
several noteworthy  
movies.



1896



Anton Chekhov reads his play, *The Seagull*, to the Moscow Art Theatre company.

1896



Nobel Prize diploma in Chemistry awarded to Fritz Haber for a method to synthesize ammonia.

1896



Irwin and actor John Rice shared the first-ever cinematic kiss in a seconds-long film in 1896 that was denounced as scandalous by clergy and critics. May Irwin kiss / Thomas A. Edison, Inc. ; producer, New York World. Photo credit: America Memory

This film, titled *The Kiss*, is only 47 seconds long. Nevertheless, it caused a scandalized uproar and disapproving newspaper editorials.

1896



Paper “safety” matchbooks were introduced in 1889. But they did not become widely popular until several years later when the Mendelssohn Opera Company distributed matchbooks with their logo imprinted as advertising material.

1896



Miners and prospectors climb the Chilkoot Trail during the Klondike Gold Rush in Canada.



# **Tuberculosis**

**(the “wasting” disease)**



Political cartoons about the effects of tuberculosis

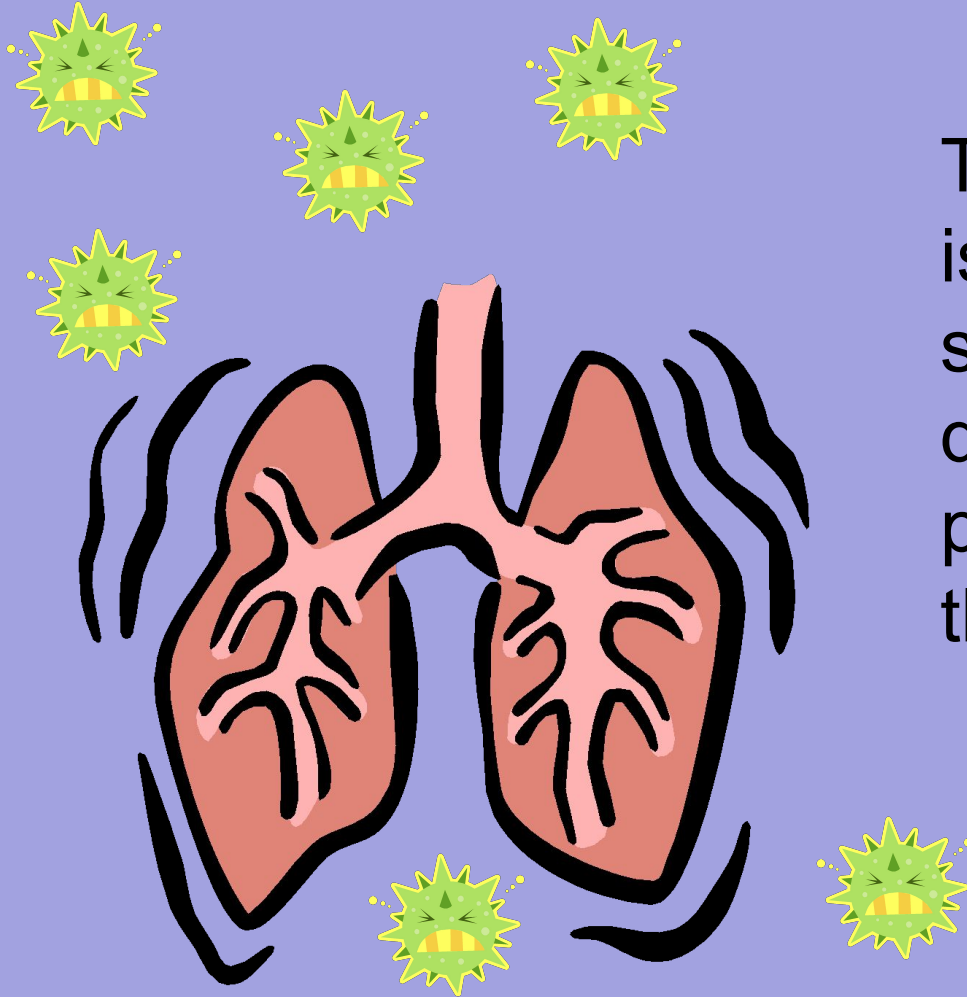




# Tuberculosis has many names

- Consumption
- Wasting disease
- White plague
- Phthisis (Greek, meaning “to waste”)
- Scrofulaz
- King’s evil
- Pott’s Disease
- Miliary TB
- Tabes mesenterica
- Koch’s Disease

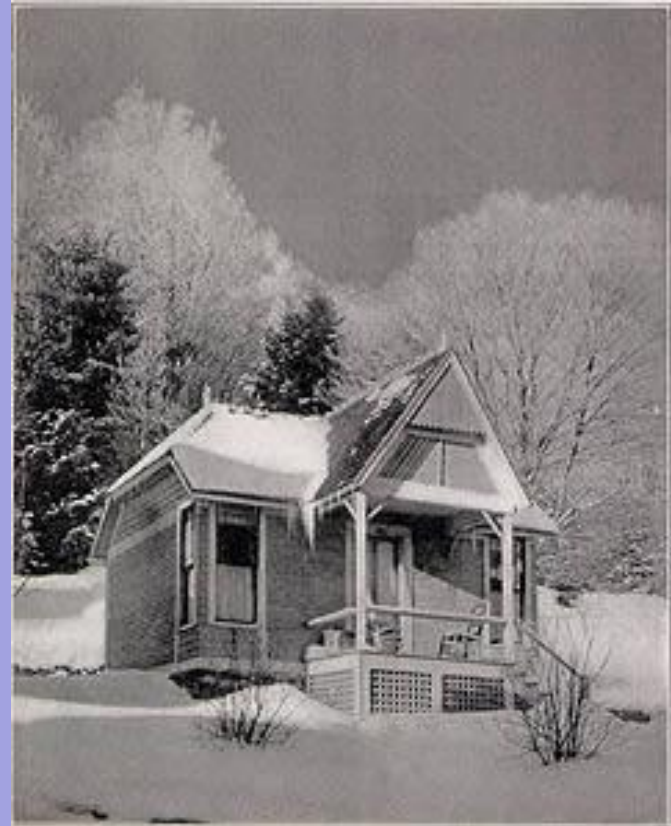
# What is it?



Tuberculosis (TB) is a potentially serious infectious disease that primarily affects the lungs.

# What did they know about it in the 1800s?

- Not much.
- People treated themselves at home
- Those who could, travelled to the country for fresh air
- Doctors used “snake oil” patent medicines

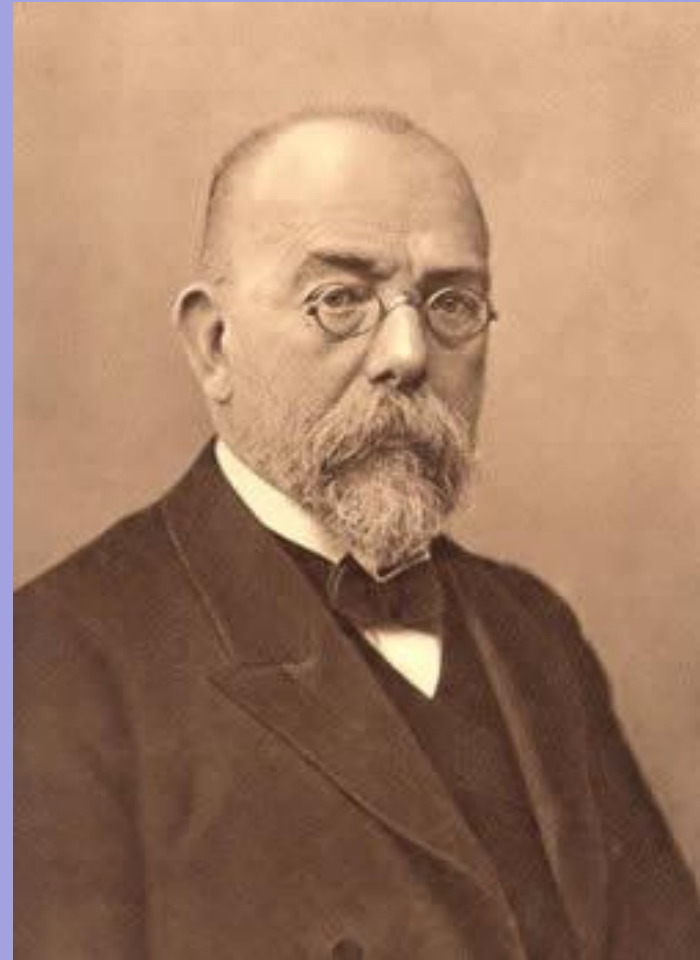


Adirondack Cottage

# Who discovered it?

German physician and scientist, Dr. Robert Koch, discovered the bacillus in 1882.

Dr. Koch won the 1905 Nobel Prize in Medicine for his discovery.



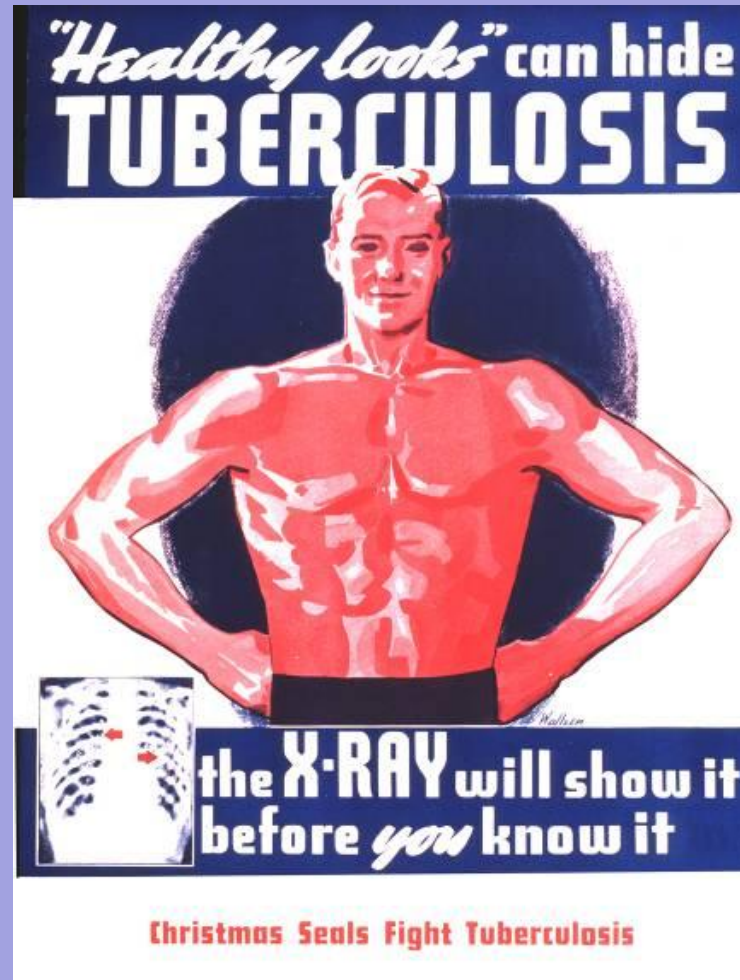
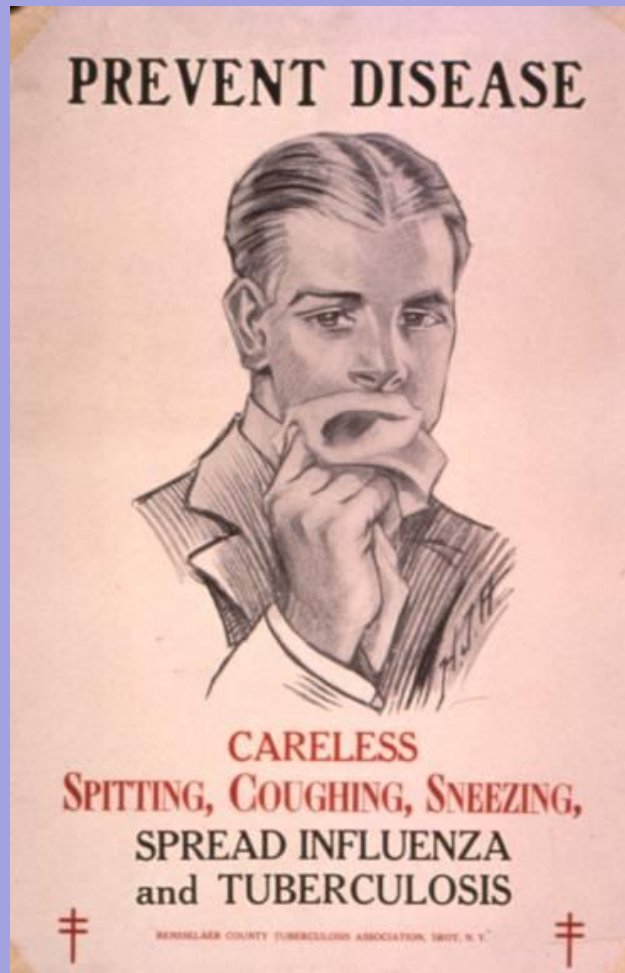
# Did treatment change?



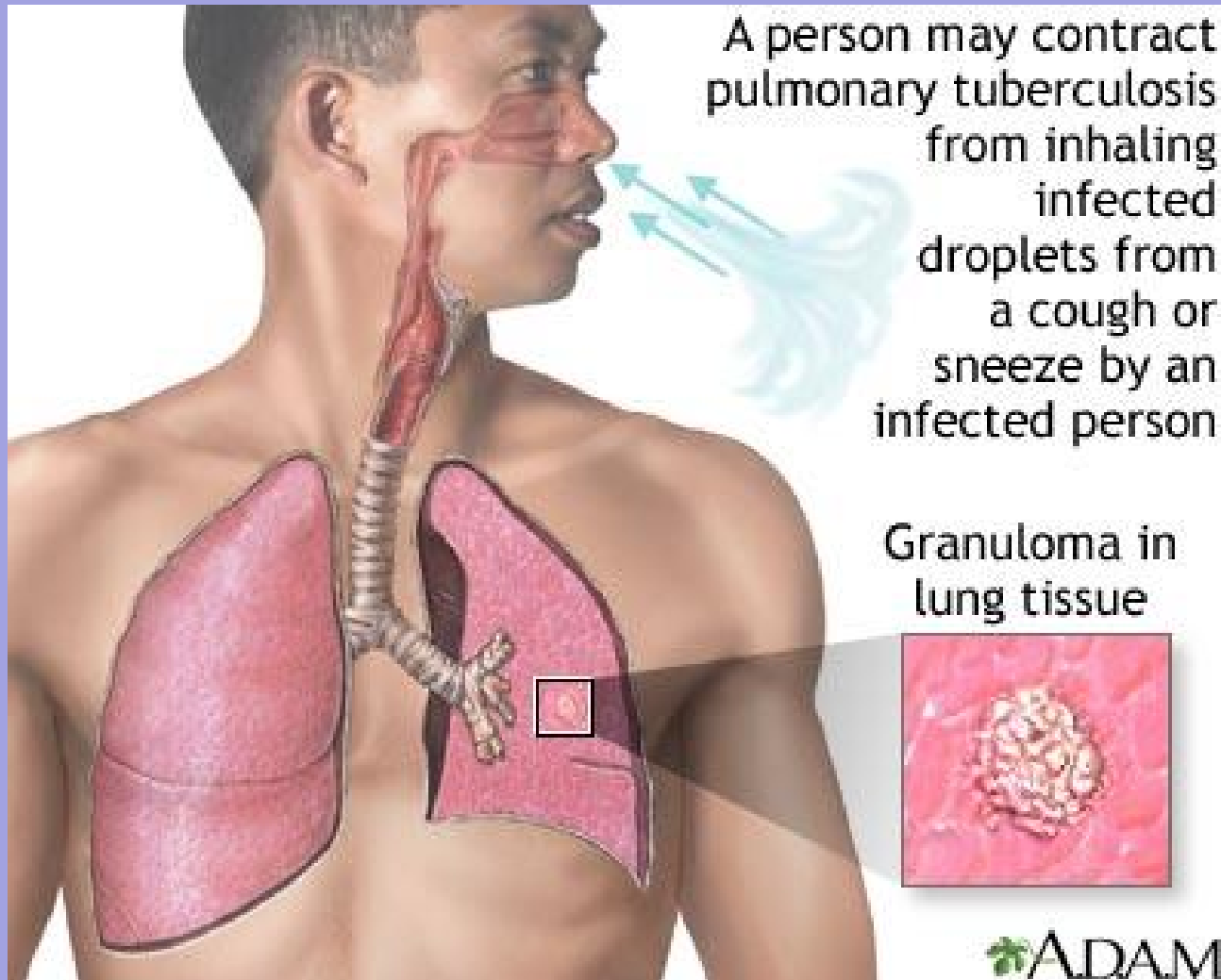
Sanatoriums became havens for the afflicted.

Patients, or “guests”, followed a strict regimen of diet, exercise, and *plenty* of fresh air!

# What do we know now?



# How does it spread?



# What does tuberculosis do?



Diseased lung with large cavities

Pink, healthy lung





## Interesting Fact:



Most people who become infected with the bacteria that cause tuberculosis do not develop symptoms of the disease.

Although your body may harbor the bacteria that cause tuberculosis, your immune system often can prevent you from becoming sick. For this reason, doctors make a distinction between **Latent TB** and **Active TB**.



# Latent TB vs. Active TB?

With **Latent TB**, you have a TB infection, but the bacteria remain in your body in an inactive state and cause no symptoms. Latent TB, also called inactive TB or TB infection, is not contagious.

With **Active TB**, you are sick and can spread the disease to others.

# What are some symptoms of Active TB?

- Unexplained weight loss
- Fatigue and Fever
- Night sweats
- Chills
- Loss of appetite

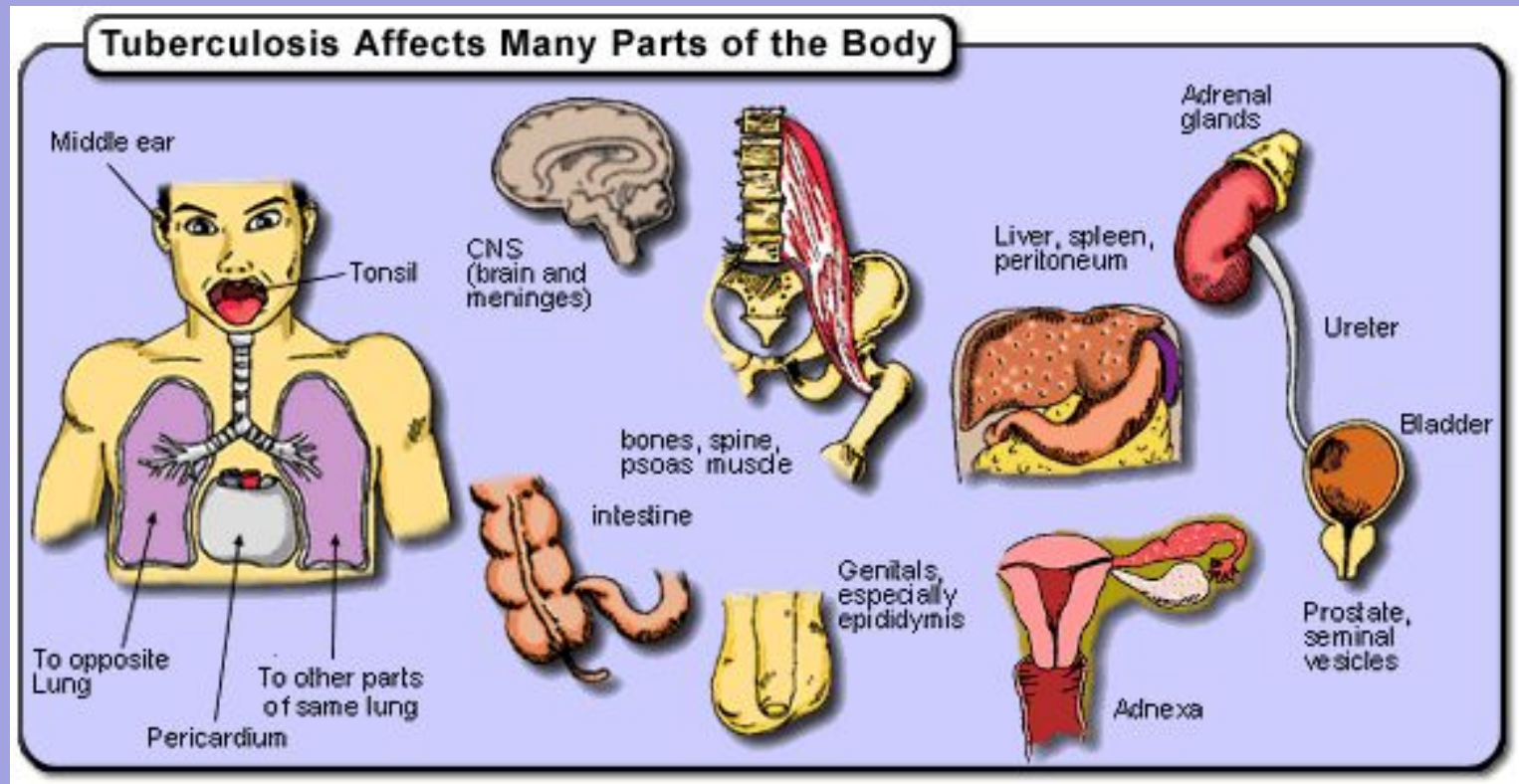


Tuberculosis usually attacks your lungs. Signs and symptoms of TB of the lungs include:

- Coughing that lasts three or more weeks
- Coughing up blood
- Chest pain, or pain with breathing or coughing

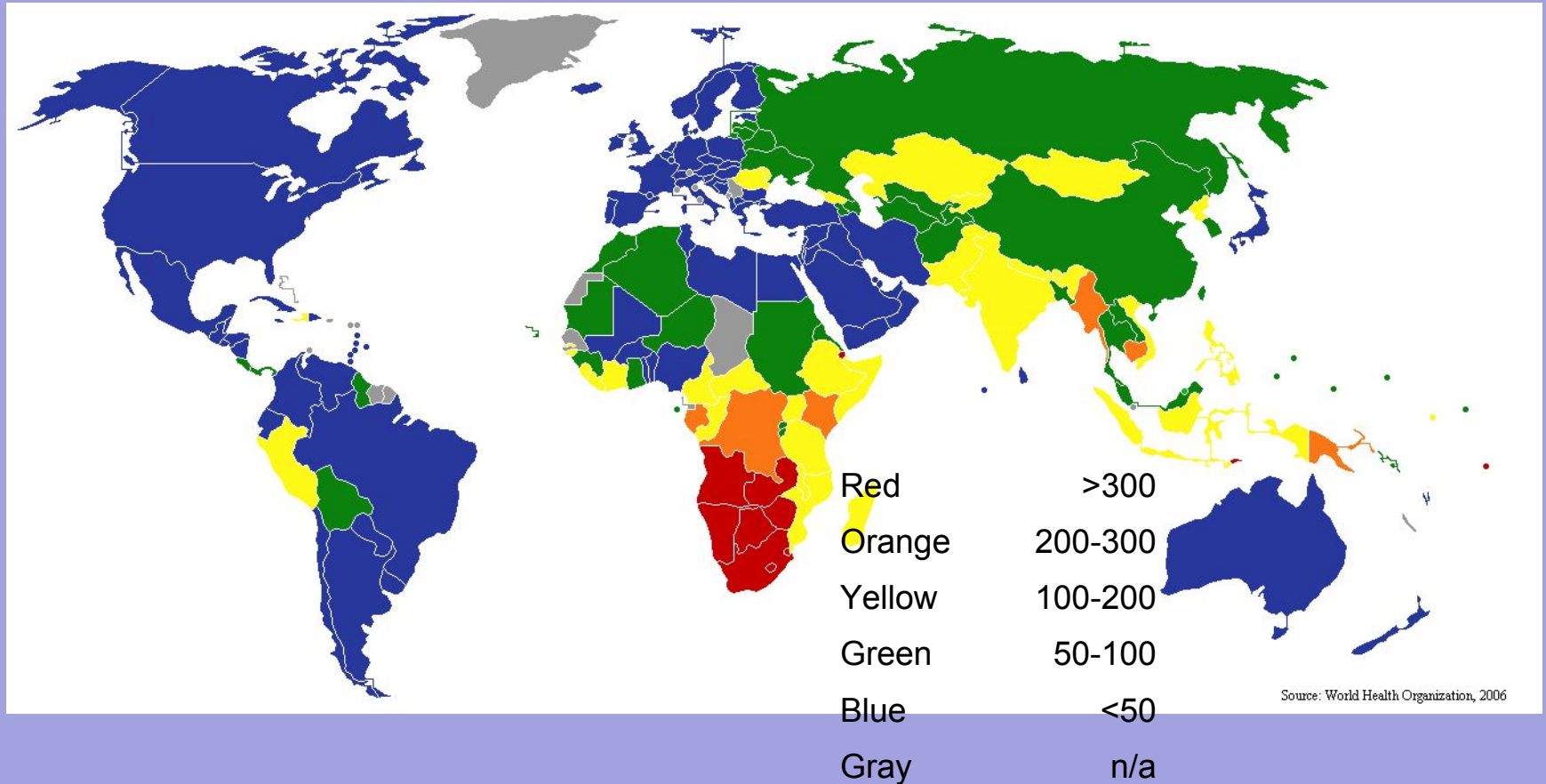


# Does it just affect your lungs?



When TB occurs outside your lungs, symptoms vary according to the organs involved. For example, TB of the spine may give you back pain, and TB in your kidneys might cause blood in your urine.

# Where do you find it?



World map showing reported cases of tuberculosis per 100,000 citizens. (May, 2008)

# What were Mimi's risk factors?

Malnutrition—a poor diet or one too low in calories put Mimi at greater risk of catching and not being able to fight off the disease.

Lack of medical care—Mimi had a low income and lacked access to the medical care needed to diagnose and treat the disease.

## Is Rodolfo at risk?

# What are the complications?

- Irreversible lung damage
- Severe pain, abscesses, and joint destruction
- Contraction of meningitis as the disease settles in the brain
- Contraction of Miliary TB, which is TB that has spread throughout the entire body

# Now that you're scared. . .

- It is not easy to become infected with TB.
- Usually a person has to be close to someone with TB for an extended period of time to contract the disease.
- TB is usually spread between family members, close friends, and people who work and live together.



# Some perspective:

- Someone in the world is newly infected with TB bacilli every second and one-third of the world's population is currently infected with TB.
- Only about 10% of that one-third will develop Active TB in their lifetimes.
- The other 90% will never get sick from the TB germs or be able to spread them to other people.



# Artist Spotlight:



*Luciano Pavarotti*

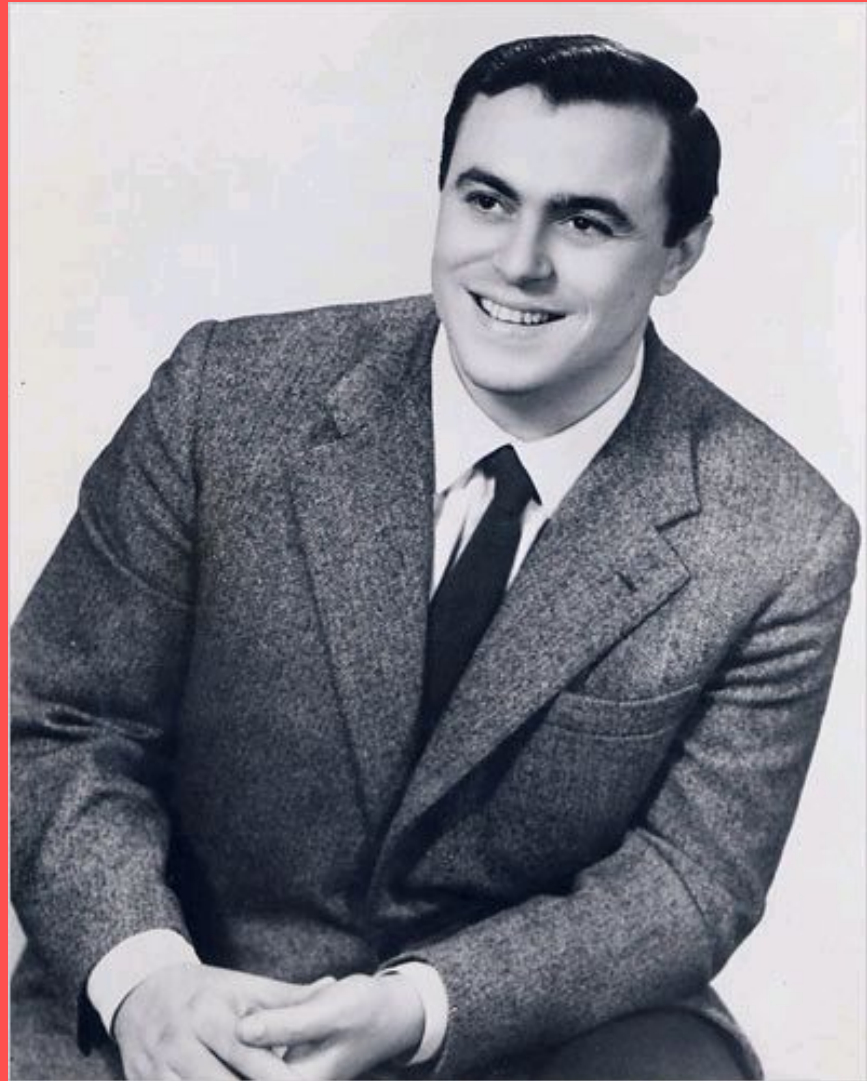


Pavarotti was born in Modena, Italy, on October 12, 1935, the first and only child of a baker.

"In the beginning, I am an elementary school teacher.

And on 21 April, 1961, I became a tenor.

That is a very, very significant date for me."

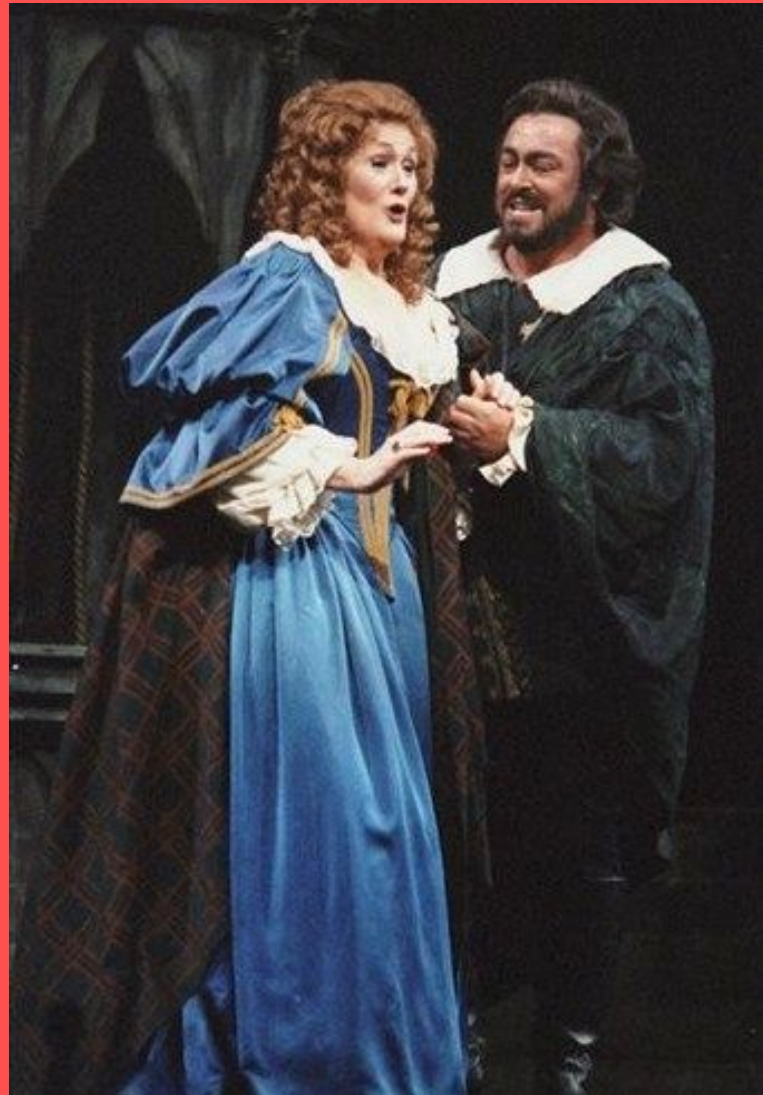


His professional debut came in April 1961, in one of the great tenor roles—Rodolfo in Puccini's *La bohème*, at the opera house in Reggio Emilia.



Pavarotti with Mirella Freni

In 1965, he made his U.S. debut in a Miami production of Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Joan Sutherland—the start of what would become a historic partnership.





Pavarotti produced one of his most legendary performances in the United States in 1972. In *La Fille du Regiment* at New York's Metropolitan Opera, he sang nine effortless high Cs, causing the audience to erupt in a frenzied ovation.





Placido Domingo, José Carreras, Luciano Pavarotti

Pavarotti's fame broadened dramatically when he took part in one of the most remarkable classical concerts in recent memory, during the 1990 World Cup. The broadcast was a major ratings hit and the subsequent recording became one of the biggest-selling classical discs of all time.



His 1992 concert in London's Hyde Park, in the presence of Charles and Diana, the Prince and Princess of Wales, was the first classical concert in the history of the park and drew some 150,000 people.



In June 1993, more than 500,000 fans gathered to enjoy his performance in New York's Central Park.

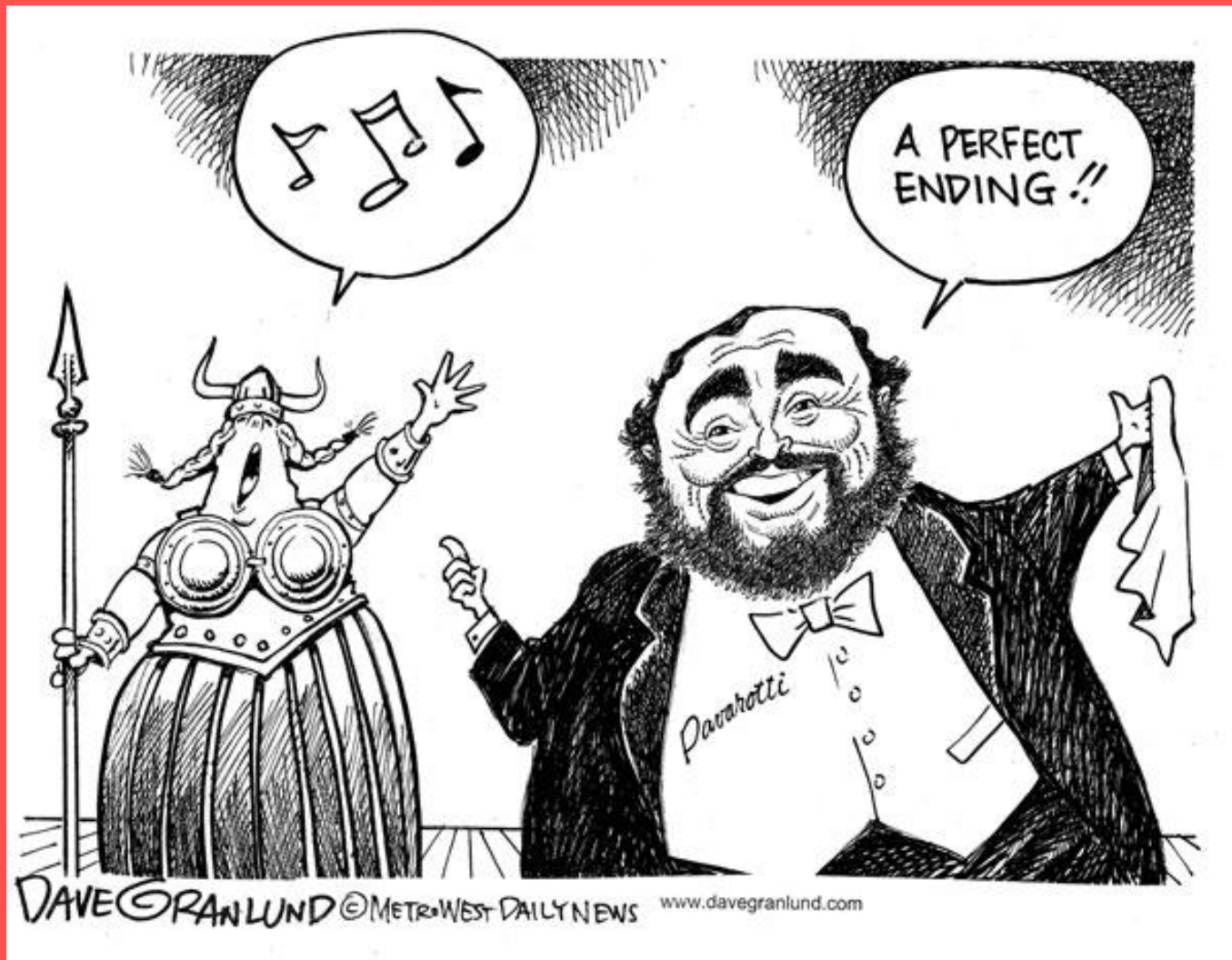
That September, he sang in the shadow of the Eiffel Tower in Paris to 300,000 fans.



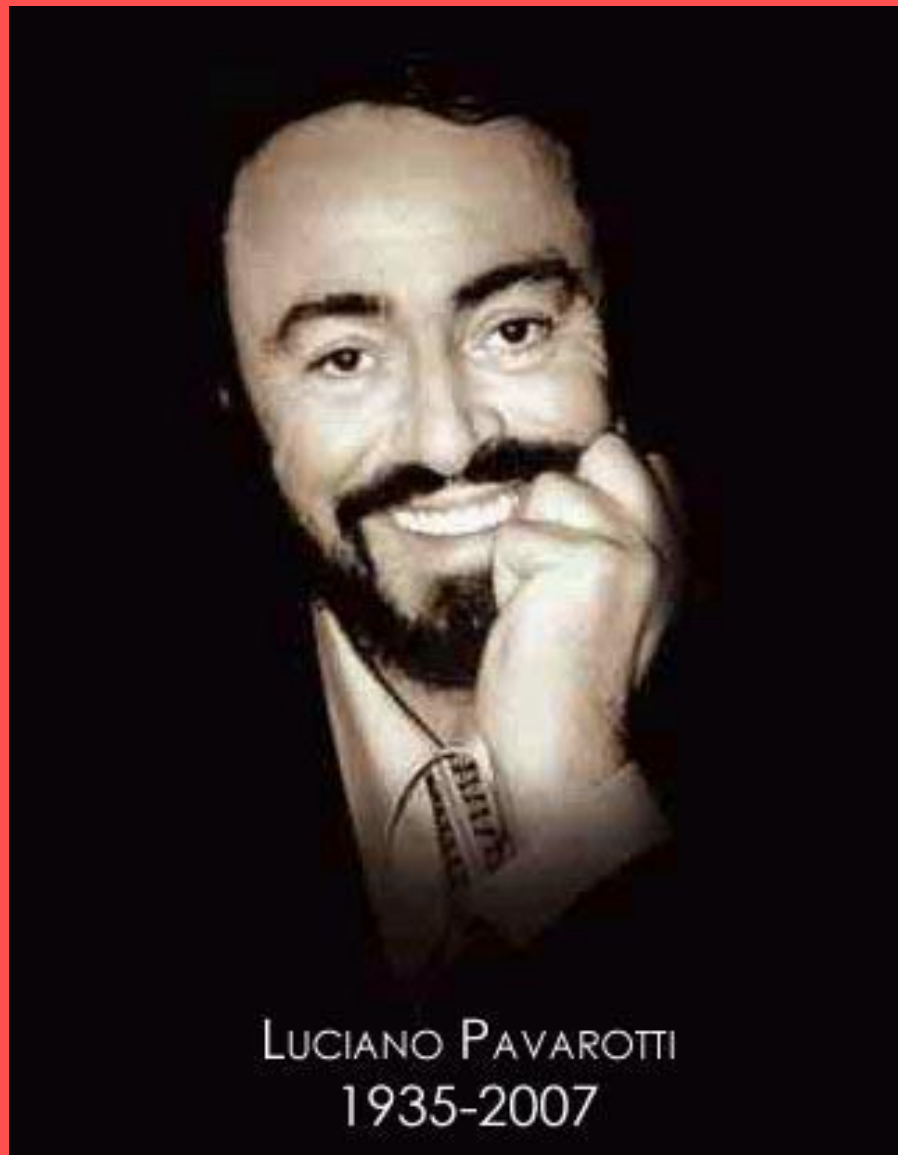
Pavarotti was also dedicated to the development of young singers, conducting standing-room-only master classes at conservatories around the world.

In March 2004, he gave his final operatic performance in Puccini's *Tosca* in New York, where he received an 11-minute standing ovation.





He succumbed to pancreatic cancer on September 6, 2007 at the age of 71.



LUCIANO PAVAROTTI  
1935-2007





# Artist Spotlight:



David Lomeli  
returns to Pittsburgh  
Opera as Rodolfo

# Background



David Lomeli was born in Mexico City and began studying and performing music with his teacher, Sandra Cisneros. With his earnings from performing, he was able to continue lessons. He began performing opera at 19.

# Education

Tenor, David Lomelì is a graduate of the San Francisco Adler Fellowship and the Merola Opera Program. Lomelì studied with noted voice teacher, César Ulloa, which led him to audition for Plácido Domingo's Operalia Competition. When Lomelì won the competition, Domingo mentored him through the Los Angeles Opera Program.

# Career



*La Bohème*



*Rigoletto*

Lomeli has earned a growing reputation in North America and Europe. His voice is especially well suited for Puccini and Verdi roles.

