

POLITECNICO DI TORINO
Master of Science in Architecture Heritage Preservation and Enhancement
Honors theses

Study for a scenography: *La Bohème*

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Attending a grand opera is a way to fly to an imaginary world, where you can be carried away by the music, the opera singers, the beauty of the scenography and by the scenes.

La Bohème is a well-known opera, that means realizing a scenography for this opera is anything but easy: since 1896 innumerable performances have been taking place in almost every theatre of the world, and every time there were different stories, scenes and point of views. In order to find his own personal view of the opera, the task of a set designer is to draw inspiration from the previous performances, and then forget about them all.

While putting on a show, you have to consider several aspects: materials, mechanisms and construction have to work together to stage an awesome opera. Other important factors to evaluate are: direction, number of actors on the scene and their disposition, scene change schedule, transport and adaptability of the scenes to other stages.

From the beginning I decided to put on a modern show, without spatial and temporal connotations, in order to underline the universality of the sentiments and emotions that belongs to the opera. The show has four acts, and each one represents a different concept: dreams of glory and new loves, the *bohèmiens* and their sparkling friendship, desolation of the suburbs and at last the end of lightheartedness.

ACT I



The first act is set in Rodolfo and Marcello's wretched attic, made by lots of boxes, that symbolize their dreams and ideals; their attic overlooks a starry sky, representing the world and all its opportunities.

ACT II



In the second act we are in a commercial gallery, where the society meet up and where new loves and friendships are born.

ACT III



The third act takes place in a drab suburb, unlike the first two: Mimi's disease is getting worse and worse and the love between Mimi and Rodolfo is over.

ACT IV

The last act is set in the attic as the first, but it's completely different: it represents Mimi's grave, and the end of all the dreams and ideals of the two young *bohémians*.

In my own view of *La Bohème* I try to put up the emotions and feelings that I found in the opera.

Despite the opera was written in 1896, the ideals of the *bohémians* and their lifestyle are extremely up-to-date: they just wanted to dedicate their lives to art and not give up their dreams, as our generation.

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