

Giacomo Puccini
TOSCA

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Conductor
Joseph Colaneri
Production
Luc Bondy
Set Designer
Richard Peduzzi
Costume Designer
Milena Canonero
Lighting Designer
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CAVARADOSSO Marcelo Alvarez
SCARPIA George Gagnidze
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ACT I Rome, June 1800. Cesare Angelotti, an escaped political prisoner, rushes into a church to hide in one of the chapels. Once he has disappeared, the painter Mario Cavaradossi enters to work on his portrait of Mary Magdalene. The painting has been inspired by the Marchesa Attavanti, whom Cavaradossi has seen in the church but does not know. While he works, he compares the dark-haired beauty of his lover, the singer Floria Tosca, to that of the blonde Marchesa Attavanti. Angelotti, who is a member of the former Bonapartist government, ventures out and is recognized by Cavaradossi. The painter gives him food and hurries him back into the chapel as Tosca is heard calling from outside. She jealously questions Cavaradossi, then reminds him of their rendezvous that evening at his villa. Suddenly recognizing the Marchesa Attavanti in the painting, she accuses him of being unfaithful, but he assures her of his love. When Tosca has left, Angelotti emerges from the chapel. A cannon signals that the police have discovered the escape, and he and Cavaradossi flee to the painter's villa. The sacristan enters with choirboys who are to sing in a Te Deum that day celebrating a victory against Napoleon. Their excitement is silenced by the arrival of Baron Scarpia, chief of the secret police, who is searching for Angelotti. When Tosca comes back looking for Cavaradossi, Scarpia shows her a fan with the Attavanti crest that he has just found. Seemingly finding her suspicions confirmed, Tosca vows vengeance and leaves. Scarpia sends his men to follow her to Angelotti's hiding place. While the gathered congregation sings the Te Deum, Scarpia swears that he will bend Tosca to his will.

Intermission

ACT II Alone in his palace, Scarpia anticipates the pleasure of having Tosca in his power. The spy Spoleta arrives, explaining that he didn't find Angelotti. Instead he brings in Cavaradossi. While Scarpia interrogates the painter, Tosca is heard singing at a royal gala downstairs. Scarpia sends for her and she enters just as Cavaradossi is being taken away to be tortured. Frightened by Scarpia's questions and Cavaradossi's screams, Tosca reveals Angelotti's hiding place. Cavaradossi, hurt and almost unconscious, is carried in. Realizing what has happened, he angrily confronts Tosca, when the officer Sciarone rushes in to announce that Napoleon has won the Battle of Marengo, a defeat for Scarpia's side. Cavaradossi shouts out his defiance of tyranny and is dragged off to be executed. Scarpia, calmly resuming his supper, suggests to Tosca that he would let Cavaradossi go free if she'd give herself to him. Fighting off his advances, she calls on God and declares that she has dedicated her life to art and love. Scarpia insists, but Spoleta interrupts: faced with capture, Angelotti has killed himself. Tosca, now forced to give in or lose her lover, agrees to Scarpia's proposition. The baron seemingly orders a mock execution for Cavaradossi, after which he is to be freed. Spoleta leaves. As soon as Scarpia has written a safe-conduct for the lovers, Tosca kills him with a knife she had found earlier on the table. She wrenches the document from his hand.

Intermission

ACT III At dawn, Cavaradossi awaits execution at the Castel Sant'Angelo. He bribes the jailer to deliver a farewell letter to Tosca. Overcome with memories of love, he gives in to his despair. Tosca enters. She explains to him what has happened and the two imagine their future in freedom. As the firing squad appears, Tosca instructs Cavaradossi how to fake his death convincingly, then hides. The soldiers fire and depart. Tosca urges Cavaradossi to hurry, but when he doesn't move, she realizes that Scarpia has betrayed her and that the bullets were real. Spoleta rushes in to arrest Tosca for murder. She cries out to Scarpia and leaps from the battlement.