

THE PUCCINI EFFECT

PRESENTER PACK
2026



WELCOME NOTE

Dear Queensland Presenters,

As a Queensland-based artist, I'm excited to share my new work 'The Puccini Effect' - a passionate blend of drama and operatic performance that brings to life the fascinating stories behind opera's most beloved music.

The show has been crafted to work across various venue sizes, and we've designed flexible engagement opportunities to create meaningful connections with your local community.

Best wishes,

Vanessa West



THIS PACK

**Show Overview
(slides 4 - 12)**

**Marketing Assets
(slides 13-20)**

**Technical Information
(Slides 21-25)**

**Engagement ideas
(Slides 26-28)**





SHOW OVERVIEW



SYNOPSIS

'**The Puccini Effect**' is a captivating one-woman show that delves into the passionate world of opera's most beloved composer through the lens of his tumultuous love life. This innovative production weaves together Puccini's real-life romances with the immortal suffering heroines they inspired, creating a powerful narrative that brings new depth to his masterpieces.

Written and performed by lyric soprano Vanessa West, and shaped by Queensland dramaturg Dr. Tarita Botsman, this unique hybrid of dramatic storytelling and operatic recital reveals the fascinating connections between Puccini's personal relationships and his iconic female characters. From the fiery Tosca to the tragic Madama Butterfly, each aria takes on new meaning when performed alongside the stories of the real women who inspired them.

The show's emotional centerpiece is a reimagined court testimony from Elvira Bonturi, Puccini's long-suffering wife, bringing to life the complex web of love, jealousy, and passion that fueled his creative genius. Stage Whispers praised West's "sheer power" and "impassioned delivery" in this pivotal scene.

Directed by Margaret Taylor OAM, accompanied by Associate artist Denis Feletto and styling 'By Celine', 'The Puccini Effect' offers audiences a fresh perspective on some of opera's most beautiful and beloved music.



SHOW STRUCTURE

Act I



**MARIA
JERITZA**
CZECH SOPRANO
1887 - 1982



**ROSE
ADER**
AUSTRIAN SOPRANO
1890 - 1955



CORINNA
LAW STUDENT
20YRS PUCCINI'S JNR



**SYBIL
SELIGMAN**
CREATIVE CONFIDANTE
1868 - 1936



**ELVIRA
GEMIGNANI**
PUCCINI'S DE FACTO
1860 - 1930



**DORIA
MANFREDI**
PUCCINI'S MAID
1886 - 1909



**ELVIRA
PUCCINI**
PUCCINI'S WIFE
1860 - 1930

**Run time - 65mins
(without interval)**

'The Puccini Effect' is told through the lens of six women Giacomo Puccini loved; the sopranos Maria Jeritza and Rose Ader, a mysterious Corinna from Turin, friend and creative confidant Sybil Seligman, de facto then wife Elvira Puccini, and finally Puccini's maid Doria Manfredi.



KEY SELLING POINTS

In an era obsessed with celebrity lives and creative inspiration, 'The Puccini Effect' reveals the scandalous true stories behind opera's greatest love songs.

This innovative fusion of theatre and operatic recital exposes Puccini - one of history's first international celebrities - through the lens of his passionate affairs and the iconic suffering heroines they inspired.

Featuring his most beloved arias woven through real-life drama that rivals any modern soap opera, this accessible performance invites both opera enthusiasts and newcomers to discover how Puccini's complex love life became the foundation for some of the world's most beautiful music.

”

**The
women
he
loved.
The
music
they
inspired.**

”



TARGET AUDIENCES

'The Puccini Effect' bridges the gap between classical opera and contemporary theatre, creating an accessible experience that appeals to both dedicated opera enthusiasts and those who've never set foot in an opera house.

Opera and classical music enthusiasts will discover fresh insights into beloved masterpieces, while newcomers are consistently surprised by how engaging and approachable the performance is, often remarking, "I didn't think I liked opera until now!"

By weaving real-life drama with familiar arias like 'O mio babbino caro' from Gianni Schicci, 'Un bel di' from Madama Butterfly and 'Vissi d'arte,' from Tosca, the performance creates an engaging experience that demystifies opera while maintaining its emotional power.

The Puccini effect



Full house for Puccini Effect

By Sonia Isaacs

A FULL house for Maleny Arts Council on Saturday June 29 with the extraordinary production of The Puccini Effect.

This one woman 'Puccini Powerhouse' performance at the Maleny Community Centre was written and performed by the talented soprano Vanessa West. Featuring associate artist, Angus Grant on piano, the Puccini Effect tells the tale of the real life women who inspired Puccini's operatic heroines including Tosca, Madama Butterfly and Mimi.



Margaret Taylor and Vanessa West



Vanessa West on stage

Hayley Ballinger and Kelly Smith



John and D'Arcy Wilson



Dale and Michael Brennan



Nico Hernuit, Fraser Thom and Garry West



AUDIENCE QUOTES



"I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO BE SUPER BORED COMING WITH MY MUM TO THE OPERA, BUT IT WAS ACTUALLY AMAZING!

THE STORIES BEHIND THE MUSIC WERE REALLY INTERESTING, AND WHEN SHE STARTED SINGING THOSE FAMOUS SONGS I RECOGNIZED FROM MOVIES AND TV, I GOT GOOSEBUMPS.

CHARLIE W, 12
BUDERIM



"I'VE BEEN ATTENDING PUCCINI'S OPERAS FOR OVER FORTY YEARS, BUT I NEVER KNEW THE TURBULENT STORIES BEHIND HIS MUSIC.

I'LL NEVER HEAR 'VISSI D'ARTE' OR 'UN BEL DÌ' THE SAME WAY AGAIN.

IT'S ADDED SUCH A PROFOUND DIMENSION TO MUSIC I THOUGHT I KNEW COMPLETELY."

MARGARET T, 69
MALENY



"I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT OPERA WAS TEDIOUS, BUT VANESSA'S PERFORMANCE WAS THE PERFECT MIX OF DIALOGUE AND SINGING.

I FELT LIKE I WAS ENJOYING A HIGHLIGHTS PACKAGE OF PUCCINI'S GREATEST HITS WHILE LEARNING ABOUT HIS LIFE. THE WAY SHE CONNECTED THE MUSIC TO HIS PERSONAL DRAMA MADE EVERYTHING JUST CLICK FOR ME.

JONNY W, 51
EUDLO



REVIEW QUOTES

” *In a case of art imitating life, lyric soprano Vanessa West presents a cleverly staged, 90-minute exploration through spoken word and song of how women’s emotional pain was used as inspiration via four of the 19th-century Italian maestro’s lovers, as well as his wife and an ingenue.*

Meanwhile, the sheer power of the operatic soprano is showcased during West’s impassioned delivery of Elvira’s (imagined) court testimony, and here West also lets her acting ability shine.”

Marie Blanche, Stage Whispers
30 June 2024



VANESSA WEST

BIO

Queensland-based lyric soprano Vanessa West combines international performance experience with innovative storytelling through her original works.

As a Puccini specialist, she has crafted and performs the acclaimed one-woman show 'The Puccini Effect', which dramatically weaves together the composer's passionate love affairs with his immortal operatic heroines.

Her international debut came in Florence performing Liú (Turandot) and Flora (La Traviata) at the L'estate Fiesolana Opera Festival, followed by performances across Italy, including Rome's Festival Euro Mediterraneo and the prestigious Puccini Festival in Torre del Lago. In Australia, her notable roles with Melbourne Opera include Gilda (Rigoletto), Cio-Cio-San (Madama Butterfly), Fiordiligi (Cosi fan tutte), and Donna Anna (Don Giovanni). Most recently, she performed Santuzza in Maleny's production of Cavalleria Rusticana, and she is currently preparing the role of Nedda for their upcoming production of Pagliacci in June 2025.

A versatile artist who bridges classical and contemporary worlds, Vanessa also pioneers '80s power ballad Popera' – creating orchestrated Italian arrangements of beloved '80s classics that showcase her distinctive artistic vision and passion for making classical music accessible to new audiences.



COLLABORATORS

MARGARET TAYLOR OAM



DIRECTOR

Margaret Taylor OAM is a highly respected singer and director based in Maleny, Queensland. With a distinguished career spanning performance, arts leadership and community advocacy, she is known for championing regional arts. Her work has shaped generations of performers, earning national recognition for her contribution to music and cultural life.

DENIS FELETTA



ASSOCIATE ARTIST

Denis Feletto is an Italian-born pianist, arranger, and conductor based in Queensland, Australia. A skilled and expressive performer, he brings a deep understanding of operatic and orchestral repertoire to his work, with a particular passion for the music of Puccini. As an arranger and conductor, he has crafted and led performances across a range of genres, from classical and opera to jazz and contemporary styles. His extensive experience includes collaborating with vocalists, ensembles, and orchestras, both in live settings and studio productions.

CELINE SUTHERLAND



HAIR, MAKE-UP & COSTUME STYLING

Celine Arif, globetrotting make-up dynamo has done it all: from running MAC Cosmetics Regional Training in Dubai, to glamming up Dubai Film Festival, magazine editorials and even avant-garde body painting. Now, she's sharing her expertise on the sunny Sunshine Coast through her makeup education business at www.byceline.com.au

DR. TARITA BOTSMAN



CREATIVE CONSULTANT & DRAMATURG

Dr. Tarita Botsman is a multi-faceted artist with a distinguished background as an opera singer, stage director, producer and writer. A former Young Australian of the Year, she is also the Artistic Director for the international female vocal ensemble, The 7 Sopranos. Throughout her diverse career, she has endeavoured to constantly redefine and blur art forms, creating vibrant, challenging theatre.



MARKETING ASSETS



MARKETING

'The Puccini Effect' is supported by a comprehensive suite of professional marketing assets, designed by experienced creative professionals right here in Queensland.

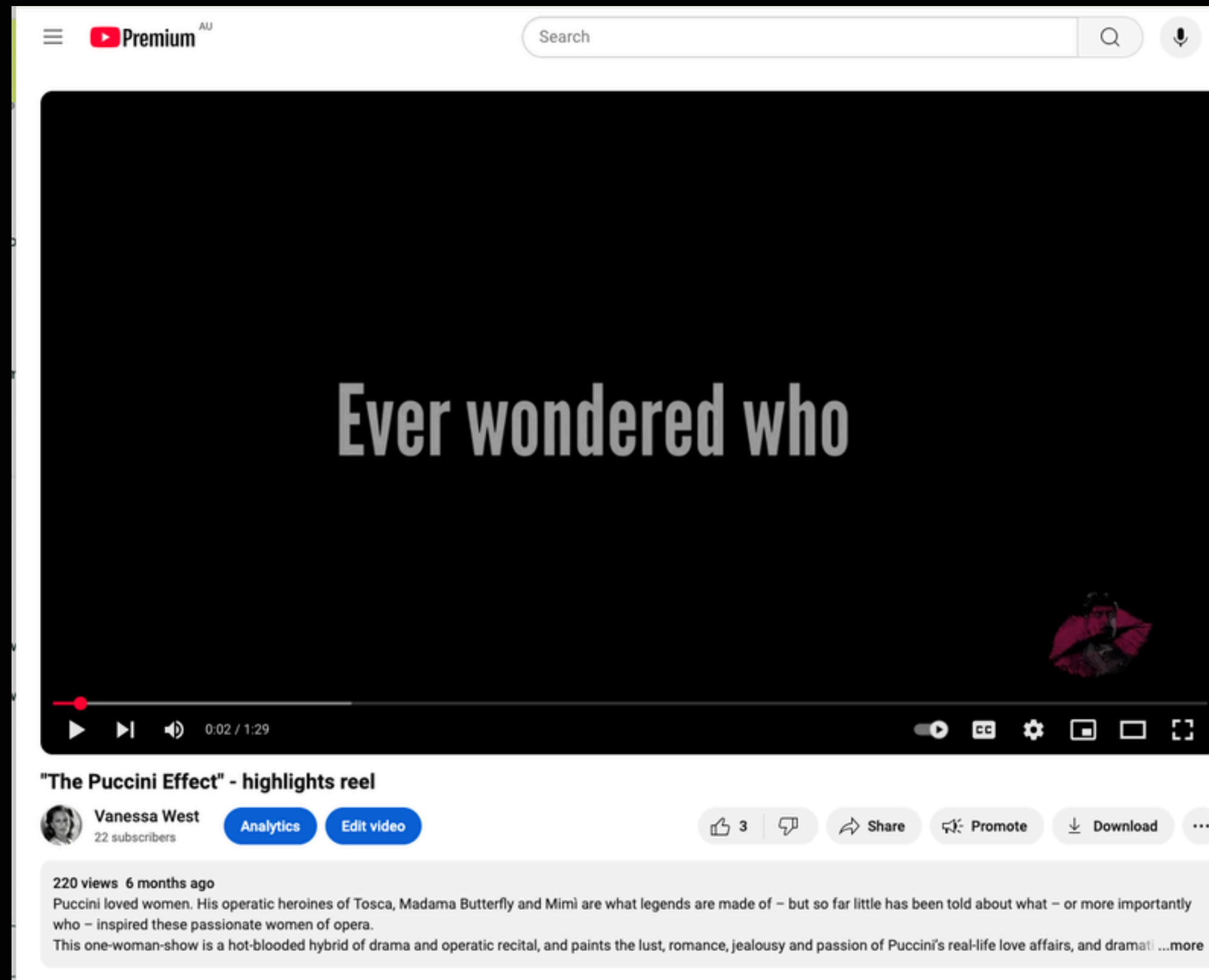
The show's distinctive visual identity captures both its classical heritage and contemporary theatrical elements. A complete brand kit has been developed and implemented in Canva, enabling quick customization of marketing materials for different venues and regions.

Presenters receive complimentary access to print-ready posters, programs, social media campaigns, and high-resolution photography. This streamlined approach ensures brand-consistent, high-quality promotion while allowing venues to easily tailor materials to their specific audience and marketing channels.

All artwork assets are provided free-of-charge to support maximum audience engagement.



SIZZLE REEL



The screenshot shows a YouTube video player interface. At the top left, there is a menu icon and the text "Premium AU". A search bar is located at the top center. The video player itself is mostly black with the text "Ever wondered who" in large white font. A small image of a person in a red dress is visible in the bottom right corner of the video frame. Below the video player, the video title is "'The Puccini Effect' - highlights reel". The channel name is "Vanessa West" with "22 subscribers" and buttons for "Analytics" and "Edit video". Interaction buttons include "3" likes, "Share", "Promote", and "Download". The video description states: "220 views 6 months ago Puccini loved women. His operatic heroines of Tosca, Madama Butterfly and Mimi are what legends are made of – but so far little has been told about what – or more importantly who – inspired these passionate women of opera. This one-woman-show is a hot-blooded hybrid of drama and operatic recital, and paints the lust, romance, jealousy and passion of Puccini's real-life love affairs, and dramati ...more".

A 90sec sizzle reel is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uWnBdxCzL7g>
n archival video is also available for viewing upon request.

SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN
FB & IN REELS & STORIES STATICS & VIDEOS



“MY HUSBAND SHOUTED. IF I LEFT WITH PUCCINI I’D NEVER SEE MY SON AGAIN.”

THE PUCCINI EFFECT



ELVIRA GEMIGNANI,
PUCCINI’S LOVER

“PUCCINI WOULD SAY TO ME, ‘SYBIL, TO LOVE, ONE MUST SUFFER.’”

THE PUCCINI EFFECT



SYBIL SELIGMAN,
PUCCINI’S CREATIVE CONFIDANTE

“IF DORIA DIDN’T DIE NOW, SHE WOULD’VE YEARS LATER FROM A BROKEN HEART.”

THE PUCCINI EFFECT



ELVIRA PUCCINI,
PUCCINI’S WIFE ON TRIAL

“IN 6 WEEKS HE WENT FROM ‘I LOVE YOU’ TO ‘IT HURTS ME TO HURT YOU.’”

THE PUCCINI EFFECT



ROSE ADER,
AUSTRIAN SOPRANO

“FINALLY I’D MEET PUCCINI. A CREATIVE GENIUS, AND BY REPUTATION, A VERY HANDSOME MAN.”

THE PUCCINI EFFECT



MARIA JERITZA,
CZECH SOPRANO

“WHAT COULD I DO? TO PROVE MY INNOCENCE WOULD MEAN BETRAYING MY BELOVED PUCCINI.”

THE PUCCINI EFFECT



DORIA MANFREDI,
PUCCINI’S MAID

“TO LOVE PUCCINI... IS TO WALK A PATH LINED WITH ROSES AND THORNS.”

THE PUCCINI EFFECT



CORINNA,
LAW STUDENT

Puccini loved women. His operatic heroines of Tosca, Madama Butterfly and Mimi are what legends are made of – but so far little has been told about what – or more importantly who – inspired these passionate women of opera.

‘The Puccini Effect’ is told through the lens of six women Giacomo Puccini loved; the sopranos Maria Jeritza and Rose Ader, a mysterious Corinna from Turin, friend and creative confidant Sybil Seligman, de facto then wife Elvira Puccini, and finally Puccini’s maid Doria Manfredi.

MARIA JERITZA

CZECH SOPRANO
1887 – 1982



Maria was a much-loved artist on both sides of the Atlantic and famed for her portrayal of Tosca. She provides rare insight into Puccini’s artistic world as she experienced his passion for his operas, heroines and leading ladies first-hand. Her monologue is based on a 1958 BBC radio interview.

ROSE ADER

AUSTRIAN SOPRANO
1890 – 1955



Rose and Puccini were lovers later in his life and it’s believed that the role of Liu in Turandot was written with her voice in mind. An affair that was largely conducted via correspondence, this scene is inspired by the final letter Puccini ever wrote Rose.

CORINNA

LAW STUDENT
20 YEARS PUCCINI’S JUNIOR



Not a lot is known about the mysterious ‘Corinna from Turin’ other than they met on a train, had a passionate affair which became so serious Puccini bought her a house only a couple of miles away from his, and they were close to marrying at one point before Puccini’s publisher Giulio Ricordi intervened.

SYBIL SELIGMAN

SOCIALITE & PUCCINI’S
CREATIVE CONFIDANTE
1868 – 1936



Sybil was rumored to have begun an affair with Puccini before dropping it in fear of a scandal. She became Puccini’s closest friend and confidant, and was likely to be the only person aware of Puccini’s greatest secret surrounding the infamous Doria Manfredi affair.

ELVIRA GEMIGNANI

PUCCINI’S DE FACTO
1860 – 1930



Elvira was married to Puccini’s schoolfriend when Puccini was hired to give Elvira piano lessons. They soon began an affair, sewing the seeds for the longest, and most turbulent love story of Puccini’s life.

DORIA MANFREDI

PUCCINI’S MAID
1886 – 1909



Doria was only 16 when she joined the Villa Puccini as their maid. The scandal that later ensued was of operatic proportions, with the truth around Puccini’s true motives only coming to light a century later in 2008.

ELVIRA PUCCINI

PUCCINI’S WIFE
1860 - 1930



Puccini’s lifelong pursuit of his “little gardens” had taken a toll on his wife Elvira - and her jealousy peaked when she became convinced her maid Doria was sleeping with her husband. Elvira’s actions were the subject of a trial that she never recovered from.

IMAGERY





This event has no dates available for booking. Please [contact the organiser](#) directly with any queries.

THE PUCCINI EFFECT



THE PUCCINI EFFECT

The women he loved. The music they inspired.

Written & Performed by Vanessa West. Associate Artist Angus Grant

Puccini loved women. His operatic heroines of Tosca, Madama Butterfly and Mimi are what legends are made of – but so far little has been told about what – or more importantly who – inspired these passionate women of opera.

This one-woman-show is a hot-blooded hybrid of drama and operatic recital. It paints the lust, romance, jealousy and passion of Puccini's real-life love affairs and dramatically links his real-life women with the infamous "suffering heroines" portrayed in his opera masterpieces.

Don't miss soprano Vanessa West sing some of the most beautiful arias ever composed, accompanied by Associate Artist Angus Grant.

vannessawest.com.au

With thanks to:

Creative Consultant and Dramaturg – Dr. Tarita Botsman. Production Styling - 'ByCeline'.

LOCATION

[Get directions](#)

MERCHANDISE

Professional merchandise designs have been created to enhance audience engagement and provide additional revenue opportunities for venues.

All designs and print-ready files are provided free-of-charge to presenters.





TECHNICAL INFORMATION







Staging

- > Minimum stage area: 4m x 3m
- > Basic lighting plot with warm and cool washes & follow-spot
- > Basic wing space for minimal costume changes

Sound

- > Professional quality sound system appropriate to venue size
- > 2 x wireless headset bud microphones (discrete lav kits)
- > 1 x handheld wireless microphone (back-up)
- > Digital mixing console
- > Playback capability
- > Sound operator for seamless transitions between amplified dialogue and acoustic singing



Equipment provided by company

- > All costumes and props
- > Recorded audio files for prologue and epilogue
- > Digital Lighting plot
- > Show script with technical cues

Venue to provide

- > Tuned piano preferred (if not available, the company can provide a professional electric stage piano)
- > Lighting system & operator
- > Sound system & operator
- > Dressing room



Set-up Requirements

- > Pre-set lighting plot: 3hrs (10am - 1pm)
- > Top & tail rehearsal & sound-check: 2hrs (3pm - 5pm)
- > Performance - 7pm

Personnel

- > 1 x sound operator (venue)
- > 1 x lighting operator (venue)
- > 1 x spot operator (venue)
- > 1 x crew (venue)

Bump in/Bump out

- > Same-day open



ENGAGEMENT IDEAS



ENGAGEMENT IDEAS

“Letters & Arias”

Library Sessions & Aged Care Facilities (60mins)

- Interactive presentations at local libraries showcasing the actual letters and interviews that inspired the show
- Live performance of related arias
- Discussion of how historical documents were transformed into theatrical monologues
- Participants explore the connection between Puccini's real relationships and his music

“From History to Stage”

School Workshop Program (60mins)

- Designed for senior Drama/Music students
- Demonstration of how to craft dramatic monologues from historical sources
- Practical exercises in bringing historical characters to life
- Mini-masterclass component featuring student singers

COMMUNITY LEGACY & CULTURAL IMPACT

MAKING OPERA ACCESSIBLE:

- Breaking down barriers by presenting opera through relatable human stories
- Creating entry points for new audiences through theatrical storytelling
- Showing regional audiences that opera isn't just for capital cities
- Bringing professional opera performances to aged care facilities, ensuring elderly residents who can't attend theatre venues can still experience live classical music

QUEENSLAND CREATIVITY:

- Showcasing Queensland-created work that meets international standards
- Building connections between regional venues and professional artists

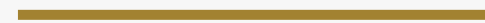
ARTIST SUSTAINABILITY:

- Providing a model for classical singers to create sustainable careers through original work
- Demonstrating how artists can blend traditional repertoire with contemporary storytelling
- Inspiring emerging artists to develop their own creative projects

LONG-TERM IMPACT:

- Encouraging young audiences to explore classical music through contemporary perspectives
- Building future audiences for opera and classical music in regional Queensland

THANK YOU



For more information:

w: vanessawest.com.au

m: +614 448 987 964

