

# Giacomo Puccini

(JAH-kaw-maw poo-CHEE-nee)

1858 – 1924



- Born to a very musical family, his family had provided five generations of organists and composers to the Cathedral of San Martino.
- At 14, he took over as the organist at the Cathedral of San Martino and he began to compose his own music.
- At 18, Puccini fell in love with opera when he and his brother walked 20 miles to see Verdi's Aida.
- He decided to study composition at the Milan Conservatory. His first attempt at opera was the one-act *La villi* for a local competition soon after he graduated. Even though it didn't win, the piece gained a small group of admirers, who ultimately funded its production.
- 'La bohème', was his first major work. It quickly gained momentum and now is part of the standard Italian opera repertory.
- Over the course of his life, Puccini composed 10 operas, 30 concert arias, 4 chamber pieces and 30 other pieces.



Listen to excerpt from La Boheme