

OPERA EXPLAINED

This series introduces, in words and music, the plot and background of major operas. Using the principal themes and arias, taken from the Naxos recording of the complete work, Thomson Smillie is informative yet entertaining, enabling the listener to get more from this remarkable art form.

An Introduction to...

MASCAGNI

Cavalleria rusticana

written by Thomson Smillie

narrated by David Timson

Cavalleria rusticana is the short opera that has all the elements of a grand opera compressed into a single highly dramatic time span. The story of love, lust, blood-feud and betrayal played out against the pageantry of the Easter celebrations in a Sicilian village delivers an emotional wallop because of the youthful vigour and musical wealth of its great score, which includes the glorious Easter Hymn and the deeply moving Intermezzo. Mascagni was never to repeat his youthful success but this brief work is enough to ensure his immortality.

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