

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... PUCCINI Turandot

written by Thomson Smillie
narrated by David Timson

Puccini's swansong has a claim to being the last great popular opera. Its melodies have enchanted audiences since its posthumous premiere in 1926, two years after Puccini's death. It involves a chilling story of love and cruelty, an intriguing cast of characters against the exotic backdrop of Imperial China, magnificent choruses and ensembles, and dazzling orchestration in an exotic score that comprises a string of remarkable arias – among which the great tenor aria 'Nessun dorma' is the jewel. It is more than Puccini's last opera: it is the last word, in every sense, on Italian opera.

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