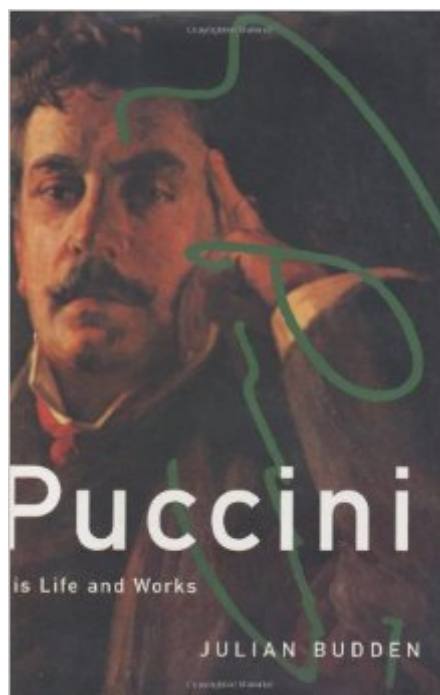


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Puccini: His Life And Works (Master Musicians Series)



Synopsis

Julian Budden, one of the world's foremost scholars of Italian opera and author of a monumental three-volume study of Verdi's works, now offers music lovers a major new biography of one of the giants of Italian opera, Giacomo Puccini. Blending astute musical analysis with a colorful account of Puccini's life, here is an illuminating look at some of the most popular operas in the repertoire, including *Manon Lescaut*, *La Boheme*, *Tosca*, *Madama Butterfly*, and *Turandot*. Budden provides an illuminating look at the process of putting an opera together, the cut-and-slash of nineteenth-century Italian opera--the struggle to find the right performers for the debut of *La Boheme*, Puccini's anxiety about completing *Turandot* (he in fact died of cancer before he did so), his animosity toward his rival Leoncavallo (whom he called Leonasino or "lion-ass"). Budden provides an informative analysis of the operas themselves, examining the music act by act. He highlights, among other things, the influence of Wagner on Puccini--alone among his Italian contemporaries, Puccini followed Wagner's example in bringing the motif into the forefront of his narrative, sometimes voicing the singer's unexpressed thoughts, sometimes sending out a signal to the audience of which the character is unaware. And Budden also paints an intriguing portrait of Puccini the man--talented but modest, a man who had friends from every walk of life: shopkeepers, priests, wealthy landowners, fellow artists. Affable, well mannered, gifted with a broad sense of fun, he rarely failed to charm all who met him. A new volume in the esteemed Master Musicians series, *Puccini* offers a masterful portrait of this beloved Italian composer.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book is a must for all Puccini scholars and any Music Composition student. Budden's impressive knowledge covers the musical aspect of the Puccini operas in depth as well as his extensive musical innovations. Being a great fan of Puccini's operas, I wished to deepen my appreciation of his genius by continuing to read more about him and Julian Budden does not disappoint. The major events of Puccini's life are covered, and the chapters are divided according to the chronological order of his operas. The interesting aspects of the background of each opera has been well researched and discussed in a refreshing manner. The backgrounds are then followed by technical observations of Puccini's innovations demonstrating with examples of his written music. These technical discussions are clearly designed for scholars of music composition and often difficult for the layman to grasp, but Budden has organized each chapter so that the layman may easily skim these technical sections. Having created a fully illustrated libretto of Madama Butterfly in graphic novel form available exclusively at The Metropolitan Opera Gift Shop and here on , The Fully Illustrated Libretto of Puccini's Madama Butterfly I found it appropriate to delve more deeply into Puccini's great accomplishments. This book was very helpful to achieve this end and I highly recommend it. Other fully illustrated librettos include:

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