

# PAGLIACCI

di Ruggero Leoncavallo

Giuseppe Giacomini  
 Elisabetta Martorana  
 Mauro Buda



## PAGLIACCI

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| Genre    | Opera  |
| Year     | 2003   |
| Country  | Italy  |
| Lenght   | 42'  |
| Format   | SD - 4:3   |
| Director | Giovanna Nocetti                                     |
| Language | Italian / English, French, Spanish subtitles         |
| Cast     | Giuseppe Giacomini, Elisabetta Martorana, Mauro Buda |

Canio clown, head of the troupe (tenor) **Giuseppe Giacomini** - Nedda Canio's wife in love with Silvio (soprano) **Elisabetta Martorana** - Tonio, the fool (baritone) **Mauro Buda** - Silvio Nedda's lover (baritone) **Massimo Valeggi** - Orchestra della Capitanata - Conductor **Elisabetta Maschio** - Director **Giovanna Nocetti**

"Pagliacci" opens with a prologue. There is an instrumental introduction. Then Tonio pokes his head through the curtains, -- "Si puo? Signore e Signori" (By your leave, Ladies and Gentlemen), -- comes out, and sings. The prologue rehearses, or at least hints at, the story of the opera, and does so in musical phrases, which we shall hear again as the work progresses -- the bustle of the players as they make ready for the performance; Canio's lament that he must be merry before his audiences, though his heart be breaking; part of the lovemaking music between Nedda and Silvio; and the theme of the intermezzo, to the broad measures of which Tonio sings, "Evo piuttosto che le nostre povere gabbane" (Ah, think then, sweet people, when you behold us clad in our motley).

Place: Montalto, in Calabria.

**Time:** The Feast of the Assumption, about 1865-70.

Act I. The edge of the village of Montalto, Calabria. People are celebrating the Feast of the Assumption. In the background is the tent of the strolling players. These players, Canio, Nedda, Tonio, and Beppe, in the costume of their characters in the play they are to enact, are parading through the village. The opening chorus, "Son qua" (They're here), proclaims the innocent joy with which the village hails the arrival of the players. The beating of a drum, the blare of a trumpet are heard. The players, having finished their parade through the village, are returning to their tent. Beppe, in his Harlequin costume, enters leading a donkey drawing a gaudily painted cart, in which Nedda is reclining. Behind her, in his Pagliaccio costume, is Canio, beating the big drum and blowing the trumpet. Tonio, dressed as Taddeo, the clown, brings up her rear. The scene is full of life and gayety. Men, women, and boys, singing sometimes in separate groups, sometimes together, form the chorus. The rising inflection in their oft-repeated greeting to Canio as "il principe se dei Pagliacci" (the prince of Pagliaccios), adds materially to the lilt of joy in their greeting to the players

whose coming performance they evidently regard as the climax to the festival. Canio addresses the crowd. At seven o'clock the play will begin. They will witness the troubles of poor Pagliaccio, and the vengeance he wreaked on the Clown, a treacherous fellow. 'Twill be a strange combination of love and of hate. Again the crowd acclaims its joy at the prospect of seeing the players on the stage behind the flaps of the tent. Tonio comes forward to help Nedda out of the cart. Canio boxes his ears, and lifts Nedda down himself. Tonio, jeered at by the women and boys, angrily shakes his fists at the youngsters, and goes off muttering that Canio will have to pay high for what he has done. Beppe leads off the donkey with the cart, comes back, and throws down his whip in front of the tent. A villager asks Canio to drink at the tavern. Beppe joins them. Canio calls to Tonio. Is he coming with them? Tonio replies that he must stay behind to groom the donkey. A villager suggests that Tonio is remaining in order to make love to Nedda. Canio takes the intended humour of this sally rather grimly. He says that in the play, when he interferes with Tonio's lovemaking, he lays himself open to a beating. But in real life -- let any one, who would try to rob him of Nedda's love, beware. The emphasis with which he speaks causes comment. Just then the bagpipers from a neighbouring village are heard approaching. The musicians, followed by the people of their village, arrive to join in the festival. All are made welcome, and the villagers, save a few who are waiting for Canio and Beppe, go off down the road toward the village. The church bells ring. The villagers sing the pretty chorus, "Din, don -- suona vespero" (Ding, dong -- the vespers bell). Canio nods good-bye to Nedda. He and Beppe go toward the village. Nedda is alone. Canio's words and manner worry her. "How fiercely he looked and watched me! -- Heavens, if he should suspect me!" But the birds are singing, the birds, whose voices her mother understood. Her thoughts go back to her childhood. She sings, "Oh! Che volo d'angelli" (Ah, ye beautiful song-birds), which leads up to her vivacious ballatella, "Stridono lassu, liberamente" (Forever flying through the boundless sky).