Ruggero Leoncavallo – Pagliacci (Gardelli) [2003]

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1. Prologue: Si puo? Si puo?   2. Act I: Eh! Son qua! Son qua!   3. Act I: Un grande spettacolo   4. Act I: Un tal gioco   5. Act I: I zampognari - Ah! Andiam - La campana - Don, din don   6. Act I: Qual fiamma avea nel quardo - Stridono lassu   7. Act I: Sei la? - Credea che te ne fossi andato! - So ben che difforme, contorto son io   4:47   8. Act I: Silvio! - A quest'ora... che improdenza!   9. Act I: Cammina adagio - Recitar! - Vesti la giubba   10. Act I: Intermezzo   11. Act II: Ohè! Ohè! Presto, Presto   12. Act II: Pagliaccio mio marito - O Colombina, il tenero fido Arlecchin 3:44   13. Act II: E dessa! Dei, come, e bella 14. Act II: Arlecchino! - Alfin s'arrenda   15. Act II: Versa il filtro nella tazza sua - No! Pagliaccio non son - Suvvia, cosi terribile 8:35 Canio, Bajazzo - Vladimir Atlantov, tenor Nedda, Colombine - Lucia Popp, soprano Tonio, Taddeo - Bernd Weikl, baritone Beppe, Harlekin - Alexandru Ionita, tenor Silvio - Wolfgang Brendel, baritone 2 Peasants - Gerhard Auer, bass / Heinrich Weber, tenor   Münchner Rundfunkorchester Lamberto Gardelli – conductor

Pagliacci, sometimes incorrectly rendered with a definite article as I Pagliacci, is an opera consisting of a prologue and two acts written and composed by Ruggiero Leoncavallo. It recounts the tragedy of a jealous husband in a commedia dell'arte troupe. It is the only opera of Leoncavallo that is still widely staged.

Pagliacci premiered at the Teatro Dal Verme in Milan on May 21, 1892, conducted by Arturo Toscanini with Adelina Stehle as Nedda, Fiorello Giraud as Canio, Victor Maurel as Tonio, and Mario Ancona as Silvio. Nellie Melba played Nedda in London in 1892, soon after its Italian premiere, and in New York in 1893.

Pagliacci was an instant success and it remains popular today. It contains one of opera's most famous and popular arias, "Recitar! ... Vesti la giubba" (literally, To perform! ... Put on the costume, but more often known in English as On with the motley). Since 1893, it has usually

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been performed in a double bill with Pietro Mascagni's Cavalleria rusticana, a pairing referred to in the operatic world colloquially as "Cav and Pag". Although this pairing has long been the norm in most places, some theatres have been very late in staging these two works together. For example, the Mikhaylovsky Theatre in Saint Petersburg presented the double bill for the first time only in February 2009. It has also been known to have been staged as a single work, as in the case of Washington National Opera's November 1997 by Franco Zeffirelli with Plácido Domingo as Canio and Véronica Villarroel as Nedda. In 2011, it was performed along with Poulenc's La voix humaine by Opera San José.

The UK premiere took place at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in London on 19 May 1893. It was last given in that house in July 2003 in a production by Zeffirelli, Canio having been sung by Domingo and Nedda by Angela Gheorghiu. The US premiere followed a month after Covent Garden's at the Grand Opera House in New York on 15 June, while the Metropolitan Opera first staged the work on 11 December of the same year (along with Orfeo ed Euridice), the Nedda being sung by Nellie Melba. The Met combined it with Cavalleria rusticana for the first time 11 days later on 22 December. Since 1893 it has been presented there 712 times (most recently in April 2009), and since 1944, exclusively with Cavalleria. The New Israeli Opera premiere took place on December 19, 1992. A new production directed by Giancarlo_del_Monaco was staged there in December 2011.

As a staple of the standard operatic repertoire, it appears as number 20 on the Operabase list of the most-performed operas worldwide.

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