

# TEATRUM MUNDÍ

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In her apartment, Isabella readies a feast of initiation for the bey, exhorting her fellow Italians to be confident. Mustafà arrives, and Lindoro reminds him of the initiation procedure. After he is pronounced a Pappataci, food is brought in, and he is tested by Isabella and Lindoro, who pretend to make love while Taddeo reminds Mustafà to ignore them. A ship draws up in the background, and the lovers prepare to embark with other Italian captives, but Taddeo realizes that he too is being tricked and tries to rally Mustafà, who persists in keeping his vow of paying no attention. When Mustafà finally responds, the Italians have the situation under control and bid a courteous farewell. Mustafà, his lesson learned, takes Elvira back, and everyone sings the praises of the resourceful Italian woman.



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L'ITALIANA IN ALGERI

# L'ITALIANA IN ALGERI

Gioachino Rossini  
Gran Teatre del Liceu, Barcelona

## Cast

**Conductor**  
Ricardo Frizza

**Mustafa**  
Luca Pisaroni

**Director**  
Vittorio Borrelli

**Isabella**  
Varduhi Abrahamyan

**Set Design**  
Claudio Boasso

**Elvíra**  
Sara Blanch

**Costume Design**  
Santuzza Cali

**Zulma**  
Lidia Vinyes-Curtis

**Lighting**  
Andrea Anfossi

**Haly**  
Tony Marsol

**Chorus Master**  
Conxita Garcia

**Lindoro**  
Maxim Mironov

**Czech subtitles**  
Petra Ocelková

**Taddeo**  
Giorgio Caoduro

**Symphony Orchestra  
and Chorus of the  
Gran Teatre del  
Liceu**

*Czech subtitles are based  
from English subtitles  
and are informative  
character.*

*Opera on 2 acts.  
Sung in  
Italian language.*

*LIVE December 18, 2018 at  
8pm (Barcelona time) From  
the Gran Teatre del Liceu,  
Barcelona*

*Premiere  
May 22, 1813*

*Libreto  
Antonio Ghislanzoni*

*L'italiana in Algeri espouses the cause of women's rights through the resourceful way its protagonist, Isabella, deals with the coarse Mustafà. Rossini was only 21 when he triumphed with this two-act farce, which consolidated his personal style and his status as the rightful heir of 18th-century opera buffa. Great arias and dazzling ensembles – like the one punctuated by onomatopoeia at the end of the first act – are just a few of the gourmet dishes on this hilarious Rossini menu. It has been 36 years since L'italiana in Algeri was last seen at the Liceu. Riccardo Frizza will be back in the orchestra pit with an entire cast of specialists in this style of opera on the stage. The bright colours of director Vittorio Borrelli's mise-en-scène are very much in keeping with the imaginative spirit of Rossini's sparkling music.*

#### ACT I

In Algiers, at the seaside palace of the bey Mustafà, his wife, Elvira, complains that her husband no longer loves her; her attendants reply there is nothing she can do. Mustafà himself bursts in. Asserting he will not let women get the better of him, he sends Elvira away when she complains. Mustafà says he has tired of his wife and will give her to Lindoro, a young Italian at the court, to marry. Then he orders Haly, a captain in his service, to provide an Italian woman for himself—someone more interesting than the girls in his harem, all of whom bore him. Lindoro longs for his own sweetheart, Isabella, whom he lost when pirates captured him. Mustafà tells him he can have Elvira, insisting she possesses every virtue that Lindoro, in his attempt to escape Mustafà's connubial trap, has listed.

Elsewhere along the shore, a shipwreck is spotted in the distance, and Haly's pirates exult in the catch. Isabella arrives on shore, lamenting the cruelty of a fate that has interrupted her quest for her lost fiancé, Lindoro. Though in danger, she is confident of her skill in taming men. The pirates seize Taddeo, an aging admirer of Isabella's, and attempt to sell him into slavery, but he claims he is Isabella's uncle and cannot leave her. When the Turks learn that both captives are Italian, they rejoice in having found the new star for their leader's harem. Taddeo is aghast at the aplomb with which Isabella takes his news, but after a quarrel about his jealousy, they decide they had better face their predicament together.

Elvira's slave, Zulma, tries to reconcile Lindoro and her mistress to the fact that Mustafà has ordered them to marry. Mustafà promises Lindoro he may return to Italy -- if he will take Elvira. Seeing no other way, Lindoro accepts, making it clear he might not marry Elvira until after they reach Italy. Elvira, however, loves her husband and sees no advantage in aiding Lindoro's escape. When Haly announces the capture of an Italian woman, Mustafà gloats in anticipation of conquest, then leaves to meet her.

Lindoro tries to tell Elvira she has no choice but to leave her heartless husband.

In the main hall of his palace, hailed by eunuchs as "the scourge of women," Mustafà welcomes Isabella with ceremony. Aside, she remarks that he looks ridiculous and feels certain that she will be able to deal with him; he, on the other hand, finds her enchanting. As she seemingly throws herself on his mercy, the jealous Taddeo starts to make a scene and is saved only when she declares that he is her "uncle." Elvira and Lindoro, about to leave for Italy, come to say good-bye to the bey, and Lindoro and Isabella are stunned to recognize each other. To prevent Lindoro's departure, Isabella insists that Mustafà cannot banish his wife, adding that Lindoro must stay as her own personal servant. Between the frustration of Mustafà's plans and the happy but confused excitement of the lovers, everyone's head reels.

#### ACT II

Elvira and various members of the court are discussing how easily the Italian woman has cowed Mustafà, giving Elvira hope of regaining his love. When Mustafà enters, however, it is to declare he will visit Isabella in her room for coffee. She comes out of her room, upset because Lindoro apparently broke faith with her by agreeing to escape with Elvira. Lindoro appears and reassures her of his loyalty. Promising a scheme for their freedom, Isabella leaves him to his rapturous feelings. After he too leaves, Mustafà reappears, followed by attendants with the terrified Taddeo, who is to be honored as the bey's Kaimakan, or personal bodyguard, in exchange for helping secure Isabella's affections. Dressed in Turkish garb, he sees no choice but to accept the compulsory honor. In her apartment, Isabella dons Turkish clothes herself and prepares for Mustafà's visit, telling Elvira that the way to keep her husband is to be more assertive. As she completes her toilette, Isabella, knowing she is overheard by Mustafà in the background, sings a half-mocking invocation to Venus to help conquer her victim. To make him impatient, she keeps him waiting, as her "servant" Lindoro acts as go-between. At length she presents herself to the bey, who introduces Taddeo as his Kaimakan. Mustafà sneezes -- a signal for Taddeo to leave—but Taddeo stays, and Isabella invites Elvira to stay for coffee, to Mustafà's displeasure. When Isabella insists that he treat his wife gently, Mustafà bursts out in annoyance, while the others wonder what to make of his fulminations.

Elsewhere in the palace, Haly predicts that his master is no match for an Italian woman. As Lindoro and Taddeo plan their escape, Taddeo says he is Isabella's true love. Lindoro is amused but realizes he needs Taddeo's help in dealing with Mustafà, who enters, still furious. Lindoro says Isabella actually cares very much for the bey and wants him to prove his worthiness by entering the Italian order of Pappataci. Believing this to be an honor, Mustafà asks what he has to do. Simple, says Lindoro: eat, drink, and sleep all you like, oblivious to anything around you. Aside, Haly and Zulma wonder what Isabella is up to.