

## ADELINA

a stage play with opera music by Deborah Perkin

***The true story of Queen Victoria's favourite soprano, the highest paid, most photographed woman of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, who risks everything for the man she loves, and for the right to live life on her own terms.***



Adelina Patti has the voice of an angel. Rising to fame as a child star in America, she has conquered opera's greatest heights, praised by Dickens, Tolstoy and Verdi. Professionally she has everything she ever wanted, but emotionally she has never really grown up. Dreaming of Prince Charming, she defies her family for a disastrous marriage to a brutish aristocrat. As divorce is not legal, she faces the decision of her life - whether to carry on in her toxic marriage, or whether to risk career and reputation for the man she truly loves. Her dilemma resonates with everyone, man or woman, who has faced up to the painful reality of ending a marriage, or come to terms with experience over innocence, or decided to create a better future for themselves.

*The year 2023 marks Adelina's 180<sup>th</sup> birthday as she was born in 1843.*

This is a love story of operatic proportions, immersing audiences in the kind of irresistible opera music that wows World Cup football fans. It touches on an artist's right to find her own voice, women and the law, the sexual double standard, the decline of the aristocracy, art versus commerce, and music history. Characters include Frederick Gye, Manager of the Royal Opera House, who gave Adelina her European debut, aged 18, in 1861, and Prussian musician Maurice Strakosch, who mentored her to stardom and managed her career, husband Henry Marquis de Caux, and her confidante Patro Castello. Ernest Nicolini sang lead tenor roles with her for over a decade before they fell in love, and left their unhappy marriages to "live in sin". The couple found sanctuary in a grand Welsh castle, where Adelina lived for the rest of her life. When divorce was legalised, they finally married, regaining the approval of royalty and high society.

Embracing a 35 year timespan, the play uses the alchemy of music and physical theatre to convey Adelina's emotional journey. The complete script is ready for development with theatre makers. The author's idea is for opera singers to be cast alongside the actors playing Adelina and Ernest, stepping in at the key moments where singing is required, conjuring bold theatricality, energy and passion.



**Patro Castello** is a key character in the play. This woman of colour was Adelina's trusted personal maid and confidante.



**Ernest Nicolini**  
Adelina's  
second  
husband



**Henry, Marquis De Caux**  
Adelina's first husband