Strictly speaking, composer Antonio Smareglia belonged to three cultural groups. His father was an Italian from Friuli, his mother Croatian, and he himself was born in Pola on the Istrian peninsula, which at the time was still part of Austria-Hungary – and yet he managed to make a name for himself across the borders of national identities, especially with his operas. Among his greatest successes was *Nozze istriane* (‘Istrian Wedding’), which premiered in Trieste on 28 March 1895 – a rural love tragedy with words by the famous poet Luigi Illica and music by the composer, whose rich melodies skilfully avoid the obvious verismo. A pair of lovers are not allowed to marry because the son of a rich man desires the girl; the young woman is deceitfully persuaded that her sweetheart has abandoned her; when the lie comes to light at the end, it is too late. A stab of a knife ends their happiness!