

Music By The Sea presents comic opera



• Mark Howlett and Judit Molnar will perform in the comic opera *La Serva Padrona* at Sandgate Town Hall next month.

ONE of the most successful comic operas in history comes to Sandgate as Music By The Sea presents *La Serva Padrona* by Giovanni Battista Pergolesi on Saturday, August 2.

To celebrate the Empress of Austria's birthday in 1733, Pergolesi (1710-1736) was commissioned to write an opera in which *La Serva Padrona* formed a two-act intermezzo, however this section later went on to gain extraordinary popularity as a separate work.

This tale of two archetypal characters, the cunning maid Serpina and her aging master Uberto, has been very palatable to audiences around the world for almost 300 years.

Now, after a year of planing, a contemporary version performed by Hungarian-born, Brisbane-based soprano Judit Molnar, baritone Mark Howlett, music director Spiros Rantos and his musicians, and director Sharyn Henry, makes for good entertainment that is as relevant today as when the work was first penned.

Ms Molnar said, "Mark (Howlett) has performed this opera many times before. I've sung a couple of the arias in Italian, but never in English. So it's been a challenge for me to learn to sing in a new language.

"But everyone, including our director Sharyn Henry, has been so supportive and so professional helping me master it.

"If people haven't seen opera before it's a good one to start with. It's a simple comic opera with modern costumes. I wear a short black maid's uniform and Mark wears normal clothing, a shirt and trousers."

The event starts at 7.30pm at Sandgate Town Hall. For program information and bookings visit musicbythesea.com.au