

GAETANO DONIZETTI

# ANNA BOLENA

CONDUCTOR  
Marco Armiliato

PRODUCTION  
Sir David McVicar

SET DESIGNER  
Robert Jones

COSTUME DESIGNER  
Jenny Tiramani

LIGHTING DESIGNER  
Paule Constable

CHOREOGRAPHER  
Andrew George

GENERAL MANAGER  
Peter Gelb

MUSIC DIRECTOR  
James Levine

PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR  
Fabio Luisi

Tragedia lirica in two acts

Libretto by Felice Romani, based on  
Ippolito Pindemonte's *Enrico VIII ossia  
Anna Bolena* and Alessandro Pepoli's  
*Anna Bolena*

Friday, October 9, 2015  
7:30–11:00PM

The production of *Anna Bolena* was made  
possible by a generous gift from  
Mercedes and Sid Bass

The revival of this production is made possible by  
a gift from the Metropolitan Opera Club

The presentation of Donizetti's three Tudor Queen  
operas this season is made possible through a  
generous gift from Daisy Soros, in memory of  
Paul Soros and Beverly Sills

# The Metropolitan Opera

2015–16 SEASON

The 16th Metropolitan Opera performance of  
GAETANO DONIZETTI'S

## ANNA BOLENA

CONDUCTOR  
Marco Armiliato

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

JANE (GIOVANNA) SEYMOUR, ANNE'S LADY-IN-WAITING  
Milijana Nikolic DEBUT

ANNE BOLEYN (ANNA BOLENA)  
Sondra Radvanovsky\*

MARK SMEATON, MUSICIAN  
Tamara Mumford\*

HENRY VIII (ENRICO), KING OF ENGLAND  
Ildar Abdrazakov

LORD ROCHEFORT, ANNE'S BROTHER  
David Crawford

LORD RICHARD (RICCARDO) PERCY  
Taylor Stayton

SIR HERVEY, COURT OFFICIAL  
Gregory Schmidt

Friday, October 9, 2015, 7:30–11:00PM



A scene from  
Donizetti's  
*Anna Bolena*

Chorus Master **Donald Palumbo**  
Musical Preparation **Gareth Morrell, Thomas Bagwell,  
Miloš Repický, and Sean Kelly**  
Assistant Stage Directors **Eric Einhorn and Jonathon Loy**  
Stage Band Conductor **Jeffrey Goldberg**  
Met Titles **J. D. McClatchy**  
Prompter **Miloš Repický**  
Italian Coach **Loretta Di Franco**  
Assistant to the Costume Designer **Luca Costigliolo**  
Scenery, properties, and electrical props constructed  
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Costumes executed by **Metropolitan Opera Costume  
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Period footwear by **Pompeii Shoes, Rome**  
Wigs by **Metropolitan Opera Wig Department**  
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Opera

2015-16 SEASON

Aleksandrs Antonenko as Othello

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# Synopsis

Greenwich and London, England, 1536

## Act I

SCENE 1 Greenwich Palace, outside the queen's apartments and inside Jane Seymour's bedchamber

SCENE 2 Greenwich Park

SCENE 3 A hall in the palace

## *Intermission* (AT APPROXIMATELY 8:50 PM)

## Act II

SCENE 1 The queen's apartments in Westminster Palace

SCENE 2 Anteroom to the Council Chamber

SCENE 3 The Tower of London

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After nearly a decade of political and religious upheaval, Henry VIII has succeeded in ridding himself of his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, and has crowned as Queen of England his long-term mistress, Anne Boleyn. But despite the birth of a princess, Elizabeth, Anne has twice miscarried and been unable to provide Henry with a male heir.

## Act I

Courtiers discuss the state of royal affairs: Queen Anne, after less than three years of marriage, is now neglected by the king and there are rumors that his attentions have turned to another, as yet unknown woman. Jane Seymour, the queen's chief lady-in-waiting, has been summoned to attend her but hesitates at the door to Anne's chamber. The queen suddenly appears, demanding to know the reason for the court's uneasy, despondent mood. She admits to Jane that she is herself troubled and asks her page, Mark Smeaton, to sing a song to cheer everyone. But the words of his song remind her of the lost happiness of her first love, which she betrayed in her ambition to marry the king.

Jane—who is in fact the king's new lover—is guilt-ridden over her betrayal. Henry appears and passionately declares his love, promising Jane marriage and glory. She is disturbed by his threats about Anne's future but realizes that it is too late for her to turn back.

Anne's brother, Lord Rochefort, is surprised to meet Richard Percy, Earl of Northumberland, in Greenwich Park. Percy, although banished for being the queen's former lover, has been recalled from exile by the king. He has heard of Anne's distress and asks after her. Rochefort answers evasively. Percy admits that his own life has been miserable since he and Anne separated. The king

arrives with a hunting party, followed by Anne and her ladies-in-waiting. Henry greets his wife coolly, then tells Percy that he has the queen to thank for his pardon. In fact, the king has arranged Percy's return as a trap for Anne and is grimly amused at their emotion and embarrassment as they greet each other. He orders Hervey, a councilor, to spy on the couple.

Smeaton, who is secretly in love with the queen, is on his way to her apartments in order to return a miniature portrait of her that he has stolen. He hides when Anne suddenly appears, arguing with Rochefort. Rochefort begs Anne to see Percy in the hope that she can persuade him to leave England and avert further danger to them both. Reluctantly, she agrees. Percy enters and is unable to hide that he still loves Anne. She admits that the king no longer loves—and in fact hates—her, but she remains firm and pleads with Percy to leave the realm. Distraught, Percy draws his sword. Smeaton rushes out of hiding to protect Anne, and Rochefort runs in to warn them that the king is approaching. Henry bursts in with Hervey and the court in tow. Smeaton proclaims the queen's innocence but the furious king seizes the miniature as welcome proof of his wife's seeming infidelity. He accuses all four of an adulterous conspiracy. Anne, in front of the court, is arrested.

## Act II

Anne has been imprisoned in her apartments at Westminster Palace in London. Her ladies are anxiously awaiting news of the impending trial when they are suddenly summoned by Hervey to give evidence before the Council of Peers. They leave with the guards. Jane steals in to tell Anne that she can only avoid the death sentence by pleading guilty and confessing her adulterous crimes, thereby allowing the king to divorce her. Anne refuses, cursing the woman who has replaced her in the king's affections. Jane admits that she is that woman. Shocked, Anne at first dismisses her, but then feels pity for Jane's desperation. She says it is the king, not Jane, who has betrayed her.

Smeaton has falsely testified under torture to being one of the queen's lovers. He believes his confession will save her life. Anne and Percy are brought before the council. Anne tells the king that she is ready to die but begs him to spare her the humiliation of a trial. In the following confrontation, Percy claims that he and Anne were married before she became the king's wife. Anne is unable to deny Percy's assertion. Even though Henry doubts that there were true vows between the lovers in the past, they have played into his hands and their conviction has become certain. Percy and Anne are led away. Jane pleads with Henry for Anne's life, but he dismisses her. News arrives of the council's verdict: the royal marriage is dissolved and Anne and her accomplices are to be executed.

Percy discovers that Rochefort has also been condemned as an incestuous conspirator to treason. The two men resolve to meet death bravely together and with Anne.

In her cell at the Tower of London, Anne is in a state of delirium. Before her ladies, her thoughts turn to happier times: the day of her wedding to Henry, her first love for Percy, and finally her childhood at her family home. Hervey and the guards enter and Anne is awakened to the awful reality of her fate. Her fellow prisoners are brought in. Smeaton accuses himself of bringing about her end. Anne embraces Percy and her brother, drifting back into insensibility. When bells and cannon fire are heard, announcing the king's new marriage, Anne comes to her senses again. She furiously curses the royal couple and goes to face her execution.

*Gaetano Donizetti*

# Anna Bolena

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*Premiere: Teatro Carcano, Milan, 1830*

The first of Donizetti's operas to achieve more than local success, *Anna Bolena* is based on a historical episode that has fascinated—even haunted—artists and writers ever since it happened: the fall and death of England's Queen Anne Boleyn, the second of Henry VIII's six wives. This personal drama took place amid the political upheavals of the English Reformation, an enormous social cataclysm that was in fact triggered by Henry and Anne's marriage. Before he could legally wed Anne, Henry unsuccessfully tried to convince the church to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon. While many operas use history as a point of departure for imaginative storytelling, *Anna Bolena* stays closer to real events than most, in the music as well as the libretto: a palpable sense of sadness and dread permeates the score. The multi-dimensional characters are both bigger than life and credibly human. The lead role was created by Giuditta Pasta, a great prima donna of her day who would also sing the premiere of Bellini's *Norma* the following year. *Anna Bolena* fell out of the repertory a few decades after its successful premiere. A famous 1957 production at Milan's La Scala, starring Maria Callas and directed by Luchino Visconti, drew audience attention back to this neglected masterpiece. Since then, it has resurfaced when there have been notable singing actors available to do justice to its demanding leading roles.

### *The Creators*

Gaetano Donizetti (1797–1848) composed more than 60 operas, plus orchestral and chamber music, in a career abbreviated by mental illness and premature death. Most of his works, with the exceptions of the ever-popular *Lucia di Lammermoor* and the comic gems *L'Elisir d'Amore* and *Don Pasquale*, disappeared from the public eye after his death, but critical and popular opinion of the rest of his huge opus has grown considerably over the past 50 years. Felice Romani (1788–1865) was the official librettist of Milan's Teatro alla Scala and worked with many of the most popular Italian composers of the time. Romani collaborated with Donizetti on several of his best-known operas, including *L'Elisir d'Amore* and *Lucrezia Borgia*, and provided Vincenzo Bellini with all but three of his librettos.

### *The Setting*

The trial of Anne Boleyn took place on May 15, 1536, and her execution followed four days later. The opera's first act is set during the weeks leading up to the trial, in Greenwich Castle near London. Act II takes place at the Tower of London, between trial and execution.

## *The Music*

One of the most striking characteristics of all of Donizetti's works is the power and abundance of melody. In context, however, the music reveals a deeper dramatic purpose. The high range of the tenor's vocal line in his Act I solos tells us of the character's passion, while its unexpected turns suggest his impetuosity. The bass's music depicts both the elegance and the menace of Henry VIII's highly complex personality. Anne first caught Henry's eye when she was a lady-in-waiting for Catherine of Aragon, and her own lady-in-waiting, Jane Seymour, is destined to become his third wife. The duet between Anne and Jane that begins Act II is an even more revealing example of creating drama through melody: Although labeled a duet, most of this scene is made up of a sequence of solos tracking the two women's evolving understanding of each other. When they finally sing together at the end of the scene, the combination of their voices depicts a complex relationship that encompasses rivalry but also a certain amount of sympathy. This attention to detail can be found throughout the opera, beyond the great arias and ensembles. The finale to Act I is a superb sextet that captures all the diverse, intense emotions of the moment. But this elaborate ensemble is introduced by a brief moment that can be equally intense in its own way: Anne cries out ("Giuduci! ad Anna!") three times as she tries to comprehend that she, a queen, must face the royal judges. This exclamation can convey varying levels of indignation, terror, despair, or sadness, and slight variations in each performance can alter the dramatic emphasis. Nowhere is the combination of focused dramatic outburst and inspired melody more apparent than in the searing final scene, as Anne awaits her execution. While often referred to as a mad scene, it is really much more. The character goes through a variety of emotions and mental conditions, including terror, illusory calm, and confusion bordering on hallucination. These states of mind come and go rapidly, sometimes encompassing complete melodies (such as the nostalgic ruminations about her happy times with Percy, accompanied by a haunting English horn), at other times breaking off before resolving, and occasionally morphing after a few words. Prayers alternate with recriminations, leading to a final climactic outburst that is a masterpiece of operatic insight and a superb example of opera's ability to explore the human dimensions behind history.

## *Met History*

The premiere of David McVicar's production on Opening Night of the 2011–12 season—with Anna Netrebko, Ildar Abdrazakov, Ekaterina Gubanova, and Stephen Costello leading the cast—marked *Anna Bolena*'s first performance at the Met.

## Program Note

“Success, triumph, delirium; it seemed that the public had gone mad. Everyone says they cannot remember ever having been present at such a triumph,” wrote composer Gaetano Donizetti to his wife after the first performance of *Anna Bolena* on December 26, 1830. It was a sweet triumph, indeed—doubly so since it took place in Milan.

Donizetti had been writing operas since 1818 and enjoyed considerable success elsewhere in Italy, especially in Naples. But the Milanese remained stubbornly aloof. The composer’s 1822 opera *Chiara e Serafina* had been written for La Scala, but it was received indifferently, with no further interest from theaters in Milan until the fall of 1830 when a group of aristocrats, fed up with the way La Scala was being run, decided to put on a rival season in Milan’s Teatro Carcano.

They offered Donizetti a contract to write the opera that would open the Carnival season (an enormous honor), for the great soprano Giuditta Pasta and equally famous tenor Giovanni Battista Rubini, with a libretto by the well-known Felice Romani. Donizetti signed. Since the opera had to open on Saint Stephen’s Day (December 26), the libretto was due at the end of September. Romani, as usual, missed his deadline, and the composer did not have the completed text until November 10. It was worth waiting for. Donizetti and Romani had worked together twice before, including on the ill-fated *Chiara e Serafina*, but the libretto to *Anna Bolena* was the best the composer had had to that point in his career. It was based on two plays: an Italian translation by Ippolito Pindemonte of Marie-Joseph de Chénier’s *Henry VIII* (Paris, 1791) and Alessandro Pepoli’s *Anna Bolena* (Venice, 1788).

Romani’s drama focuses attention squarely on the innocent Anna Bolena and the suffering she endures while awaiting her tragic fate, a fate she shares with the man she truly loves, Henry Percy, even though she has been faithful to her husband, King Henry VIII (Enrico in the opera). The characters are all sharply etched, and they are brought together in situations that further the drama while revealing new aspects of the people involved. The libretto does not follow history to a T, but it is marvelous drama, and Donizetti turned it into a sensational opera.

The Anne Boleyn who became Henry VIII’s second wife was not the beloved, long-suffering queen of the opera. As a young teenager she and her older sister Mary were sent to France, where they were part of the court of King Francis I. “The court followed the lead of the king in making a mannerly art of adultery,” wrote one historian. “The clergy adjusted themselves after making the requisite objections. The people made no objections, but gratefully imitated the easy code of the court.” Centuries later Victor Hugo wrote a play about Francis I’s licentious court, *Le Roi s’amuse*. It was banned after one performance, but became the basis of Verdi’s *Rigoletto*—after numerous changes to satisfy the censor. One can only wonder what effect such behavior may have had on the psyche of the teenage Anne Boleyn, especially after her sister Mary became the French king’s (and later King Henry’s) mistress.

The Anne who returned to England in 1522 was described by the Venetian ambassador as “not the handsomest woman in the world. She is of middle height, dark-skinned, long neck, wide mouth, rather flat-chested.” But she was vivacious, quick-tempered, witty, outspoken, and knew how to make the most of her flashing dark eyes, long hair, and graceful neck. Thanks to her training at the French court, and her own ambition, she soon attracted serious attention from several men, including Henry Percy, son of the Earl of Northumberland, who was already betrothed. In the opera Percy claims he and Anne were married—or at least promised to each other in the sight of God—before she ever married the king, and Anne does not deny it. Whether or not this is historically accurate is open to debate. What is known is that young Percy was hustled away from court on order of King Henry, and that Percy’s wife (who loathed him) later claimed there had indeed been an understanding between Percy and Anne. The king’s inquiry into the persistent rumors of the queen’s adultery failed to produce any evidence. Unlike his operatic counterpart, the historic Percy was never brought to trial, and his life was spared.

Initially, Anne had played her cards right with Henry VIII. She refused to become his mistress, and the more she resisted his advances, the more besotted the king became. “This passion is the most extraordinary thing,” wrote the Papal legate in February 1529. “He sees nothing, he thinks of nothing, but his Anne; he cannot be without her for an hour.” What is never mentioned in the opera is the biggest plum Anne could offer Henry—the prospect of a son, an heir to the throne, and political stability for the Tudor line at a time when many Englishmen still remembered the devastating effects of the War of the Roses. Henry’s wife, Queen Catherine, had not provided a male heir who survived infancy, and she was past childbearing. Determined to make Anne his queen, Henry set off a series of international crises before he succeeded.

By the time they were married, Anne was pregnant with a daughter—Elizabeth, who would later become one of England’s most illustrious monarchs (and a key character in Donizetti’s operas *Maria Stuarda* and *Roberto Devereux*). Later pregnancies ended in miscarriages. Anne’s charms began to wear thin, and her lack of friends at court did not help matters when Henry—ever on the quest for a male heir—decided that one of Anne’s ladies-in-waiting, Jane Seymour, would be the wife he needed. Seizing on rumors of Anne’s indiscreet behavior, he had her charged with multiple counts of adultery, including incest with her own brother, and treason. The only person who actually confessed to having been Anne’s lover was a court musician, Mark Smeaton, and he was possibly tortured. In the opera, he believes his confession will save Anne’s life. The historic Anne Boleyn did not go mad and did not die while the people cheered the king’s new marriage to Jane Seymour. (The wedding took place 11 days later.) One historian summed it up: “No one could be sure of her guilt, but few regretted her fall.”

Whether or not historically accurate, Romani's libretto gave Donizetti the opportunity to write music that took Italian opera to a new level. With *Anna Bolena*, he found his own, personal voice as a composer of Romantic tragedy, primarily by bending the traditional forms of the genre to create a tighter and more emotionally gripping drama. In the opera's opening scene, for instance, Anne interrupts Smeaton's aria before it is finished, adding a sense of urgency to the proceedings. In the famous Act II duet between Anne and Jane (Giovanna in the libretto), the two women do not sing together until the very end of the number. The revelation that Jane is Anne's rival, and Anne's reaction to it, are handled in a more conversational manner, almost as they would be in a play—but greatly intensified by Donizetti's music.

The score is rich in ensembles, and the numerous choruses are used brilliantly to provide atmosphere, especially the women's choruses in Act II. Equally striking are the opportunities Donizetti gave his soloists to make a tremendous impact on the audience—even outside the context of their formal arias and ensembles. In *Anna Bolena*, the composer proved himself a master at writing music that is not part of a "number" yet expresses a character's emotion so vividly that in the hands of a skillful singer it can electrify listeners. The role of Anne includes so many of these moments that one wonders what influence Giuditta Pasta might have had on the score, since Donizetti wrote the opera while her houseguest.

One example can be found in the finale of Act I, when the king tells Anne to save her story for the judges who will hear her evidence. "Judges! For Anne!" the thunderstruck queen replies. "For Anne! Judges!" The soprano's words are punctuated by forte chords in the orchestra that leave most of the text unaccompanied, conveying the fact that at that moment she is all on her own—and allowing the soprano to put her individual imprint on Anne's sudden awareness that she is doomed. Then she launches into the finale's rousing stretta, with its jagged vocal line (marked "desperately" in the score) and the words "Ah, my fate is sealed."

Another example occurs in the opening of Act II. For this scene, Donizetti wrote a very simple prayer for Anne, "God, who sees into my heart." It's not a formal aria and just 16 measures long—a brief, unvarnished look into Anne's soul. But a great soprano can bring tears to the eyes of an audience through the way she molds its simple vocal line.

All the major characters get their moments in the sun. Smeaton's solos are charming, and Percy's Act II aria, "Vivi tu," has been a favorite of almost any tenor who sings it. Still, it remains a remarkable feat on Donizetti's part to have written the role of Henry in such a way that it would attract some of the greatest basses of his or any time—even though the king has no aria. The Italian writer and statesman Giuseppe Mazzini commented, "Who has not heard in the musical expression of Henry VIII the stern language, at once tyrannical and artful, that history assigned him? *Anna Bolena* is the sort of opera that approaches the musical epic."

The score's crown jewel, of course, is Anne's justly famous mad scene. Donizetti's stroke of genius lies in combining its individual elements—Anne's arias, bits of recitative, melodic fragments—with just the right amount of chorus, comments from other characters, and superb use of the orchestra (both in terms of individual instruments, such as the English horn, and as a whole). The result is a final scene that is greater than the sum of its parts, that is strong enough to provide a dramatically satisfying, emotionally cathartic climax to the entire opera. Giuditta Pasta was only the first in a long line of great singing actresses who reveled in first wringing dry the souls of her audience with her poignant aria "Al dolce guidami," keeping them on the edges of their seats with "Cielo, a' miei lunghi spasimi," then finally whipping them into hysteria with the dazzling and fiendishly difficult "Coppia iniqua." Donizetti went on to write a number of famous mad scenes, but he arguably never wrote a better one. No wonder *Anna Bolena* was the opera that introduced the composer's name to Paris and London, set him securely on the path to international fame, and whetted the opera audience's taste for Romantic tragedy for decades to come.

—Paul Thomason

## The Cast



### Marco Armiliato

CONDUCTOR (GENOA, ITALY)

**THIS SEASON** *Il Trovatore* and *Anna Bolena* at the Met, *Lucrezia Borgia* in Barcelona, *La Traviata* at Munich's Bavarian State Opera, and *L'Elisir d'Amore*, *La Bohème*, *La Traviata*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Manon Lescaut*, and *Roméo et Juliette* at the Vienna State Opera.

**MET APPEARANCES** More than 350 performances of 23 operas including *La Bohème* (debut, 1998), *Tosca*, *Francesca da Rimini*, *Rigoletto*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *La Rondine*, *La Traviata*, *La Fille du Régiment*, *Turandot*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, and *Pagliacci*.

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** Highlights of last season include *La Fanciulla del West* and *La Traviata* in Zurich, *Faust* with the Deutsche Oper Berlin, and *Tosca*, *Andrea Chénier*, and *Don Carlo* at the Vienna State Opera. A frequent guest at many of the world's leading opera houses, he made his Italian debut in 1995 at Venice's Teatro La Fenice with *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and his international debut that same year at the Vienna State Opera with *Andrea Chénier*.



### Tamara Mumford

MEZZO-SOPRANO (SANDY, UTAH)

**THIS SEASON** Smeaton in *Anna Bolena* at the Met, Daniel Schnyder's *Charlie Parker's Yardbird* with Gotham Chamber Opera, and concert engagements with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Netherlands Radio Symphony, and Utah Symphony.

**MET APPEARANCES** Nearly 150 performances including Flosshilde in *Das Rheingold* and *Götterdämmerung*, Margret in *Wozzeck*, Hippolyta in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Laura in *Luisa Miller* (debut, 2006), Lola in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, Mavra Kuzminichna/Matryosha in *War and Peace*, Maddalena in *Rigoletto*, the Abbess in *Suor Angelica*, Dryade in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and Pauline in *The Queen of Spades*.

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** Recent engagements include Marta in *Iolanta* with the Dallas Opera, the title role of Henze's *Phaedra* and Lucretia in Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia* with the Opera Company of Philadelphia, Dido in *Dido and Aeneas* at the Glimmerglass Opera, Ottavia in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* at the Glyndebourne Opera, Isabella in *L'Italiana in Algeri* at the Palm Beach Opera, and the world premiere of John Adams's oratorio *The Gospel According to the Other Mary* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. She is a graduate of the Met's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.



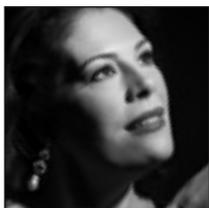
### Milijana Nikolic

MEZZO-SOPRANO (SREMSKA MITROVICA, SERBIA)

**THIS SEASON** Jane Seymour in *Anna Bolena* for her debut at the Met, Eboli in *Don Carlo* and the title role of *Carmen* with Opera Australia, and Dalila in *Samson et Dalila* in concert in Tokyo.

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** She has sung *Carmen* at Finland's Savonlinna Festival and in Melbourne and Adelaide; Amneris in *Aida* for her American debut with Michigan Opera Theatre, and in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, and New Zealand; and

Dalila in Finland. Additional engagements include Eboli in Seoul and for Opera Hong Kong, Cuniza in Verdi's *Oberto* at La Scala and in Genoa, Emma in Donizetti's *Ugo, Conte di Parigi* in Bergamo, Catania, and at La Scala, and Fenena in *Nabucco* in Sardinia. She made her operatic debut with the Belgrade National Theatre and is a frequent soloist with the Queensland and Adelaide Symphony Orchestras and the Auckland Philharmonia.



## Sondra Radvanovsky

SOPRANO (BERWYN, ILLINOIS)

**THIS SEASON** All three of Donizetti's Tudor queen operas at the Met (Elisabetta in *Roberto Devereux* and the title roles of *Anna Bolena* and *Maria Stuarda*), the title roles of *Manon Lescaut* and *Tosca* at the Deutsche Opera Berlin, *Tosca* at Munich's Bavarian State Opera, and the title role of *Aida* at the Paris Opera.

**MET APPEARANCES** More than 150 performances of 24 roles, including Amelia in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Norma, *Tosca*, *Aida*, Luisa Miller, Roxane in Alfano's *Cyrano de Bergerac*, Leonora in *Il Trovatore*, Elvira in *Ernani*, Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus*, Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*, Musetta in *La Bohème*, Antonia in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, Micaëla in *Carmen*, and Countess Ceprano in *Rigoletto* (debut, 1996).

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** *Anna Bolena* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, *Aida* with the Vienna State Opera, and *Norma* with the San Francisco Opera, Munich's Bavarian State Opera, and in Barcelona. She has also sung Donizetti's *Elisabetta* with the Canadian Opera Company, the title role of *Suor Angelica* in Los Angeles, Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia* in Washington, Hélène in *Les Vêpres Siciliennes* and Elisabeth in *Don Carlos* with the Paris Opera, Elena in *I Vespri Siciliani* and *Manon Lescaut* at the Vienna State Opera, and Roxane at La Scala. She is a graduate of the Met's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.



## Ildar Abdrazakov

BASS (UFA, RUSSIA)

**THIS SEASON** Henry VIII in *Anna Bolena* at the Met, Don Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* with the Paris Opera, the title role of *Attila* in Monte Carlo, and the Verdi Requiem in Luxembourg.

**MET APPEARANCES** The title role of *Prince Igor*, Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Escamillo in *Carmen*, Dosifei in *Khovanshchina*, the Four Villains in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, Méphistophélès in *Faust* and *La Damnation de Faust*, the title role of *Attila*, Alidoro in *La Cenerentola*, Mustafà in *L'Italiana in Algeri*, Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and Don Giovanni, Leporello, and Masetto (debut, 2004) in *Don Giovanni*.

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** Recent performances include Moïse in Rossini's *Moïse et Pharaon* at the Marseille Opera, Méphistophélès in *Faust* at the Paris Opera, and Mustafà at the Vienna State Opera. He has also sung the title role of Boito's *Mefistofele* at the San Francisco Opera, the Four Villains at the Vienna State Opera and La Scala, Banquo in *Macbeth* at the Munich Opera Festival and La Scala, Don Giovanni with Washington National Opera and Vienna State Opera, *Attila* in Rome, Don Basilio at Covent Garden, Figaro with Washington National Opera, and Walter in *Luisa Miller* with the Paris Opera.



## Taylor Stayton

TENOR (SIDNEY, OHIO)

**THIS SEASON** Lord Richard Percy in *Anna Bolena* and Count Almaviva in *The Barber of Seville* at the Met, Idreno in *Semiramide* with Washington Concert Opera, and Arturo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* at Covent Garden.

**MET APPEARANCES** Elvino in *La Sonnambula* and Lord Richard Percy (debut, 2011).

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** Recent performances include Count Almaviva with Opera Philadelphia and debuts with Palm Beach Opera as Tonio in *La Fille du Régiment* and Lyric Opera of Kansas City as Lindoro in *L'Italiana in Algeri*. He has also sung Almaviva with Opéra de Lille, Deutsche Oper Berlin, and Nashville Opera, the title role of *Le Comte Ory* and Ernesto in *Don Pasquale* with Des Moines Metro Opera, Don Ramiro in *La Cenerentola* at the Glyndebourne Festival, Marzio in *Mitridate, Re di Ponto* with Munich's Bavarian State Opera, Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* with Kentucky Opera, Tybalt in *Roméo et Juliette* with Opera Philadelphia, and Fenton in *Falstaff* in Rome.

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