

GIACOMO PUCCINI

MADAMA BUTTERFLY

CONDUCTOR
Karel Mark Chichon

PRODUCTION
Anthony Minghella

DIRECTOR AND
CHOREOGRAPHER
Carolyn Choa

SET DESIGNER
Michael Levine

COSTUME DESIGNER
Han Feng

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Peter Mumford

PUPPETRY
Blind Summit Theatre

GENERAL MANAGER
Peter Gelb

MUSIC DIRECTOR
James Levine

PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR
Fabio Luisi

Opera in two acts

Libretto by Giuseppe Giacosa and
Luigi Illica, based on the play
by David Belasco

Saturday, April 9, 2016
8:00–11:20PM

The production of *Madama Butterfly* 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 NPD Group, Inc.

Co-production of the Metropolitan Opera, English
National Opera, and Lithuanian National Opera

The Metropolitan Opera

2015–16 SEASON

The 868th Metropolitan Opera performance of

GIACOMO PUCCINI'S

MADAMA BUTTERFLY

CONDUCTOR

Karel Mark Chichon

IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

LT. B.F. PINKERTON

Roberto De Biasio

GORO

Tony Stevenson*

SUZUKI

Maria Zifchak

U.S. CONSUL SHARPLESS

Dwayne Croft*

CIO-CIO-SAN

Kristine Opolais

HER RELATIVES:

COUSIN

Patricia Steiner

MOTHER

Belinda Oswald

UNCLE YAKUSIDE

Craig Montgomery

AUNT

Jean Braham

IMPERIAL COMMISSIONER

David Crawford

THE REGISTRAR

Juhwan Lee

THE BONZE,
CIO-CIO-SAN'S UNCLE

Stefan Szkafarowsky

YAMADORI

Yunpeng Wang**

KATE PINKERTON

Edyta Kulczak

CIO-CIO-SAN'S CHILD

Kevin Augustine

Tom Lee

Marc Petrosino

BALLET SOLOISTS

Hsin-Ping Chang

James Graber

Saturday, April 9, 2016, 8:00–11:20PM



© GRIGIO METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE

A scene from Puccini's
Madama Butterfly

Chorus Master **Donald Palumbo**
Assistant Choreographer **Anita Griffin**
Musical Preparation **Gregory Buchalter, J. David Jackson,
Liora Maurer, and Natalia Katyukova**
Assistant Stage Directors **Sara Erde and Gregory Keller**
Prompter **Gregory Buchalter**
Met Titles **Christopher Bergen**
Italian Coach **Gildo Di Nunzio**
Puppets made by **Blind Summit Theatre**
Scenery, properties, and electrical props constructed
and painted in **Metropolitan Opera Shops**
Costumes executed by **English National Opera Production
Wardrobe; Metropolitan Opera Costume Department**
Additional costumes by **Han Feng and Karen Crichton**
Wigs and makeup executed by **Metropolitan Opera
Wig and Makeup Department**

* Graduate of the
Lindemann Young Artist
Development Program

** Member of the
Lindemann Young Artist
Development Program

Yamaha is the
Official Piano of the
Metropolitan Opera.

Latecomers will not be
admitted during the
performance.

This performance is made possible in part by public funds
from the New York State Council on the Arts.

Before the performance begins, please switch off cell
phones and other electronic devices.

Met Titles

To activate, press the red button to the right of the screen in front of
your seat and follow the instructions provided. To turn off the display,
press the red button once again. If you have questions please ask an
usher at intermission.

Visit metopera.org

STRAUSS

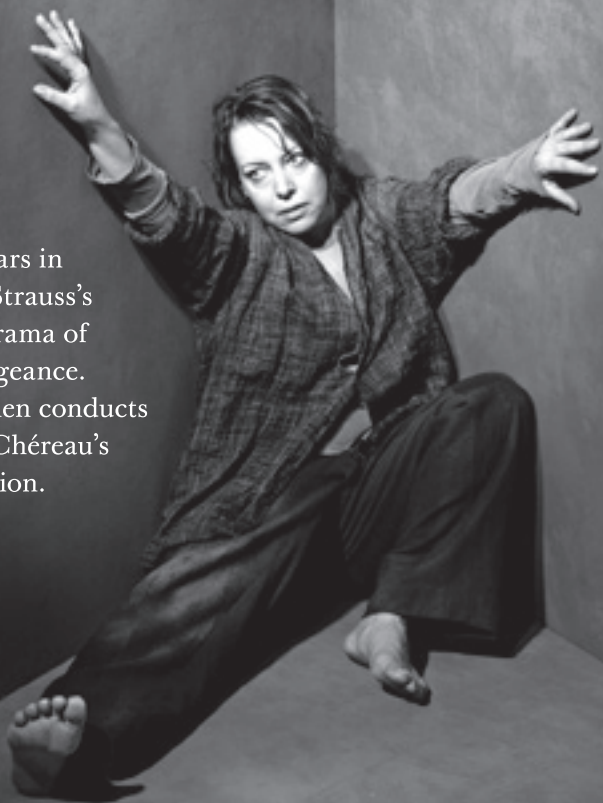
ELEKTRA

Opens April 14

Tickets from \$32

metopera.org

Nina Stemme stars in the title role of Strauss's overpowering drama of murder and vengeance. Esa-Pekka Salonen conducts the late Patrice Chéreau's chilling production.



Synopsis

Act I

Outside a house overlooking Nagasaki harbor

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 9:00 PM)

Act II

PART 1 Cio-Cio-San's house, three years later

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 10:25 PM)

Act II

PART 2 Cio-Cio-San's house, the next morning at dawn

Act I

Lieutenant B.F. Pinkerton of the U.S. Navy inspects a house overlooking Nagasaki harbor that he is leasing from Goro, a marriage broker. The house comes with three servants and a geisha wife named Cio-Cio-San, known as Madam Butterfly. The lease runs for 999 years, subject to monthly renewal. The American consul Sharpless arrives breathless from climbing the hill. Pinkerton describes his philosophy of the fearless Yankee roaming the world in search of experience and pleasure. He is not sure whether his feelings for the young girl are love or a whim, but he intends to go through with the marriage ceremony. Sharpless warns him that the girl may view the marriage differently, but Pinkerton brushes off such concerns and says someday he will take a real, American wife. He offers the consul whiskey and proposes a toast. Butterfly is heard climbing the hill with her friends for the ceremony. In casual conversation after the formal introduction, Butterfly admits her age, 15, and explains that her family was once prominent but lost its position, and she has had to earn her living as a geisha. Her relatives arrive and chatter about the marriage. Cio-Cio-San shows Pinkerton her very few possessions, and quietly tells him she has been to the Christian mission and will embrace her husband's religion. The Imperial Commissioner reads the marriage agreement, and the relatives congratulate the couple. Suddenly, a threatening voice is heard from afar—it is the Bonze, Butterfly's uncle, a priest. He curses the girl for going to the Christian mission and rejecting her ancestral religion. Pinkerton orders them to leave and as they go the Bonze and the shocked relatives denounce Cio-Cio-San. Pinkerton tries to console Butterfly with sweet words. She is helped by Suzuki into her wedding kimono, and joins Pinkerton in the garden, where they make love.

Act II PART 1

Three years have passed, and Cio-Cio-San awaits her husband's return. Suzuki prays to the gods for help, but Butterfly berates her for believing in lazy Japanese gods rather than in Pinkerton's promise to return one day. Sharpless appears with a letter from Pinkerton, but before he can read it to Butterfly, Goro arrives with the latest potential husband for her, the wealthy Prince Yamadori. Butterfly politely serves the guests tea but insists she is not available for marriage—her American husband has not deserted her. She dismisses Goro and Yamadori. Sharpless attempts to read Pinkerton's letter and suggests that perhaps Butterfly should reconsider Yamadori's offer. "And this?" asks the outraged Butterfly, showing the consul her small child. Sharpless is too upset to tell her more of the letter's contents. He leaves, promising to tell Pinkerton of the child. A cannon shot is heard in the harbor announcing the arrival of a ship. Butterfly and Suzuki take a telescope to the terrace and read the name of Pinkerton's ship. Overjoyed, Butterfly joins Suzuki in strewing the house with flower petals from the garden. Night falls, and Butterfly, Suzuki, and the child settle into a vigil watching over the harbor.

Act II PART 2

Dawn breaks, and Suzuki insists that Butterfly get some sleep. Butterfly carries the child into another room. Sharpless appears with Pinkerton and Kate, Pinkerton's new wife. Suzuki realizes who the American woman is, and agrees to help break the news to Butterfly. Pinkerton is overcome with guilt and runs from the scene, pausing to remember his days in the little house. Cio-Cio-San rushes in hoping to find Pinkerton, but sees Kate instead. Grasping the situation, she agrees to give up the child but insists Pinkerton return for him. Dismissing everyone, Butterfly takes out the dagger with which her father committed suicide, choosing to die with honor rather than live in shame. She is interrupted momentarily when the child comes in, but Butterfly says goodbye to him and blindfolds him. She stabs herself as Pinkerton calls her name.

Giacomo Puccini

Madama Butterfly

Premiere: Teatro alla Scala, Milan, 1904

The title character of *Madama Butterfly*—a young Japanese geisha who clings to the belief that her arrangement with a visiting American naval officer is a loving and permanent marriage—is one of the defining roles in opera, as convincing and tragic as any figure in drama. Part of the reason for the opera's enduring hold on the popular imagination may have to do with the fact that the mere mention of *Madama Butterfly* triggers ideas about cultural and sexual imperialism for people far removed from the opera house. Film, Broadway, and popular culture in general have riffed endlessly on the story and have made the lead role iconic. But the opera itself, while neither emphasizing nor avoiding these aspects of the story, focuses more on the characters as real people than on complicated issues of power. The opera survived a disastrous Milan opening night but was reworked immediately and enjoyed great success in nearby Brescia a few months later, then in Paris, and soon all over the world. It has remained at the core of the opera repertory ever since, and the lyric beauty of the music for the thoroughly believable lead role has made *Butterfly* timeless.

The Creators

Giacomo Puccini (1858–1924) was immensely popular in his own lifetime. His operas are celebrated for their mastery of detail, their sensitivity to everyday subjects, their copious melody, and their economy of expression. Puccini's librettists for *Madama Butterfly*, Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica, also collaborated with the composer on his previous two operas, *Tosca* and *La Bohème* (both of which, along with *Butterfly*, are among his most enduringly successful). The opera is based on the play *Madame Butterfly* by playwright and producer David Belasco (1853–1931), a giant of the American theater and a fascinating, if controversial, character whose daring innovations brought a new level of realism and vitality to the stage.

The Setting

The story takes place in the Japanese port city of Nagasaki at the turn of the 20th century, at a time of expanding American international presence. Japan was hesitantly defining its global role, and Nagasaki was one of the country's few ports open to foreign ships. Temporary marriages for foreign sailors were not unusual. While other time periods have been used in various productions, the issues of East/West cultural conflict as they existed in 1900 cannot be easily ignored in this opera, no matter when it's set.

The Music

Puccini achieved a new level of sophistication with his use of the orchestra in this opera, with subtle colorings and sonorities throughout the score. The chorus is similarly effective and imaginative, though used very sparingly, notably in the entrance of the relatives in Act I and the unforgettable and enigmatic Humming Chorus in Act II. The opera, however, rests squarely on the performer singing the title role as in few other works: she is on stage for most of the time and is the only character that experiences true (and tragic) development. The soprano who sings this role, among the most difficult in the repertory, must convey an astounding array of emotions and characteristics, from ethereal (her entrance) to fleshly (the Act I love duet) to intelligent and stinging (her Act II dealings with other Japanese characters) to dreamy-bordering-on-insane (the famous aria “Un bel di”) to resigned in the final scene. The vocal abilities needed to animate this complex character are virtually unique in opera.

Met History

Madama Butterfly had its Met and U.S. premieres in 1907 in grand fashion, with Puccini in the audience and Enrico Caruso and Geraldine Farrar in the lead roles. Puccini always maintained that Farrar’s voice was too small for the part, yet she sang it here to great audience approval 139 times over the next 15 years. In 1922, Joseph Urban designed a production that lasted for 36 years. Temporarily off the boards during World War II, *Madama Butterfly* returned to the Met stage in 1946 and was served well by Licia Albanese (72 performances) and Dorothy Kirsten (68 performances) for the following decade and a half. In a 1958 production (with Antonietta Stella in the title role), director and designer Yoshio Aoyama and Motohiro Nagasaka famously dispensed with the holes in the rice-paper walls that were specified in the libretto for Act II, calling that touch “wholly un-Japanese.” This production showcased such stars as Renata Tebaldi, Renata Scotto (debut, 1965), Teresa Stratas, Pilar Lorengar, Martina Arroyo, Raina Kabaivanska, Leontyne Price, and Diana Soviero. A new staging by Giancarlo del Monaco opened in 1994, featuring Catherine Malfitano as the title heroine. The current production by Anthony Minghella opened the Met’s 2006–07 season with James Levine conducting Cristina Gallardo-Domâs and Marcello Giordani in the leading roles.

What Is Bunraku Puppetry?

Western audiences are accustomed to seeing puppets used in the spirit of provocative comedy (à la Charlie McCarthy or Punch and Judy) or as homespun, educational entertainment for children (Pinocchio, the Muppets). The puppets featured in the Met's *Madama Butterfly*, on the other hand, have been inspired by Japanese Bunraku puppetry, a serious and sophisticated theatrical art form born in 17th-century Osaka. Most traditional Bunraku plays feature historical storylines and address the common Japanese theme of conflict between social obligation and human emotion. Puppeteers go through lengthy apprenticeships to master the form, which could account for the gradual waning of its popularity. There are still a number of practitioners today in Japan, however, and in the West, Mark Down and Nick Barnes, the founders of Blind Summit Theatre, also take inspiration from this tradition for their puppet-theater presentations. For Anthony Minghella's staging of *Butterfly*, they created Bunraku-style puppets to represent Cio-Cio-San's child and, in a dream sequence, Butterfly herself.



Generally one-half to two-thirds life size, a Bunraku puppet has no strings and is operated by three highly trained puppeteers, each responsible for a different body part and discreetly visible to the audience. —Charles Sheek

Program Note

As soon as Puccini recovered from the stressful world premiere of *Tosca* in 1900 (the worries included a bomb scare at the Rome Opera), he began thinking about a new opera. He looked to works by Zola and Dostoyevsky, considering the latter's *From the House of the Dead*, which was later set by Janáček. Though sometimes linked with the verismo, or realist, composers Mascagni, Leoncavallo, and Giordano, Puccini was more interested in an "extended" realism: stories steeped in the details of ordinary life but with a strong guiding theme and an accumulating dramatic thrust. It's a long way from Dostoyevsky to David Belasco, but it was the latter who provided Puccini with the source for his next opera.

In the summer of 1900, in London, Puccini saw the American playwright and director's *Madame Butterfly*. He went backstage and begged for the rights. "I agreed at once," Belasco wrote, "[though] it is not possible to discuss business arrangements with an impulsive Italian who has tears in his eyes and both arms around your neck."

Belasco was born in San Francisco to a Jewish Portuguese family. As a child, he ran away to join the circus, ended up on Broadway, and became the Steven Spielberg of his time. He used a remarkable facility with stage effects to dress up his plays—most of them derivative, some of them plagiarized. Belasco invented a remarkable series of lighting and scrim effects, which later would be called "montage" and become basic to the way stories are told in films. Puccini instinctively grasped the emotional power of the story of *Butterfly* and its suitability to his musical gifts. The themes of the one-act *Madame Butterfly*—cultural conflict, impossible love, the connection between forbidden love and death, the inevitable dislocation as modern internationalism sweeps away "traditional values"—remain remarkably potent and contemporary. Such prescience was perhaps as much a part of Puccini's genius as anything else.

Belasco (who would inspire Puccini again with *The Girl of the Golden West*) based his play on a short story by John Luther Long, a lawyer from Philadelphia, who had gotten the idea from his sister, who married a missionary and lived in Japan. Her husband converted a geisha to Christianity. Later, the geisha tried to commit hara-kiri when her American husband deserted her, but she was dissuaded.

In the story, the young girl called Butterfly does indeed kill herself, by inserting a knife between the nerves in the back of her neck—evidently painless and not very bloody; Belasco changed this to the gruesome self-disembowelment one usually sees. In the Met's current production, director Anthony Minghella has chosen to use the original method, for which he has staged a simple but striking image. Criticized by the genteel for its poor taste, the scene gave Puccini what he always needed: an overwhelming final image. (His failure to find one in *Turandot* impeded his finishing that opera.)

The challenge of developing *Butterfly* into an effective full-length opera was building to that final scene with details that accumulate rather than distract. Wrestling with this were librettists Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa, who looked to the novel *Madame Chrysanthème* by French writer Pierre Loti for additional material. To portray Japanese culture, Illica and Giacosa raided Loti for a range of characters, including a drunken uncle (who got his own theme) and the monstrous little son of Butterfly's cousin.

This approach raised questions among Puccini's associates. Was the incident-filled first act too long? More crucially, where would they find an Italian tenor who wanted to play a part as unsympathetic as Pinkerton? In the opera's first version, he didn't even have an aria.

Work was delayed when Puccini had a serious car accident. His broken leg failed to heal and the composer was diagnosed with diabetes. He never entirely recovered, walking with a limp for the rest of his life.

Madama Butterfly was given its world premiere at La Scala on February 17, 1904. It was one of the greatest scandals in the history of opera. Ricordi, Puccini's publisher, described how the opera was greeted by "roars, laughter, howls, bellowing, and guffaws." The noise began immediately and virtually none of the music was heard, not unlike the debacle suffered in 1913 in Paris by Igor Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du Printemps*.

Puccini was the victim of intrigue and also of a crowd that fell into a lynch-mob dynamic. Rosina Storchio, the first Butterfly, had trouble managing her kimono, which billowed up at one point. "She's pregnant again!" someone shouted from the audience. "By Toscanini!" someone answered, eager to show he was in on the backstage gossip (true, in fact) about the soprano and the famous conductor. When she said her child's name was "Dolore" ("trouble"), the battle was truly lost. One of the headlines following this premiere sums it up: "*Butterfly*, Diabetic Opera, Result of an Accident." The opera was taken off the boards after one performance. A shattered Puccini covered La Scala's costs.

With Ricordi's encouragement, Puccini and his collaborators set about revising the score. They softened Pinkerton's character, making him slightly less offensive and, most importantly (for tenors), giving him an aria ("Addio, fiorito asil"). Kate was reduced to little more than a walk-on. Much of the "local color" that had bogged down Act I was cut.

The opera's second premiere, at Brescia on May 28, 1904, was a triumph. It was also a runaway success in Buenos Aires that same year, with Storchio singing and Toscanini conducting. Puccini made further changes for Covent Garden in 1905, when Caruso sang his first Pinkerton. There were even more changes for the Paris premiere in 1906. It is this version that is most widely performed.

In *Butterfly*, Puccini's musical dramaturgy centers on contrasting "Eastern" and "Western" sounds. His method was to utilize native Japanese music,

including the Japanese national anthem, as well as Asian orchestral sounds like bells, gongs, and high woodwinds. The combination immediately creates an utterly concrete and convincing ambience. With the utmost delicacy and imagination, Puccini invented melodies in “Japanese” style, so that the lyrical expansion essential in opera can occur without contradicting that precise color. Butterfly’s famous entrance in Act I is the first of many examples. Puccini moves effortlessly and with seeming inevitability from Eastern to Western styles (including a use of our own “Star-Spangled Banner”). Butterfly, thinking herself an American in Act II, uses some Western gestures in her famous aria, “Un bel dì.” But a striking whole-tone phrase on the words “I’ll see him climb up the hill,” which sounds consistent with a Western melos, is hurled back at us at the very end of the opera. As Butterfly lies dying, Pinkerton does indeed climb the hill one final time—to take their child. The phrase, now sounding distinctly “Asian,” is thundered out rapidly in unison by harsh brass.

Puccini uses many harmonic devices that were cutting-edge at the time, at least in the commercial medium of opera. One of the most effective is the *ostinato*—the obsessive repeating of a note or rhythm. As Butterfly answers Sharpless’s question in Act II—“What will you do if Pinkerton doesn’t return?”—the insistence of two clarinets in *ostinato* is like a beating heart. When Sharpless encourages her to forget Pinkerton, a pedal-point D in the harp turns the heartbeat into a death knell. The crushing terror the 18-year-old Butterfly feels at this dreaded eventuality is heart-stoppingly dramatized and leads in turn to the staggering eruption as she reveals her son by Pinkerton.

There is nothing doctrinaire in Puccini’s advanced harmony (unmatched by any of his Italian contemporaries); perhaps that’s why he has gotten so little credit for it. But in the theater, what matters is the use made of these techniques, and there have been very few opera composers as skillful as Puccini. There are two remarkable uses of the added sixth in *Butterfly*. The first is the quiet final chord of Act I—the lack of a clear harmonic resolution sinks into our consciousness like a dangerous hint. The thunderous final chord, which adds the note G to a B-minor chord, not only is shocking as a conclusion to the drama, but brilliantly suggests that the tragedy will continue, as Butterfly’s young son faces likely ostracism and bigotry in turn-of-the-century America.

Butterfly has all the earmarks of what critics hated in Puccini. It is full of instantly memorable melodies; its writing unabashedly and continually goes for the jugular; and, worst of all, it is overwhelmingly effective. There are few other stage works of any description that are as sure-fire.

—Albert Innaurato

Stream Hundreds of Met Performances on Your Favorite Devices



Free Apps for Android™, iPad®, Roku®, and Samsung Smart TV Available!

Met Opera on Demand delivers instant and unlimited online access to more than 550 full-length Met performances—including more than 90 stunning high-definition presentations from the award-winning *Live in HD* series, along with classic telecasts and radio broadcasts spanning from 1935 to 2015.



Experience these extraordinary Met performances on your TV, tablet, smartphone, or computer. Download the apps for free, and visit the Met website to subscribe or sign up for a free 7-day trial.

metoperaondemand.org



Photo: Marty Sohl/Metropolitan Opera
Apple, the Apple logo, and iPad are trademarks of Apple Inc., registered in the U.S. and other countries. App Store is a service mark of Apple Inc. Android is trademark of Google Inc. ROKU is a registered trademark of Roku, Inc. in the United States and other countries.



Karel Mark Chichon

CONDUCTOR (GIBRALTAR)

THIS SEASON *Madama Butterfly* for his debut at the Met and in concert at Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, 12 weeks of concerts with the Deutsche Radio Philharmonie, and guest appearances in Berlin and Geneva.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He is Chief Conductor of the Deutsche Radio Philharmonie, former Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra, and former Chief Conductor of the Graz Symphony Orchestra. He regularly conducts at the Vienna State Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Munich's Bavarian State Opera, Teatro dell'Opera di Roma, Teatro Comunale di Bologna, Teatro Real Madrid, Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceu, and with orchestras such as the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, English Chamber Orchestra, and Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra. From 2006 to 2010, he was Music Director of the "Christmas in Vienna" concerts held yearly at Vienna's Konzerthaus and broadcast to millions of TV viewers.



Kristine Opolais

SOPRANO (RIGA, LATVIA)

THIS SEASON The title role of *Manon Lescaut* and Cio-Cio-San in *Madama Butterfly* at the Met, as well as Margherita and Helen of Troy in Boito's *Mefistofele* and Rachel in Halévy's *La Juive* at the Bavarian State Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Mimì in *La Bohème* and Magda in *La Rondine* (debut, 2013).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Cio-Cio-San, the title role of *Tosca*, and Manon Lescaut at Covent Garden; Vitellia in *La Clemenza di Tito*, Manon Lescaut, Tatiana in *Eugene Onegin*, Cio-Cio-San, Amelia in *Simon Boccanegra*, and the title role of *Rusalka* at the Bavarian State Opera; Mimì at the Vienna State Opera and Berlin's Deutsche Staatsoper; *Rusalka* at the Paris Opera; the title role of *Jenůfa* in Zurich; and Nedda in *Pagliacci* at La Scala. In her hometown of Riga, she has sung Katerina Ismailova in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, Violetta in *La Traviata*, Lisa in *The Queen of Spades*, and the title role of *Aida*.



Maria Zifchak

MEZZO-SOPRANO (SMITHTOWN, NEW YORK)

THIS SEASON Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly*, Jane Kennedy (Anna) in *Maria Stuarda*, Giovanna in *Rigoletto*, and Ines in *Il Trovatore* at the Met.

MET APPEARANCES Nearly 400 performances of more than 35 roles, including Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*, Meg Page in *Falstaff*, Enrichetta in *I Puritani*, Bersi in *Andrea Chénier*, Magdalene in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Brian's Mother in *Two Boys*, Kasturbai in *Satyagraha*, and Kate Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* (debut, 2000).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Suzuki with Dallas Opera, New Orleans Opera, and Opera Philadelphia; Mrs. Grose in Britten's *The Turn of the Screw* and Bianca in *The Rape of Lucretia* with Central City Opera; Effie Belle Tate in Floyd's *Cold Sassy Tree* with Atlanta Opera; Adalgisa in *Norma* in Bogotá; Dorabella with the Seattle Opera and Arizona Opera; the Composer in *Ariadne auf Naxos* with Opera North; Angelina in *La Cenerentola* with Utah Festival Opera; and Geneviève in *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Herodias in *Salome*, and both Gertrud and the Witch in *Hansel and Gretel* with Opera Theatre of St. Louis. She was a winner of the Met's 1998 National Council Auditions.



Dwayne Croft

BARITONE (COOPERSTOWN, NEW YORK)

THIS SEASON Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* and Ping in *Turandot* at the Met.

MET APPEARANCES Thirty-six roles and more than 500 performances including Nick Carraway in the world premiere of John Harbison's *The Great Gatsby*, Marcello in *La Bohème*, Figaro and Fiorello (debut, 1990) in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Escamillo in *Carmen*, Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, the title role in *Billy Budd*, Pelléas in *Pelléas et Mélisande*, and de Brétigny in *Manon*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Walt Whitman in the world premiere of *Oscar* at the Santa Fe Opera, Escamillo with the Los Angeles Opera and Dallas Opera, Malatesta in *Don Pasquale* with Washington National Opera, and Jack Rance in *La Fanciulla del West* with the Finnish National Opera. He has also sung Germont in *La Traviata* with the San Francisco Opera, Marcello with the Dallas Opera, Count Almaviva and Figaro with the Vienna State Opera, Eugene Onegin and Sharpless at the Paris Opera, and Jaufré Rudel in the world premiere of Saariaho's *L'Amour de Loin* and Count Almaviva at the Salzburg Festival.



Roberto De Biasio

TENOR (SIRACUSA, SICILY)

THIS SEASON Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* at the Met, Ismaele in *Nabucco* in Barcelona, Alfredo in *La Traviata* in Strasbourg, Francesco Foscari in *I Due Foscari* at Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, and Don José in *Carmen* in Palermo.

MET APPEARANCES Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*, the title role in *Ernani*, and Gabriele Adorno in *Simon Boccanegra* (debut, 2011)

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Rodolfo in *Luisa Miller* at Paris's Opéra Bastille, Gabriele Adorno at the Vienna State Opera, Macduff in *Macbeth* in Bologna, Alfredo in Montreal and São Paulo, Foresto in *Attila* at Parma's Teatro Regio, Alfredo at Venice's La Fenice, and Pollione in a concert version of *Norma* at Tanglewood with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Since making his professional debut in 2006 as Edgardo at Bergamo's Teatro Donizetti, he has also been heard in leading roles in Tokyo, Seoul, Beijing, Zurich, and Modena.