

GIACOMO PUCCINI

MANON LESCAUT

CONDUCTOR
Fabio Luisi

PRODUCTION
Sir Richard Eyre

SET DESIGNER
Rob Howell

COSTUME DESIGNER
Fotini Dimou

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Peter Mumford

CHOREOGRAPHER
Sara Erde

GENERAL MANAGER
Peter Gelb

MUSIC DIRECTOR
James Levine

PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR
Fabio Luisi

Opera in four acts

Libretto by Domenico Oliva, Marco Praga,
Luigi Illica, and others, based on the
novel *L'Histoire du Chevalier des Grieux
et de Manon Lescaut* by Abbé Prévost

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

7:30–10:40PM

New Production

The production of *Manon Lescaut* was
made possible by a generous gift from
Helen and Bengt Agerup and Rolex

Co-production of the Metropolitan Opera and
the Festival Hall Baden-Baden

The Metropolitan Opera

2015–16 SEASON

The 219th Metropolitan Opera performance of

GIACOMO PUCCINI'S

MANON LESCAUT

CONDUCTOR

Fabio Luisi

IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

EDMONDO

Zach Borichevsky

CHEVALIER DES GRIEUX

Roberto Alagna

LESCAUT, MANON'S BROTHER

Massimo Cavalletti

A HOTEL MANAGER

Philip Cokorinos

GERONTE DE RAVOIR

Brindley Sherratt

MANON LESCANT

Kristine Opolais

A MUSICIAN

Virginie Verrez*

MADRIGAL SINGERS

Maria D'Amato

Christina Thomson

Anderson

Stephanie Chigas

Rosalie Sullivan

DANCING MASTER

Scott Scully

SOLO DANCER

Martin Harvey

A SERGEANT

Brandon Cedel*

A STREET SWEEPER

Andrew Bidlack

A SEA CAPTAIN

Richard Bernstein

This performance
is being broadcast
live on Metropolitan
Opera Radio on
SiriusXM channel 74.

Wednesday, February 24, 2016, 7:30–10:40PM



Kristine Opolais
and Roberto Alagna
in a scene from
Puccini's *Manon
Lescaut*

Chorus Master **Donald Palumbo**
Musical Preparation **Joan Dornemann, Robert Morrison,
Lydia Brown, Bryan Wagorn, and Sesto Quatrini**
Assistant Stage Directors **J. Knighten Smit and Paula Williams**
Prompter **Joan Dornemann**
Italian Coach **Loretta Di Franco**
Met Titles **J. D. McClatchy**
Assistant Costume Designer **Irene Bohan**
Assistant Scenic Designer, Properties **Scott Laule**
Scenery, properties, and electrical props constructed
and painted by **Hertzler GmbH, Berlin; Metropolitan
Opera Shops; and Festival Hall Baden-Baden**
Costumes executed by **Metropolitan Opera Costume
Department; Das Gewand GmbH, Düsseldorf; and
Scafati Theatrical Tailors, New York**
Wigs and Makeup executed by **Metropolitan Opera
Wig and Makeup Department**

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The Met
ropolitan
Opera

2015-16 SEASON

Aleksandrs Antonenko as Otello

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Synopsis

France, the 1940s

Act I

A square in Amiens. Edmondo, a songwriter, and his student companions flirt with some factory girls. His friend, des Grieux, also a student, stays apart from them. A train arrives, bringing Geronte, a tax collector, and Lescaut, a soldier, who is accompanying his younger sister, Manon. Des Grieux falls in love with her at first sight, finds out that her father is sending her to a convent, and makes plans to prevent this happening. But Geronte, with Lescaut's connivance, intends to abduct Manon. Edmondo overhears his plans and warns des Grieux, who escapes with Manon to Paris. Lescaut consoles Geronte by telling him that Manon will not stay long with a student and that he will bring her back to him.

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 8:05 PM)

Act II

A house in Paris. Manon has left des Grieux and is living a life of luxury with Geronte. She's bored, and her brother promises to arrange for des Grieux to visit her. Some singers serenade Manon with a madrigal written by Geronte. Then she dances and sings for him and his friends. When they leave, she tells Geronte that she will follow shortly, but des Grieux appears, and Manon starts to seduce him. Geronte interrupts their lovemaking, chillingly threatens the two of them, and leaves, telling them he will return soon. Lescaut runs in, warning the lovers that Geronte is going to have Manon arrested and that she must escape. She delays, trying to collect her jewelry, but is arrested before she can get away.

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 9:15 PM)

Intermezzo

Imprisonment: The journey to Le Havre. The thoughts of des Grieux.

Act III

Outside a prison in Le Havre by the harbor. Dawn. Des Grieux waits outside the prison where Manon is held. Lescaut bribes a sentry to allow his sister to spend time with des Grieux while he organizes a group to enable her escape. The effort fails, and a shot is fired. Townspeople run in. The soldiers restore order, and the captain of the ship processes Manon and the other prisoners—mostly prostitutes—before they are deported. In desperation, des Grieux grabs Lescaut's weapon and threatens the captain, who faces him down. Des Grieux pleads with the captain to be allowed to sail with them as one of the crew.

Act IV

A wasteland. Des Grieux and Manon are on the run. They are at the end of their strength, collapsing from thirst and exhaustion. Des Grieux leaves Manon, searching for water. When he returns, he finds her dying. In her last breath, she says she loves him.

Giacomo Puccini

Manon Lescaut

Premiere: Teatro Regio, Turin, 1893

Few operas, if any, have surpassed *Manon Lescaut* in the depiction of the urgency of young love—perhaps not even Puccini’s next stage work, *La Bohème*. The French tale of a beautiful young woman destroyed by her conflicting needs for love and luxury had already inspired Jules Massenet’s *Manon* (1884), which was a relatively new and immensely popular work at the time of *Manon Lescaut*’s premiere. Puccini was as yet almost unknown (*Manon Lescaut* would change that), and the idea of taking on an established composer like Massenet was considered folly. The two operas, however, are so different in tone that each stands on its own. Puccini infused the story with a new level of frank emotion and a flood of melody. He made the story, in a word, Italian and created the first of his many archetypal heroines who continue to captivate audiences today.

The Creators

Giacomo Puccini (1858–1924) was immensely popular in his own lifetime, and his mature works remain staples in the repertory of most of the world’s opera companies. His operas are celebrated for their mastery of detail, sensitivity to everyday subjects, copious melody, and economy of expression. *Manon Lescaut* was his first great success, ensuring his international status and leading George Bernard Shaw to name him “the successor to Verdi.” Writing the libretto for *Manon Lescaut* was a laborious process: Domenico Oliva (1860–1917), a journalist and sometime politician, and novelist and playwright Marco Praga (1862–1929) provided much of the raw material. Puccini then turned to playwright Giuseppe Giacosa (1847–1906) and poet Luigi Illica (1857–1919) for revisions. These two would later collaborate with Puccini on his three most successful operas, *La Bohème*, *Tosca*, and *Madama Butterfly*. Fellow (and eventual rival) composer Ruggero Leoncavallo (1857–1919) worked on the libretto at various points, and even Puccini’s publisher Giulio Ricordi (1840–1912) provided key tweaks. The source material was a novel by the colorful Abbé Prévost (1697–1763), *L’Histoire du Chevalier des Grieux et de Manon Lescaut* (1731).

The Setting

The first three acts of the opera take place in various locations in France: the first in the town of Amiens, the second in a magnificent house in Paris, and the third on the waterfront of the port city of Le Havre. The fourth act is set in a desolate location in the New World, an imaginary place described in the libretto as “a

vast desert near the outskirts of New Orleans.” The libretto originally places the action in the second half of the 18th century. The Met’s new production sets the opera in German-occupied France in the 1940s.

The Music

The work that thrust Puccini onto the international stage as Italy’s foremost opera composer, *Manon Lescaut* is built on lessons learned from Richard Wagner, translated into a thoroughly Italian, full-blooded thrill ride. The orchestra plays a prominent role in propelling the action—the waves of sound during the powerful Act II love duet are among the most blatantly erotic in opera. The tenor’s entrance aria, “Tra voi, belle,” is a pleasant, bouncy tune appropriate to the youth’s frivolous outlook on love. Shortly after, when he has met the woman whose love transforms him, he sings the meatier “Donna non vidi mai.” The fullest expression of his growth occurs at the end of Act III in a brief but explosive cry of despair. Similarly, the title character grows from a bored and pouty youth in Act II’s elegant and self-pitying “In quelle trine morbide” into a fully realized adult facing untimely death in Act IV’s shatteringly dramatic “Sola, perduta, abbandonata.” The use of the chorus in Act III is one of the most striking moments in this opera. The tone is hypnotic, persistent, rolling like the ship that awaits the prisoners, and pulsating like a sad mockery of the earlier love duet.

Met History

Manon Lescaut premiered at the Met in 1907, with Lina Cavalieri and Enrico Caruso in the leading roles. Puccini was in the audience, on his first trip to New York. The Met also gave the Paris premiere of the opera on tour in 1910, with Arturo Toscanini conducting Caruso and the Spanish diva Lucrezia Bori in her first appearance with the company. More revivals through the 1920s followed, with New Zealand soprano Frances Alda taking on the title role opposite Beniamino Gigli. The opera fell out of the repertory in 1930 until a historic 1949 revival with Dorothy Kirsten and Jussi Björling. The following years saw notable performances of the title role from Licia Albanese (1949–1966), Renata Tebaldi (1958–1968), and Mirella Freni (1984–1990). Richard Tucker sang des Grieux between 1949 and 1968. A new staging in 1980, by Gian Carlo Menotti, featured James Levine conducting Renata Scotto and Plácido Domingo. It was most recently revived in 2008 with Karita Mattila and Marcello Giordani. Richard Eyre’s new production opened February 12, 2016, with Kristine Opolais in the title role, Roberto Alagna as des Grieux, and Fabio Luisi on the podium.

Program Note

Following the world premiere of *Manon Lescaut* on February 1, 1893, the chorus of critical praise included the observation that, with his new opera, “Puccini stands revealed for what he is: one of the strongest, if not the strongest, of the young Italian opera composers.”

It was a moment of unparalleled excitement and tension in Puccini’s career. The 34-year-old composer’s artistic future hinged on the success of *Manon Lescaut*. Although he had gained prominent and influential supporters, Puccini had written only one full-scale opera to date: the *Tannhäuser*-scented *Edgar* (1888), a concoction set in the Middle Ages that failed to impress on its first outing, when it closed after a mere three performances. Prior to that had come *Le Villi* (1883), an “opera-ballet” that set the legend familiar from the ballet *Giselle*. *Le Villi* lost the one-act opera competition to which it was submitted in 1883, but it did win the admiration of Giulio Ricordi—the mighty music publisher and legendary champion of Verdi—who signed the ambitious young Puccini and began commissioning him to write operas.

With *Manon Lescaut*, Puccini needed to prove that he could live up to the promise invested in him. Yet by the time of its premiere, the sensational triumph of *Cavalleria Rusticana* (in 1890) by Pietro Mascagni, Puccini’s younger classmate at the Milan Conservatory, heralded the gritty, fast-paced aesthetic of verismo as the fashionable way forward. Mascagni seemed to have found a viable answer to the fundamental question—whither Italian opera?—that had been hanging over Puccini and his peers ever since they embarked on their careers in the last decades of the 19th century.

The tension was between a vision of opera centered on traditional Italianate qualities of the primacy of the voice and melody, and a vision of a more tightly integrated *dramma per musica*—reflecting the increasingly powerful influence of Wagner—in which the orchestra should play a more prominent role and the musical components should be linked more seamlessly. What Puccini achieved with *Manon Lescaut*, and demonstrated as another possible path forward to his doubters, went well beyond enjoying the first undiluted triumph of his career—a triumph that made his name internationally. (Indeed, no subsequent Puccini opera met with such combined critical and popular acclaim at its premiere.) More fundamentally, he arrived at a synthesis of influences from Wagner and Verdi, but one unmistakably rooted in the aesthetic values of the Italian opera tradition. Much of the excitement and passion that fuel *Manon Lescaut*’s music derives from the sense that Puccini is beginning to discover his full powers here.

When *Manon Lescaut* was produced at Covent Garden in 1894, George Bernard Shaw—then employed as a music critic—declared, “Puccini looks to me more like the heir of Verdi than any of his rivals.” That claim—to be the legitimate successor to Verdi—had indeed been the real prize Puccini coveted and the image for which Ricordi had been grooming his young protégé. It was

certainly no coincidence that Ricordi orchestrated the premiere of *Falstaff* (at La Scala) to occur a week after that of *Manon Lescaut*, which was secured for the Teatro Regio in Turin. Even more, the publisher encouraged companies (by means of a huge discount) to rent *Falstaff* contingent on also producing Puccini's new opera.

Puccini was convinced that with *Edgar* his efforts had been hamstrung by a defective libretto. Following the sour experience of that collaboration, he determined to play an active part in shaping *Manon Lescaut*'s libretto, beginning a pattern of interventionism (and resulting strife) with his librettists that he would follow from that point on. Ricordi, an inveterate artistic matchmaker who had shepherded the productive pairing of the "retired" Verdi with Arrigo Boito, wanted to encourage a partnership between his young composer and the distinguished playwright Giuseppe Giacosa, but Puccini was uninterested in the original story, set in Russia, that Giacosa began working on. Ricordi in turn tried in vain to dissuade Puccini from his sudden enthusiasm for taking up *Manon Lescaut* because of the popularity and hence potential rivalry of *Manon*, Jules Massenet's French opera of 1884 based on the same source. The riposte attributed to Puccini is often quoted: "Why shouldn't there be two operas about her? A woman like Manon can have more than one lover."

It's not surprising that he recognized so much potential in the source, *L'Histoire du Chevalier des Grieux et de Manon Lescaut*, a scandalous and hugely popular novel published in 1731 by the Abbé Prévost (1697–1763), who spent part of his life as a priest and Benedictine monk. The motivating force of Eros in this material, mixed with Puccini's recent, excited discoveries of Wagner, promised a potent musico-dramatic synergy. To stimulate the composer's imagination from another direction, Ricordi had paid for Puccini to make several pilgrimages in the 1880s to the new Wagnerian temple in Bayreuth; one mission was to observe the production of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, since Ricordi's house had acquired the rights in Italy and was looking ahead to the Italian premiere.

Nowhere in Puccini's operas is the influence of Wagner more palpable than in *Manon Lescaut*: in his distinctive adaptation of the leitmotif technique, his harmonic language (in the Intermezzo between the second and third acts in particular), and in both the fevered passion and desperation of the love music, with its echoes of *Tristan und Isolde*. Puccini was convinced that he had something fresh to say with this material: Massenet, he told one of his librettists working on the project, "feels it as a Frenchman, with powder and minuets. I will feel it as an Italian, with desperate passion."

Manon Lescaut underwent a remarkably complicated genesis of several years, though Puccini would later say that it was "the only one of my operas that never caused me any worry." Initially, a librettist team was put together comprising Marco Praga, who had written a successful play for the actress

Eleanora Duse (though he had no opera experience), and the poet Domenico Oliva. Puccini insisted on micro-managing their work, continually changing his mind and demanding rewrites, and he eventually alienated Praga. Ricordi then gingerly asked Giacosa to consult (although the playwright's original idea for a collaboration had been rejected by Puccini) and even enlisted help from Ruggero Leoncavallo, the composer and librettist of *Pagliacci*. At a later stage, the writer Luigi Illica was brought on board to rework the libretto-in-progress.

Manon Lescaut thus marks the first time Puccini worked on an opera with both Giacosa and Illica, the team that would be responsible for the libretti for his three biggest hits (*La Bohème*, *Tosca*, and *Madama Butterfly*). Even Puccini and Ricordi crafted some verses for the final libretto; in the end, so many contributions had gone into and been dropped from the heavily rewritten text that it was decided to list no one as the libretto's official authors.

One key challenge any staging of *Manon Lescaut* faces is to make theatrical sense of the abrupt transitions from one act to the next, each of which calls for a striking change of setting. The desert of the last act, remarks Richard Eyre, the director of the Met's new production, evokes "a metaphorical desert, a world of desolation." Also crucial to any interpretation is how to make psychological and emotional sense of the glaring inconsistencies of the title character. While all the others revolve around and react to Manon, she herself is the most contradictory and mutable of Puccini's creations—as well as the first in the gallery of his unforgettable heroines.

Each of the four acts presents Manon in a different light as we witness her suddenly shift—rather than develop—from an unsophisticated country girl who is ready to be swept away by true love and who becomes "dazzled by the big city," as Eyre puts it. Manon's subsequent incarnations show her as a pleasure-addicted courtesan, a degraded outcast, and, finally and too late, a tragically aware woman. It is precisely in this extended scene—a scene essentially lacking in external action—that Puccini lavishes his powerful technique of musical reminiscence. Motifs heard earlier in the opera come back in painful replay as Manon assesses what has brought her to this extremity.

At this point, Puccini has taken us furthest from where the love between Manon and des Grieux started: the "new enchantment" the Chevalier promised in his first duet with Manon has become inescapable nightmare. All of the social contexts presented with considerable musico-dramatic detail up until now vanish in the final act. In this impossible landscape, Manon cries out that she has come to understand at last a love that "will not die," expiring in a Liebestod that offers no comforting transcendence. Love at the breaking point: portraying this, Puccini found the inspiration for an intensity of expression that set the course of his entire career.

—Thomas May

The Cast and Creative Team



Fabio Luisi

CONDUCTOR (GENOA, ITALY)

THIS SEASON *Manon Lescaut*, *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci*, and *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the Met; *Wozzeck*, *I Puritani*, *Falstaff*, *Die Zauberflöte*, and *Tosca* at the Zurich Opera; *L'Elisir d'Amore* at La Scala; Reimann's *Lear* at the Paris Opera; and concerts in

Europe and the U.S.

MET APPEARANCES *Macbeth*, *The Merry Widow*, *La Cenerentola*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Un Ballo in Maschera*, *Les Troyens*, *Aida*, *Don Giovanni*, *Manon*, *La Traviata*, *Elektra*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *Tosca*, *Lulu*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Die Ägyptische Helena*, *Turandot*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Rigoletto*, *Don Carlo* (debut, 2005), and Wagner's *Ring* cycle.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He is Principal Conductor of the Met, General Music Director of the Zurich Opera, Principal Conductor Designate of the Danish National Symphony Orchestra (taking up that position in 2017), Music Director Designate of the Opera di Firenze (taking up that position in 2018), and former Chief Conductor of the Vienna Symphony. He made his La Scala debut in 2011 with *Manon*, his Salzburg Festival debut in 2003 leading Strauss's *Die Liebe der Danae*, and his American debut with the Lyric Opera of Chicago leading *Rigoletto*. He also appears regularly with the Vienna State Opera, Munich's Bavarian State Opera, and Berlin's Deutsche Oper and Staatsoper.



Sir Richard Eyre

DIRECTOR (DEVON, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON *Manon Lescaut* at the Met.

MET PRODUCTIONS *Carmen* (debut, 2009), *Werther*, and *Le Nozze di Figaro*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS His productions include *Mary Poppins*, *Racing Demon*, *Skylight*, *Amy's View*, *Vincent in Brixton*, *Private Lives*, and *The Crucible* on Broadway. He has directed *La Traviata* at Covent Garden; *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the Aix-en-Provence Festival; *Comedians*, *Guys and Dolls*, *The Beggar's Opera*, *The Government Inspector*, *The Voyage Inheritance*, *Hamlet*, *Richard III*, *King Lear*, *Night of the Iguana*, *Sweet Bird of Youth*, *John Gabriel Borkman*, and *The Invention of Love* for London's National Theatre; *The Pajama Game*, *Betty Blue Eyes*, *Quartermaine's Terms*, and *Mr. Foote's Other Leg* in London's West End; and his own adaptations of *Les Mains Sales*, *Hedda Gabler*, *Ghosts* (also at BAM), and *Little Eyolf* at the Almeida Theater. His films include *Tumbledown*, *Iris*, *Notes on a Scandal*, and *The Dresser*. He was director of London's National Theatre from 1988 to 1997 and has received numerous awards for his work in theater, television, and film. He was knighted in 1997. He has written four books and was made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in 2011.

The Cast and Creative Team CONTINUED



Rob Howell

SET DESIGNER (LONDON, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON *Manon Lescaut* at the Met.

MET PRODUCTIONS *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Werther*, and *Carmen* (debut, 2009).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has worked extensively with London's National Theatre and the Royal Shakespeare Company, as well as for theaters in London's West End and on Broadway. Opera credits include *The Turn of the Screw* for Welsh National Opera and *Sophie's Choice* for Covent Garden. He has received numerous Olivier Award and Tony Award nominations and has been awarded Olivier Awards for best set design in 2000 (*Troilus and Cressida*, *Vassa*, and *Richard III*) and 2006 (*Hedda Gabler*). In 2013, he won Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle, Olivier, and Tony Awards for *Matilda the Musical*. Additional Broadway credits include *Ghost the Musical*, *The Norman Conquests*, and *Boeing-Boeing*. Productions with director Richard Eyre include *The Observer*, *The Last Cigarette*, *The Reporter*, and *Hedda Gabler*.



Fotini Dimou

COSTUME DESIGNER (LONDON, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON *Manon Lescaut* for her debut at the Met.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS She designed the costumes for the same co-production of *Manon Lescaut* at the Festival Hall Baden-Baden in 2013 and has designed costumes for *Dido and Aeneas* at La Scala,

a production that was also mounted at Covent Garden. Most recently, she designed the costumes for *Der Fliegende Holländer* at Opera North in Leeds. She has also designed sets for *Eugene Onegin* at the English National Opera, *Šarlatán* at Ireland's Wexford Festival Opera, *Le Nozze di Figaro* at London's Hackney Empire, and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* for Scottish Opera. She regularly designs for modern dance, ballet, and theater, and has worked at the Royal Shakespeare Company for many years. She has also designed for film and television, including *The Browning Version*, *Ripley's Game*, *Skin*, *Second Sight*, *The Commander*, *Man and Boy*, and *The Dresser*, a film for BBC2 directed by Richard Eyre.



Peter Mumford

LIGHTING DESIGNER (LONDON, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON *Manon Lescaut* at the Met.

MET PRODUCTIONS *Werther*, *Carmen*, *Peter Grimes*, *Faust*, *Madama Butterfly* (debut, 2006), and the 125th Anniversary Gala.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent opera work includes *Andrea Chénier* at Opera North, *Kát'a Kabanová* at Boston Lyric Opera, *The Soldier's Tale* for the Chicago Symphony, *Eugene Onegin* at Los Angeles Opera and Covent Garden, and *The Midsummer Marriage* for Lyric Opera of Chicago. For Opera North, he has directed and

designed concert versions of Wagner's *Ring* cycle and *The Flying Dutchman*; the entire *Ring* cycle to be performed in 2016. Recent work in theater includes *Love and Information* for New York Theatre Workshop, *Ghosts* and *King Lear* at BAM, *King Kong* for Global Creatures/Australia, *The Seagull* on Broadway, *Cock* at New York's Duke Theater, *Drunk Enough to Say I Love You* for the Public Theater, and *A Christmas Carol*, *High Society*, and *Top Hat* in London's West End. Awards include 1995 and 2003 Olivier Awards, the 2010 Knight of Illumination Award, and the 2013 Helpmann Award for best lighting.



Sara Erde

CHOREOGRAPHER (NEW YORK, NEW YORK)

THIS SEASON Choreographer for *Manon Lescaut* and assistant stage director for *Rigoletto*, *Madama Butterfly*, and *La Donna del Lago* at the Met; choreographer for *Carmen* at Washington National Opera; associate director/choreographer for *Roméo et Juliette* in Atlanta; and choreographer for *Madama Butterfly* at Berkshire Opera Festival.

MET PRODUCTIONS Choreographer for *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Werther* (debut, 2014), assistant stage director for many productions, including *Don Carlo* and *Les Troyens*, and movement coach for *Carmen*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, and *La Traviata*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS She trained at New York's Ballet Hispanico with Tina Ramirez and has worked at the Met since 1996 in various capacities, including choreographer, assistant stage director, movement coach, and dancer. Recent engagements include choreographer for *Manon Lescaut* (Festival Hall Baden-Baden), associate director and choreographer for *Madama Butterfly* at Atlanta Opera, and associate director for *La Forza del Destino* at Washington National Opera. Her work has also been seen at the Public Theatre, Manhattan Theatre Club, Classic Stage Company, Quebec Opera, and Italy's Spoleto Festival, among others.



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*.



Roberto Alagna

TENOR (CLICHY-SOUS-BOIS, FRANCE)

THIS SEASON Des Grieux in *Manon Lescaut*, Canio in *Pagliacci*, and Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* at the Met; the title role of Meyerbeer's *Vasco da Gama* (the original version of *L'Africaine*) at Berlin's Deutsche Oper; Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore* at the Paris Opera; Cavaradossi in *Tosca* at the Vienna State Opera; and Eléazar in *La Juive* at Munich's Bavarian State Opera.

MET APPEARANCES The title roles of *Werther*, *Don Carlo*, and *Faust*, Don José in *Carmen*, Cavaradossi, Radamès in *Aida*, Ruggero in *La Rondine*, Turiddu in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, Rodolfo in *La Bohème* (debut, 1996), the Duke in *Rigoletto*, Nemorino, and Roméo in *Roméo et Juliette*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Rodrigue in Massenet's *Le Cid* and Lancelot in Chausson's *Le Roi Arthur* at the Paris Opera; the Condemned Man in David Alagna's *Le Dernier Jour d'un Condamné* in Avignon; Don José at the Vienna State Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, and Covent Garden; Cavaradossi at Covent Garden; Werther at the Paris Opera and in Bilbao; Aeneas in *Les Troyens* at the Deutsche Oper Berlin; and the title role of *Otello* in concert at Paris's Salle Pleyel.



Zach Borichevsky

TENOR (PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA)

THIS SEASON Edmondo in *Manon Lescaut* for his debut at the Met, Rodolfo in *La Bohème* at English National Opera, Anatol in *Vanessa* at Santa Fe Opera, and Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus* with Cincinnati Opera. In concert, he joins the Netherlands' Radio Philharmonic Orchestra as Lazarus in John Adams's *The Gospel According to the Other Mary* and sings in Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* with the Orquesta Sinfónica del Principado de Asturias in Spain.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Rodolfo at Finnish National Opera, Alfredo in *La Traviata* with the Glyndebourne Tour, Lensky in *Eugene Onegin* at Arizona Opera, Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* at Opera Carolina and Toledo Opera, Roméo in *Roméo et Juliette* at Teatro Municipal de Santiago de Chile, Matteo in *Arabella* at Santa Fe Opera, Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte* at Boston Lyric Opera, and Jonathan Dale in Kevin Puts's *Silent Night* at Opera Philadelphia.



Massimo Cavalletti

BARITONE (LUCCA, ITALY)

THIS SEASON Lescaut in *Manon Lescaut* at the Met, Ford in *Falstaff* at Tokyo's New National Theatre, Paolo Albiani in *Simon Boccanegra* at La Scala, Belcore in *L'Elisir d'Amore* at Sevilla's Teatro de la Maestranza, and Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* in Abu Dhabi.

MET APPEARANCES Escamillo in *Carmen*, and Schaunard (debut, 2010) and Marcello in *La Bohème*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has sung Marcello at Covent Garden, La Scala, the Salzburg Festival, and in Amsterdam, Valencia, and Zurich; Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Rodrigo in *Don Carlo* at La Scala; Paolo, Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Enrico, and Schaunard at La Scala; and Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Paolo, Escamillo, and Belcore with the Zurich Opera. Additional engagements include Escamillo in Barcelona, Riccardo in *I Puritani* in Florence, Jake Wallace in *La Fanciulla del West* at Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, and Enrico at Bologna's Teatro Comunale. He was a member of La Scala's Young Artists Program.



Brindley Sherratt

BASS (LANCASHIRE, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON Geronte in *Manon Lescaut* at the Met, Doctor in *Wozzeck* for his debut at Lyric Opera of Chicago, Arkel in *Pelléas et Mélisande* for his debut at the Zurich Opera, and Gremin in *Eugene Onegin* at Covent Garden.

MET APPEARANCES Trulove in *The Rake's Progress* (debut, 2015).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Sparafucile in *Rigoletto* at Covent Garden; Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* at the Vienna State Opera, Covent Garden, and the Dutch National Opera; Claggart in *Billy Budd* at the Glyndebourne Festival and Brooklyn Academy of Music; Gremin at Covent Garden; Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Aix-en-Provence Festival; Rocco in *Fidelio* at the Glyndebourne Festival; Balducci in *Benvenuto Cellini* at the Salzburg Festival; Pogner in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* with Welsh National Opera; King Philip in *Don Carlo* with Opera North; and Pimen in *Boris Godunov* and Fiesco in *Simon Boccanegra* at the English National Opera.

Facilities and Services

THE ARNOLD AND MARIE SCHWARTZ GALLERY MET

Art gallery located in the South Lobby featuring leading artists. Open Monday through Friday, 6pm through last intermission; Saturday, noon through last intermission of evening performances.



ASSISTIVE LISTENING SYSTEM AND BINOCULARS

Wireless headsets, which work with the FM assistive listening system to amplify sound, are available at the coat check station on the South Concourse Level before performances. Binoculars are also available for rental at the coat check station on the South Concourse level. The rental cost is \$5. A major credit card or driver's license is required as a deposit.



BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

Large print programs are available free of charge from the ushers. Braille synopses of many operas are available free of charge. Please contact an usher. Tickets for no-view score desk seats may be purchased by calling the Met Opera Guild at 212-769-7028.



BOX OFFICE

Monday–Saturday, 10am–8pm; Sunday, noon–6pm. The Box Office closes at 8pm on non-performance evenings or on evenings with no intermission. Box Office Information: 212-362-6000.

CHECK ROOM

On Concourse level (Founders Hall).

FIRST AID

Doctor in attendance during performances; contact an usher for assistance.

LECTURE SERIES

Opera-related courses, pre-performance lectures, master classes, and more are held throughout the performance season at the Opera Learning Center. For tickets and information, call 212-769-7028.

LOST AND FOUND

Security office at Stage Door. Monday–Friday, 2pm–4pm; 212-799-3100, ext. 2499.

MET OPERA SHOP

The Met Opera Shop is adjacent to the North Box Office, 212-580-4090. Open Monday–Saturday, 10am–final intermission; Sunday, noon–6pm.



PUBLIC TELEPHONES

Telephones with volume controls and TTY Public Telephone located in Founders Hall on the Concourse level.

RESTAURANT AND REFRESHMENT FACILITIES

The Grand Tier Restaurant features creative contemporary American cuisine, and the Revlon Bar offers panini, crostini, and a full service bar. Both are open two hours prior to the Met Opera curtain time to any Lincoln Center ticket holder for pre-curtain dining. Pre-ordered intermission dining is also available for Met ticket holders. For reservations call 212-799-3400.



RESTROOMS

Wheelchair-accessible restrooms are on the Dress Circle, Grand Tier, Parterre, and Founders Hall levels.

SEAT CUSHIONS

Available in the South Check Room. Major credit card or driver's license required for deposit.

SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

For information contact the Met Opera Guild Education Department, 212-769-7022.

SCORE-DESK TICKET PROGRAM

Tickets for score desk seats in the Family Circle boxes may be purchased by calling the Met Opera Guild at 212-769-7028. These no-view seats provide an affordable way for students to study an opera's score during a performance.

TOUR GUIDE SERVICE

Backstage tours of the Opera House are held during the Met season on most weekdays at 3:15pm, and on select Sundays at 10:30am and/or 1:30pm. For tickets and information, call 212-769-7028. Tours of Lincoln Center daily; call 212-875-5351 for availability.

WEBSITE

www.metopera.org



WHEELCHAIR ACCOMMODATIONS

Telephone 212-799-3100, ext. 2204. Wheelchair entrance at Concourse level.

The exits indicated by a red light and the sign nearest the seat you occupy are the shortest routes to the street. In the event of fire or other emergency, please do not run—walk to that exit.

In compliance with New York City Department of Health regulations, smoking is prohibited in all areas of this theater.

Patrons are reminded that in deference to the performing artists and the seated audience, those who leave the auditorium during the performance will not be readmitted while the performance is in progress.

The photographing or sound recording of any performance, or the possession of any device for such photographing or sound recording inside this theater, without the written permission of the management, is prohibited by law. Offenders may be ejected and liable for damages and other lawful remedies.

Use of cellular telephones and electronic devices for any purpose, including email and texting, is prohibited in the auditorium at all times. Be sure to turn off all devices before entering the auditorium.