

GEORGES BIZET

LES PÊCHEURS DE PERLES

The Pearl Fishers

CONDUCTOR

Gianandrea Noseda

PRODUCTION

Penny Woolcock

SET DESIGNER

Dick Bird

COSTUME DESIGNER

Kevin Pollard

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Jen Schriever

PROJECTION DESIGN

59 Productions

MOVEMENT DIRECTOR

Andrew Dawson

GENERAL MANAGER

Peter Gelb

MUSIC DIRECTOR

James Levine

PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR

Fabio Luisi

Opera in three acts

Libretto by Eugène Cormon and
Michel Carré

Saturday, January 23, 2016
8:00–10:35 PM

New Production

The production of *Les Pêcheurs de Perles*
was made possible by a generous gift
from the **Gramma Fisher Foundation,**
Marshalltown, Iowa

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The Annenberg Foundation; Mr. William R. Miller,
in memory of Irene D. Miller; and American Express

A co-production of the Metropolitan Opera and
English National Opera, originally created by
English National Opera

The Metropolitan Opera
2015–16 SEASON

The 11th Metropolitan Opera performance of

GEORGES BIZET'S

**LES PÊCHEURS
DE PERLES**

The Pearl Fishers

CONDUCTOR

Gianandrea Noseda

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

ZURGA, VILLAGE HEADMAN

Mariusz Kwiecien*

NADIR, A PEARL DIVER

Matthew Polenzani

LEÏLA, PRIESTESS OF BRAHMA

Diana Damrau

NOURABAD, HIGH PRIEST OF BRAHMA

Nicolas Testé

Saturday, January 23, 2016, 8:00–10:35PM



Matthew Polenzani
as Nadir and
Diana Damrau as
Leïla in Bizet's *Les
Pêcheurs de Perles*

Chorus Master **Donald Palumbo**
Musical Preparation **Steven Eldredge, Denise Massé,
Howard Watkins, Pierre Vallet, and Marie-France Lefebvre**
Assistant Stage Directors **Gina Lapinski, Stephen Pickover,
and Paula Suozzi**
Prompter **Marie-France Lefebvre**
Fight Director **J. Allen Suddeth**
Aerial Effects Consultant **Lee Stephenson**
Met Titles **J. D. McClatchy**
Assistant Scenic Designer **Scott Laule**
Scenery, properties, and electrical props constructed
and painted in **Metropolitan Opera Shops**
Costumes executed by **Metropolitan Opera Costume
Department**; additional costumes by **Giuseppina Coviello,
Madeleine Fry, and ENO Production Wardrobe**
Wigs and Makeup executed by **Metropolitan Opera
Wig and Makeup Department**

Les Pêcheurs de Perles is performed in the Urtext edition
edited by Brad Cohen and performed by arrangement with
Edition Peters Group, publisher.

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

This performance uses strobe light effects.

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,
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usher at intermission.

* Graduate of the
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2015-16 SEASON

Aleksandrs Antonenko as Othello

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Synopsis

A pearl-diving village in the Far East

Act I

As the villagers prepare for their dive, they sing of their fear of the sea. Zurga tells them they must choose a leader, and they unanimously swear loyalty to him. Nadir returns to the village after spending a year away. He and Zurga recall that their friendship was almost destroyed when they both fell in love with a Hindu priestess. Nadir swears he has kept the vow they both made to protect their friendship by staying away from her. Nourabad, the High Priest, brings a priestess to the village. She is to sing and pray all night to calm the demons of the deep and to ward off the spirits of the storm. Although she is veiled, Nadir immediately realizes she is Leïla, the priestess he still loves. Zurga, who does not recognize her, imposes an oath of obedience upon her on pain of death. Leïla is to remain veiled and pure. Her reward for keeping the divers safe from harm will be their finest pearl. Nadir, alone, reveals that he and Leïla have met illicitly and that he has followed her to the village. He listens as she begins her incantation and, unable to resist any longer, calls out to her. She breaks off, answering his love.

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 8:50 PM)

Act II

Nourabad tells Leïla that the divers have returned safely and she can now sleep until morning in the temple. He stresses the importance of her vow. As proof of her ability to keep her promise she tells him how, as a little girl, she once protected a fugitive. The man she saved gave her a necklace, which she wears to this day. Alone, Leïla dreams of Nadir, who soon appears by the shrine where she sleeps, and they are reunited. As a storm breaks out, they are discovered and denounced by Nourabad, who blames them for the tempest. Zurga protects his friend from the fury of the villagers, who demand his immediate death. Nourabad tears off Leïla's veil. Zurga finally recognizes Leïla and realizes that Nadir has betrayed their oath. He angrily demands death for the guilty couple.

Act III

The storm has died away but the village has suffered terrible damage from flooding. Zurga's anger has passed and he sadly reflects on Nadir's fate. Leïla intercedes for Nadir and Zurga relents, but his jealousy reawakens when he realizes how much Leïla loves his rival. He allows Nourabad to take her to be sacrificed together with Nadir. Before she leaves, she gives her special necklace to one of the young divers and asks her to give it to her mother. Zurga seizes the necklace with a cry.

Synopsis CONTINUED

The pearl fishers prepare for the ritual deaths of Leïla and Nadir at dawn. Zurga stops them with the news that the village is on fire, and the villagers flee to try and save their children. Zurga releases Nadir and Leïla and explains that he set the village alight in order to rescue them. He reveals that he was the fugitive Leïla saved many years ago. The lovers gratefully make their escape and Zurga is left to face the consequences of his actions.

—*Reprinted courtesy of English National Opera*

Georges Bizet

Les Pêcheurs de Perles

Premiere: Théâtre Lyrique, Paris, 1863

Few operas can match the sheer lyric beauty of Bizet's youthful *The Pearl Fishers*. Critics at the time were not in favor of it—the composer was accused, bafflingly, of imitating both Verdi and Wagner—but the audience was swept up in the ravishing score tinged with the allure of a mythical South Asian setting. The drama itself remains within the conventional standards of the day: in ancient Ceylon, two men have their close friendship tested by their love for the same woman, who re-enters their lives as a priestess sworn to chastity. The desire for physical love eventually overcomes the girl's vows as well as one of the men's oaths of friendship, and the lovers are only saved from the wrath of the community by the other suitor's act of self-sacrifice at the finale. But the somewhat formulaic plot becomes insignificant alongside the accomplishment of the score and the tantalizing musical vision of a distant land that it provides. *The Pearl Fishers* employs the same blend of exoticism and eroticism that would find such indelible expression in Bizet's subsequent masterpiece, *Carmen*, but the sensual scope of the music is perhaps even wider in the earlier work with its deliberately vague setting. (An early version of the libretto placed the story in Mexico, but Ceylon was eventually chosen as having even greater "exotic" possibilities.) Though not performed frequently, *The Pearl Fishers* successfully stands on its own when appreciated for its unique atmosphere, rather than compared to *Carmen* or held up to modern notions of dramatic plausibility.

The Creators

French composer Georges Bizet (1838–75) was known as a brilliant student and prodigy, but his works only found lasting success after his untimely death. His final opera, *Carmen*, which premiered to very mixed reactions three months before he died, became a hit shortly afterward and is acknowledged today as one of opera's greatest achievements. Eugène Cormon (1810–1903) was the pen name of Pierre-Étienne Piestre, a French dramatist and prolific librettist. Most of his works are forgotten today, although his play *Philippe II, Roi d'Espagne* served as one of the sources for Verdi's *Don Carlos*. His collaborator on *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* was Michel Carré (1821–72), who also co-created the libretto to Gounod's *Faust* and *Roméo et Juliette* and the play that formed the basis for Offenbach's *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*.

The Setting

The opera is originally set in Ceylon (modern Sri Lanka) in non-historic “ancient times,” signifying an exotic land with a mythical and romantic aura. The Met’s new production places the action in an unspecified locale in the Far East.

The Music

In addition to its striking lyrical expression, the score is filled with surprising and delightful features throughout. The important role of the chorus is evident from the opening number, with its extraordinarily beautiful middle section for men’s voices. The later “welcoming” chorus in Act I and the boisterous Act III number, bordering on a sort of bacchanal, are no less notable. The orchestral writing is equally sophisticated, especially in the subtle touches of instrumentation (which would become so marked a feature of *Carmen*): flute and harp to denote moments of noble religious sentiment; two piccolos evoking nighttime in the ruins of an ancient temple at the beginning of Act II; a solo oboe suggesting indigenous instruments in the same act. But the highest honors of the score must go to the remarkable solos and duets that have made the opera impossible to forget. Among these are the tenor’s Act I romance, “Je crois entendre encore,” a gorgeous melody that requires both refined delicacy of expression and extraordinary power and discipline; Leïla’s highly ornamented invocation to Siva directly after; her joyful love aria, “Comme autrefois,” in Act II; and Leïla and Nadir’s love duet in the same act, a piece as passionate as anything in Bizet. The most famous moment in the opera comes with the justly celebrated duet between the tenor and baritone, the ravishing “Au fond du temple saint” in Act I. Its abundant melody miraculously encompasses a profusion of diverse sentiment, from religious ecstasy to exalted friendship to sadness and loss.

Met History

Prior to this production, which had its Met premiere on New Year’s Eve 2015, the opera received only four performances by the company. The partial premiere took place in 1896, when the first two acts were presented in a matinee together with Massenet’s one-act *La Navarraise*, as a star vehicle for soprano Emma Calvé. The first complete staging was seen on opening night of the 1916–17 season, with a cast led by Frieda Hempel, Enrico Caruso, and Giuseppe De Luca. After two more performances, the opera disappeared from the repertoire, although excerpts, most notably the duet “Au fond du temple saint,” have frequently been heard in concert at the Met.

Program Note

“The Orient is...one of [the West’s] deepest and most recurring images of the Other,” wrote the scholar Edward Said in his groundbreaking 1978 book *Orientalism*. “The Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience.”

Georges Bizet’s *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* springs from a long, prolific vein of European Orientalist music, drama, literature, and visual art. Much like *Leïla*, the opera’s veiled heroine, the East was portrayed in these works of art as languorous, inscrutable, submissive, primitive, impulsive, tempting, and sometimes even violent—everything that bourgeois, Christian Europe wanted to believe it was not.

Nineteenth-century Orientalism thrived nowhere more than in France. Napoleon’s occupation of Egypt from 1798 to 1801 and Charles X’s expedition against Algiers in 1830 incited a wave of Orientalism manifested over the following decades in such works as Gustave Flaubert’s novel *Salammbô*; the vivid canvases of Eastern scenes by Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, Eugène Delacroix, and Jean-Léon Gérôme; and Félicien David’s seminal symphonic ode *Le Désert*, which in turn inspired a raft of Orientalist French operas including Gounod’s *La Reine de Saba*, Saint-Saëns’s *Samson et Dalila*, Delibes’s *Lakmé*, and Massenet’s *Thaïs*.

The Orientalist flavor of *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* is palpable in other Bizet operas as well, including *La Guzla de l’Émir* (1862), *La Jolie Fille de Perth* (1866), and *Djamileh* (1871). Even his masterwork *Carmen* falls under the Orientalist umbrella; “the Orient,” then, could be almost any place deemed exotic. Victor Hugo, in the preface to *Les Orientales*, defined it as “Hebraic, Turkish, Greek, Persian, Arab, even Spanish, because Spain is still the Orient.”

Bizet (1838–1875) is familiar to all operagoers as the composer of the ever-popular *Carmen*, the last work he completed before his untimely death at age 36. *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* dates from 12 years earlier, when he was fresh out of the Paris Conservatory, where he had studied composition with Jacques-Fromental Halévy, the composer of *La Juive* (whose daughter, Geneviève, he married in 1869). An even stronger musical influence during those years was Charles Gounod, the composer of *Faust*, a mentor and close friend to Bizet.

By 1863, the year in which *The Pearl Fishers* was composed, Bizet had already written six stage works, only one of which had been performed. His earliest operas, created during his student days, had been comic and largely Italianate in style, modelled upon the spirited bel canto works of Rossini and Donizetti. After Bizet’s sojourn in Italy from 1858 to 1860 as a winner of the Prix de Rome, his operas turned more serious and more French in style, displaying the influence of Gounod, Meyerbeer, and even the Parisian-flavored late middle period operas of Verdi.

In April 1863, the 25-year-old Bizet was approached by Léon Carvalho, manager of the Théâtre Lyrique, who had been offered an annual grant of 100,000 francs on the condition that he premiere a new work by a recent Prix de Rome winner each

The Program CONTINUED

year. Carvalho offered Bizet a libretto called *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* by Eugène Cormon and Michel Carré, an exotic drama set on the island of Ceylon (today's Sri Lanka). One of its chief sources was a recent book, Octave Sachot's *L'Île de Ceylan et des Curiosités Naturelles*, which included discussions of pearl fishery and the superstitions surrounding it, as well as evocative scenic descriptions. And, though clothed in Orientalist garb, the opera's heroine, Leïla—a virgin priestess who breaks her vows for love—owes much to Julia, the leading lady in Spontini's *La Vestale* (1807), and perhaps also to Bellini's *Norma* (1831).

Carvalho's commission to Bizet stipulated a planned opening night in September, obliging him to compose at lightning speed. Luckily, he had a wealth of musical "leftovers" from thwarted earlier works which he could recycle. His unperformed opera *Ivan IV* yielded music for three numbers in *The Pearl Fishers*: the orchestral prelude; part of Zurga's Act I aria, "Une fille inconnue;" and the Act III duet "O lumière sainte." The chorus "Brahma, divin Brahma" is drawn from an early, rejected *Te Deum*, and another chorus, "Ah chante, chante encore," comes from *Don Procopio*, an early opéra-bouffe unperformed in the composer's lifetime. Bizet completed the score of *The Pearl Fishers* by early August.

The premiere took place at the Théâtre Lyrique on September 30, 1863. When the first-night audience accorded Bizet a curtain call, the composer, unaccustomed to success, was reported by the writer Louis Gallet as appearing "a little dazed." The opera achieved a respectable run of 18 performances, but the critical establishment did not share the audience's enthusiasm. Benjamin Jouvin of *Le Figaro* wrote, "There were neither fishermen in the libretto nor pearls in the music." He and other Parisian critics, accustomed to the lighter sounds of Auber and Offenbach, accused Bizet of "Wagnerism," a charge often hurled at his robust orchestrations, which the critics found noisy and overstuffed. One of them called the opera "a fortissimo in three acts." The disappointed Bizet described it as "an honorable, brilliant failure," referring to it in a letter to his publisher Choudens as "Les Pêcheurs de Crevettes"—"The Shrimp Fishers."

Hector Berlioz, himself a misunderstood pioneer, disagreed. In his review in *Journal des Débats*, he asserted, "The score of *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* does M. Bizet the greatest honor," describing it as "filled with fire and rich coloring" and "ravishing originality."

Modern critical opinion has gradually warmed to *The Pearl Fishers*, recognizing in it the melodic gifts, imaginative orchestration, and sure dramatic instincts that would fully bloom a decade later in *Carmen*. But the opera's libretto has continued to endure scorn for its unlikely coincidences, stereotyped characterizations, and prosaic verse. Cormon, one of the librettists, himself later admitted, "Had we known of the talent of M. Bizet, we would never have given him our white elephant." Nevertheless, their libretto can be deemed a good one in 19th-century terms: an effective scaffold for vivid, compact, fast-paced musical drama. And the music that Bizet draped on that scaffold is among the finest of French opéra lyrique, the elegant Romantic style refined to a high sheen

by Gounod. The score's highlights are justifiably popular: Nadir and Zurga's stirring Act I friendship duet, "Au fond du temple saint," whose sweeping theme becomes the opera's main motif; Leïla's Act II cavatina, "Comme autrefois," whose expansive melody, triple meter, and pair of French horns foreshadow Micaëla's aria in *Carmen*; and Nadir's Act I barcarole, "Je crois entendre encore," whose Phrygian scale and haunting English horn solo against muted strings create a strongly exotic flavor.

After its opening run, *The Pearl Fishers* was not performed again until 11 years after Bizet's death and the runaway success of *Carmen*. In 1886, it was presented at La Scala in Italian, followed by regular stagings in European cities, also often in Italian. It did not reach Paris again until 1889. In 1893 it received its U.S. premiere in Philadelphia and in 1896, its first two acts were performed at the Met on a double bill with Massenet's one-act opera *La Navarraise*. In the mid-20th century, it began to enter the opera repertory worldwide.

Unfortunately, all of these performances were based on badly corrupted editions of Bizet's score. After his death in 1875, his widow was careless with his musical legacy, letting a number of his autograph scores go astray, including that of *The Pearl Fishers*. Choudens published a second piano vocal score in 1887–88 and a "nouvelle edition" in 1893, which incorporated the corruptions that had crept into recent revivals; these scores remained the basis of productions for nearly a century.

The opera's finale, a bone of contention even before its premiere, was the most compromised portion of the corrupt editions, disfigured to provide what was thought to be a more dramatic ending—"a grand Meyerbeerian holocaust," as Bizet biographer Winton Dean put it. In one version, a villager stabs Zurga in the back as we hear the offstage voices of Leïla and Nadir. In other versions Zurga is burned at the stake. This finale also included a trio composed by Benjamin Godard.

In the 1970s, an authentic 1863 vocal score was discovered, spurring efforts to reconstruct the score in accordance with Bizet's intentions, and Arthur Hammond orchestrated the restored portions that existed only in the vocal score. In the 1990s, Bizet's original 1863 six-stave short score was discovered in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. It became the basis for the critical edition, prepared by Brad Cohen and published by Edition Peters in 2002, that is performed this season at the Met.

—Cori Ellison

The Cast and Creative Team



Gianandrea Noseda

CONDUCTOR (MILAN, ITALY)

THIS SEASON *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* at the Met; *La Bohème*, *Rigoletto*, and *Il Trittico* at St. Petersburg's Mariinsky Theatre; *Il Trovatore* at Covent Garden; *Lucia di Lammermoor* in concert with Turin's Teatro Regio at Paris's Théâtre des Champs-Élysées;

Norma and *La Bohème* with the Teatro Regio at the Savonlinna Festival; a concert with the Juilliard Orchestra; and *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Casella's *La Donna Serpente* with the Teatro Regio in Turin.

MET APPEARANCES *Prince Igor*, *Andrea Chénier*, *Macbeth*, *La Traviata*, *Il Trovatore*, *War and Peace* (debut, 2002), *La Forza del Destino*, and *Un Ballo in Maschera*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He is music director of Turin's Teatro Regio, principal guest conductor of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, guest conductor of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, principal conductor of the Orquestra de Cadaqués, and artistic director of Italy's Stresa Festival. He is also conductor laureate of the BBC Philharmonic and was formerly principal guest conductor of the Mariinsky Theatre and Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra.



Penny Woolcock

DIRECTOR (BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA)

THIS SEASON *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* at the Met.

MET PRODUCTION *Doctor Atomic* (debut, 2008).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS She is both a director and filmmaker working across different genres. Recent work includes *Utopia*, an art installation at London's Roundhouse; *1 Day*, a fiction about gang life in inner-city Birmingham; and *Tina Goes Shopping*, *Tina Takes a Break*, and *Mischief Night*, a trilogy about the marginal economy in Leeds. She directed *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* for English National Opera in 2010, and was both writer and director for the feature films *Margate Exodus* (2006), *Mischief Night* (2006), and *Principals of Lust*. Her work for television includes *The Death of Klinghoffer* (2003, adapted from John Adams's opera), *Macbeth on the Estate* (1997), and *The Two Marys* (1993). Work in documentary film includes *Going to the Dogs*, *One Mile Away*, *From Sea to the Land Beyond*, *On the Streets*, and *The Wet House*.



Dick Bird

SET DESIGNER (LONDON, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* for his debut at the Met, *The Mikado* for the Scottish Opera, *Summertime* for the Sarasota Ballet (choreographed by Sir Peter Wright), and *The Passion*, based on Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, for Manchester's Streetwise Opera.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Opera credits include *La Donna del Lago* (Covent Garden), *From the House of the Dead* (Opera North), *Béatrice et Bénédicte* and *Der Freischütz* (Paris's Opéra Comique), and *The Gambler* and *Il Trittico* (Opera Zuid). Designs for ballet include David Bintley's *Aladdin* (Birmingham Royal Ballet), *La Bayadère* (Tokyo's K Ballet), *The*

Canterville Ghost (English National Ballet), and *The Firebird* (National Ballet of Japan). His work in theater includes *Hamlet* and *La Grande Magie* (Comédie Française), *The Comedy of Errors* (Théâtre Vidy), *King Lear* (The Crucible), *Light* (Complicite), *Harvest* (Royal Court Theatre), *The Enchanted Pig* and *Monkey* (Young Vic), *Othello* and *As You Like It* (The Globe), and *The Walls, A Prayer for Owen Meany*, and *The Night Season* (National Theatre). He designed Kate Bush's *Before The Dawn* concerts at Hammersmith Apollo in 2014 and received the UK Awards Best Design of 2015 award for *The Hudsucker Proxy* at the Nuffield Theatre.



Kevin Pollard

COSTUME DESIGNER (LIVERPOOL, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* at the Met.

MET PRODUCTIONS *Satyagraha* (debut, 2008) and *The Enchanted Island*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS In addition to his work in costume design for theater, film, and dance, he is also a set designer. Among his recent work is the multi-award winning *Shockheaded Peter* and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* for London's Royal National Theatre; *The Magic Flute* for the Welsh National Opera; *Satyagraha* and *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* for English National Opera; *The Dreadful Hours* (sets and costumes) and the trilogy *Tmesis*, *Memento Mori*, and *Anima* (sets and costumes) for Liverpool's Tmesis Theatre Company; *L'Amour de Loin* for English National Opera, Vlaamse Opera, and Canadian Opera Company; *Ménage à Trois* for the National Theatre of Scotland; *Danny the Champion of the World* (sets and costumes), *Top of the World*, and *Beasts and Beauties* (sets) for Liverpool's Spike Theatre; *Beauty and the Beast* (costumes) with Improbable for the Young Vic Theatre; and Brecht and Weill's *The Threepenny Opera* at the Salzburg Festival (costumes).



Jen Schriever

LIGHTING DESIGNER (NEW YORK, NEW YORK)

THIS SEASON The new production of *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* and the revival of *Die Fledermaus* at the Met and Danaï Gurira's *Eclipsed* on Broadway next spring.

MET PRODUCTION *Die Fledermaus* (debut, 2013)

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent productions include *La Traviata*, *Faust* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Golden Mask nominee) for St. Petersburg's Mariinsky Theatre. Off-Broadway work includes *Toast* and *A Second Chance* (Public Theater), *Night is a Room* (Signature Theatre), *I'm Looking for Helen Twelevetrees* (Abrons Arts Center), *Bright Half Life* (Women's Project), *Mala Hierba*, and *American Hero* (Second Stage), *Sunset Baby* (Labyrinth Theater Company), *Triassic Park* (Soho Playhouse), *Bullet for Adolf* (New World Stages), *Stuffed and UnStrung* (Union Square Theater), and *An Evening Without Monty Python* (Town Hall). She has also worked with regional theaters including the Goodman, Berkeley Rep, South Coast Rep, Goodspeed, Woolly Mammoth, Signature, Papermill, CenterStage, Folger, and Williamstown. She is an adjunct professor at Purchase College.

59 Productions

PROJECTION DESIGN

THIS SEASON *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* at the Met.

MET PRODUCTIONS *The Enchanted Island*, *Two Boys*, *Satyagraha* (debut, 2008), *Doctor Atomic*, and the 125th Anniversary Gala.

COMPANY HIGHLIGHTS 59 Productions creates and integrates animation, film, and video into live performance and real-world environments. Recent designs for opera include Haas's *Morgen und Abend*, *Eugene Onegin*, and Birtwistle's *The Minotaur* (Covent Garden), Luigi Nono's *Al Gran Sole Carico d'Amore* (Deutsche Oper Berlin and the Salzburg Festival), and *Two Boys*, *Satyagraha*, *Idomeneo*, *Messiah*, *Doctor Atomic*, *Dr Dee*, and *After Dido* (English National Opera). Ballet designs include *Ceremony of Innocence*, *Invitus Invitam*, and *La Bayadère* (London's Royal Ballet). Video design for theater includes *An American in Paris*, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, and *Big Fish* (Broadway), *Wonder.land* (Manchester International Festival, National Theatre), *The Forbidden Zone* (Salzburg Festival, Schaubühne Berlin), *Great Britain and Emil and the Detectives* (National Theatre), *War Horse* (Lincoln Center, National Theatre, and worldwide tours), and *Les Misérables* (World Tour). Exhibition and events include the 2012 Olympic opening ceremony in London, *Hampton Court 500 Rewind* (Historic Royal Palaces), *David Bowie Is* and *Shakespeare: Greatest Living Playwright* (Victoria and Albert Museum), *Lighting the Sails of Sydney Opera House* (Vivid LIVE), and *Harmonium Project* (Edinburgh Festival).



Andrew Dawson

CHOREOGRAPHER (LONDON, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* at the Met.

MET PRODUCTION *Doctor Atomic* (debut, 2008).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS A theater director and performer, he studied dance in New York with Merce Cunningham; theater in Paris with Philippe Gaulier, Monika Pagneux, and Jacques Lecoq; and the Feldenkrais method. He was movement director for the recent production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Bristol Old Vic (with later tours to Washington, D.C. and Seoul) and choreographed *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* for English National Opera in 2010. Pieces he has created and performed include *Space Panorama* in 1987 (the story of the Apollo 11 moon landing told using only his hands) and his solo show *Absence and Presence* in 2005. He was one of the lead puppeteers in the opening ceremony of the 2012 Olympics in London. With an arts award from Wellcome Trust in 2011 he created *The Articulate Hand*, which premiered that year at New York's World Science Festival and was featured at TEDMED in San Diego. In 2013 he created *Ring Hands* on a commission from London's Royal Opera House, in which he told the story of Wagner's *Ring* cycle in 30 minutes using only his hands.



Diana Damrau

SOPRANO (GÜNZBURG, GERMANY)

THIS SEASON Leïla in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* at the Met, the title role of *Manon* at the Vienna State Opera, Elvira in *I Puritani* in Madrid, Violetta in *La Traviata* at the Orange Festival, and the title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor* at Covent Garden, Turin's Teatro Regio, and with the Teatro Regio on tour in Paris and Essen.

MET APPEARANCES Amina in *La Sonnambula*, Gilda in *Rigoletto*, Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Adèle in *Le Comte Ory*, Marie in *La Fille du Régiment*, Pamina and the Queen of the Night in *Die Zauberflöte*, Zerbinetta in *Ariadne auf Naxos* (debut, 2005), Aithra in *Die Ägyptische Helena*, Konstanze in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Violetta, Manon, and Lucia di Lammermoor.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Leïla at Vienna's Theater an der Wien, Lucia di Lammermoor at La Scala and Munich's Bavarian State Opera, the title role in Iain Bell's *A Harlot's Progress* at Vienna's Theater an der Wien, and Violetta at La Scala, the Paris Opera, and Covent Garden. She has also sung Philine in Thomas's *Mignon* in Geneva, and Lucia di Lammermoor at the Vienna State Opera and Deutsche Oper Berlin.



Mariusz Kwiecien

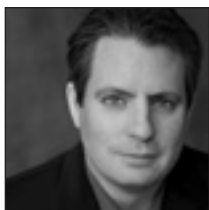
BARITONE (KRAKÓW, POLAND)

THIS SEASON Zurga in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* and the Duke of Nottingham in *Roberto Devereux* at the Met, the title role of *Don Giovanni* at the Vienna State Opera, Rodrigo in *Don Carlo* with the San Francisco Opera, and the title role of Szymanowski's *King Roger* at Poland's Kraków Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Seventeen roles including Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Marcello in *La Bohème*, the title role of *Eugene Onegin*, Riccardo in *I Puritani*, Belcore in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Don Giovanni, Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, Escamillo in *Carmen*, and Kuligin in *Kát'a Kabanová* (debut, 1999).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has recently sung Don Giovanni at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Dr. Malatesta in *Don Pasquale* in Barcelona, and Eugene Onegin with Munich's Bavarian State Opera. Additional engagements include Riccardo with the Paris Opera; Rodrigo at Covent Garden; Don Giovanni at Covent Garden, the San Francisco Opera, Seattle Opera, and in Munich and Santa Fe; Eugene Onegin with the Bolshoi Theatre, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and Vienna State Opera; and Count Almaviva at Covent Garden and in Munich, Chicago, and Madrid.

The Cast and Creative Team CONTINUED



Matthew Polenzani

TENOR (EVANSTON, ILLINOIS)

THIS SEASON Nadir in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* and the title role of *Roberto Devereux* at the Met, Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* at the Paris Opera, the title role of *Werther* at the Vienna State Opera and Munich's Bavarian State Opera, and Rodolfo in *La Bohème* for his debut at Barcelona's Liceu.

MET APPEARANCES More than 300 performances of 34 roles including Hoffmann in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, Ferrando in *Così fan tutte*, the Duke in *Rigoletto*, Ernesto in *Don Pasquale*, Belmonte in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Count Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Chevalier de la Force in *Dialogues des Carmélites*, Boyar Khrushchov in *Boris Godunov* (debut, 1997), Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*, and Alfredo in *La Traviata*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has recently sung the title role of *Idomeneo* at Covent Garden, Alfredo for his debut in Zurich, and Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore* and Tamino at Munich's Bavarian State Opera. He was the recipient of the Met's 2008 Beverly Sills Artist Award, established by Agnes Varis and Karl Leichtman.



Nicolas Testé

BASS-BARITONE (PARIS, FRANCE)

THIS SEASON Nourabad in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* at the Met, Giorgio in *I Puritani* in Madrid, Dr. Grenvil in *La Traviata* at the Orange Festival, and Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* with the San Francisco Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Paris's Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, and Turin's Teatro Regio.

MET APPEARANCES Count des Grieux in *Manon* and Colline in *La Bohème* (debut, 2014).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has recently sung Nourabad at Vienna's Theater an der Wien and in Valencia, Claudius in *Hamlet* in Avignon, Ferrando in *Il Trovatore* at the Orange Festival, and Colline at Munich's Bavarian State Opera. He has also sung Giorgio at the Paris Opera, the Coach Driver/Officer/Jailer in the world premiere of Iain Bell's *A Harlot's Progress* and Jupiter in Rameau's *Castor et Pollux* at the Theater an der Wien, the title role of *Le Nozze di Figaro* in Warsaw, Hermann and Schlémil in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at La Scala, Nourabad at Paris's Opéra Comique, and Pantheus in *Les Troyens*, Agamemnon in *Iphigénie en Aulide*, and Frère Laurent in *Roméo et Juliette* in Amsterdam.

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