

GIUSEPPE VERDI

RIGOLETTO

CONDUCTOR
Roberto Abbado

PRODUCTION
Michael Mayer

SET DESIGNER
Christine Jones

COSTUME DESIGNER
Susan Hilferty

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Kevin Adams

CHOREOGRAPHER
Steven Hoggett

GENERAL MANAGER
Peter Gelb

MUSIC DIRECTOR
James Levine

PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR
Fabio Luisi

Opera in three acts

Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave, based
on the play *Le Roi s'amuse* by Victor Hugo

Tuesday, December 8, 2015
7:30-10:40PM

The production of *Rigoletto* was
made possible by a generous gift from
the **Hermione Foundation, Laura Sloate,**
Trustee; and Mr. and Mrs. Paul M. Montrone

The revival of this production is made possible
by a gift from the Estate of Francine Berry

The Metropolitan Opera

2015–16 SEASON

The 876th Metropolitan Opera performance of
GIUSEPPE VERDI'S

RIGOLETTO

CONDUCTOR
Roberto Abbado

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

THE DUKE
Piotr Beczala

GILDA
Nadine Sierra

BORSA
Scott Scully

GIOVANNA
MaryAnn McCormick

COUNTESS CEPRANO
Katherine Whyte

A PAGE
Catherine MiEun
Choi-Steckmeyer

RIGOLETTO
Željko Lučić

GUARD
Earle Patriarco

MARULLO
Jeff Mattsey

MADDALENA
Nancy Fabiola Herrera

COUNT CEPRANO
Paul Corona

MONTERONE
Robert Pomakov

SPARAFUCILE
Dimitry Ivashchenko

Tuesday, December 8, 2015, 7:30–10:40PM



Piotr Beczala as the Duke and Željko Lučić in the title role of Verdi's *Rigoletto*

Chorus Master **Donald Palumbo**
Musical Preparation **Linda Hall, Steven Eldredge, Robert Morrison, and Joel Revzen**
Assistant Stage Directors **Eric Einhorn and Sara Erde**
Stage Band Conductor **Gregory Buchalter**
Italian Coach **Loretta Di Franco**
Met Titles **Sonya Friedman**, revised for this production by **Michael Panayos and Paul Cremo**
Assistant to the Set Designer **Brett Banakis**
Assistant to the Costume Designer **Marina Reti**
Assistant Choreographer **Lorin Latarro**
Scenery, properties, and electrical props constructed and painted in **Metropolitan Opera Shops**
Costumes constructed by **Metropolitan Opera Costume Shop; Giliberto Designs, Inc., New York; Tricorne, New York; Eric Winterling, Inc., New York; Euroco Costumes, Inc., New York; and Merimask Designs, Tonawanda, New York**
Wigs and Makeup executed by **Metropolitan Opera Wig and Makeup Department**

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

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The Met
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2015-16 SEASON

A scene from *Anna Bolena*

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Synopsis

Las Vegas, 1960

Act I

SCENE 1 The Duke's casino

SCENE 2 Outside Rigoletto's apartment

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 8:30 PM)

Act II

The Duke's penthouse at the casino

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 9:35 PM)

Act III

A seedy club on the outskirts of Las Vegas

Act I

At his casino, the Duke boasts of his way with women. He flirts with the wife of Ceprano, one of his entourage, while Rigoletto, the Duke's hunchbacked sidekick and comedian, mocks the enraged husband. Marullo, another one of the Duke's entourage, bursts in with the latest gossip: Rigoletto is keeping a young mistress at his place. Unaware of this, Rigoletto continues to taunt Ceprano, who plots with the others to punish Rigoletto for his insults. Monterone, an Arab tycoon, forces his way into the crowd to denounce the Duke for seducing his daughter and is viciously ridiculed by Rigoletto. Monterone is arrested and puts a curse on Rigoletto.

Rigoletto is disturbed by Monterone's curse. He encounters Sparafucile, a hitman, who offers his services. Rigoletto reflects that his own tongue is as sharp as the murderer's knife. Arriving at home, he warmly greets his daughter, Gilda. Fearing for the girl's safety, he warns the housekeeper, Giovanna, not to let anyone into the apartment. When Rigoletto leaves, the Duke appears and bribes Giovanna, who lets him see Gilda whom he's seen in church. He declares his love for her and tells her he is a poor student. After he has left, Gilda tenderly reflects on her newfound love. The Duke's entourage gathers nearby, intending to abduct Rigoletto's "mistress." When Rigoletto arrives, surprising them, they convince him they are abducting the Countess Ceprano, and enlist his aid in their scheme. Successfully deceiving Rigoletto, they kidnap Gilda. When Rigoletto discovers that his daughter has been taken, he collapses as he remembers Monterone's curse.

Act II

Arriving at his penthouse apartment in the casino, the Duke is distraught, having immediately gone back to see Gilda only to find her missing. When his entourage returns and tells him the story of how they abducted a girl from Rigoletto's apartment and left her in the Duke's bedroom, he realizes it is Gilda and hurries off to her. Rigoletto enters, looking for Gilda. The entourage is astonished to find out that she is his daughter rather than his mistress, but they prevent him from storming into the Duke's bedroom. Rigoletto violently denounces them for their cruelty, then asks for compassion. Gilda returns from the Duke's room. She tells Rigoletto of the Duke's courtship, her abduction, and her deflowering by the Duke. Monterone is brought in to be killed by the Duke's men, and Rigoletto swears that both he and the Arab will be avenged. Gilda begs her father to forgive the Duke.

Act III

Rigoletto brings Gilda to a seedy club on the outskirts of town where Sparafucile and his sister Maddalena live. The Duke appears, and Gilda and Rigoletto watch him through the window as he amuses himself with Maddalena. Rigoletto tells his distraught daughter to leave town disguised as a man and, after she leaves, pays Sparafucile to murder the Duke. Gilda returns to overhear Maddalena urge her brother to spare the Duke and kill Rigoletto instead. Sparafucile refuses but agrees to kill the next person to arrive at the club, so that he will be able to produce a dead body for Rigoletto. Gilda decides to sacrifice herself for the Duke. Her plan succeeds and Sparafucile and Maddalena put her body in the trunk of a car. Rigoletto returns, and assuming the body is the corpse of the Duke, gloats over his revenge. But when he hears the Duke singing inside the club, he realizes he has been duped. He quickly removes the hood covering the head of the body in the car and is horrified to find it has been masking the identity of his dying daughter. Gilda dies asking her father's forgiveness and Rigoletto realizes Monterone's curse has been fulfilled.

Giuseppe Verdi

Rigoletto

Premiere: Teatro la Fenice, Venice, 1851

A dramatic journey of undeniable force, *Rigoletto* commands the respect of critics, performers, and audiences alike. It was immensely popular from its premiere—from even before its premiere, if we credit accounts of the buzz that surrounded the initial rehearsals—and remains fresh and powerful to this day. The story is one of the most accessible in opera, based on a controversial Victor Hugo drama whose full dramatic implications only became apparent when transformed by Verdi's musical genius. *Rigoletto* is the tale of an outsider—a hunchbacked jester—who struggles to balance the dueling elements of beauty and evil that exist in his life. Written during the most fertile period of Verdi's artistic life, the opera resonates with a universality that is frequently called Shakespearean.

The Creators

In a remarkable career spanning six decades in the theater, Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901) composed 28 operas, at least half of which are at the core of today's repertoire. His role in Italy's cultural and political development has made him an icon in his native country. Francesco Maria Piave (1810–1876), his librettist for *Rigoletto*, collaborated with him on ten works, including *Ernani*, *La Traviata*, *La Forza del Destino*, and the original versions of *Macbeth* and *Simon Boccanegra*.

The Setting

Victor Hugo's 1832 play *Le Roi s'amuse*, set at the court of King François I of France (circa 1520), is a blatant depiction of depraved authority. In adapting it, Verdi and Piave fought incessantly with the Italian censors in a well-documented battle. It makes for interesting reading, particularly in revealing what Verdi found important in the story and what he considered superfluous. Though Verdi had no love of royalty and favored a republic, he was not a proletarian ideologue like Hugo, and he tended to view people more as individuals than as representatives of classes. He was content, with Piave's deft juggling, to set the opera at the non-royal Renaissance court of Mantua and to change all the names, but held firm on other issues in the story, such as the curse that is the catalyst of the drama. Although the Duke remains unnamed, he was modeled on history's Vincenzo Gonzaga (1562–1612). The Gonzaga family motto—*Forse che sì, forse che non* ("Maybe yes, maybe no")—provides an interesting insight into some of the duke's cavalier pronouncements. In Michael Mayer's Met production, the action unfolds in Las Vegas in 1960, a time and place with surprising parallels to the decadent world of Verdi's original setting.

The Music

Rigoletto contains a wealth of melody, including one that is among the world's most famous: "La donna è mobile." The opera's familiar arias—"Questa o quella" and "Caro nome," for example—are also rich with character insight and dramatic development. The heart of the score, though, lies in its fast-moving subtleties and apt dramatic touches. The baritone's solos, "Pari siamo!" (Act I, Scene 2) and "Cortigiani, vil razza dannata" (Act II), are epic scenes telescoped to less than four minutes each. Not even Wagner's great monologues cover more territory than these, and certainly not within Verdi's economy of means. The celebrated father–daughter duets also reflect Verdi's overall design. Rigoletto sings of his protective love for Gilda in Act I, Scene 2 in a spun-out phrase of simple, honest melody, while her music decorates his. In their subsequent scene in Act II, Gilda's music (and, by implication, her life) is similarly intertwined with that of Rigoletto, until finally her melody breaks away as she strives to declare her adolescent independence. The famous quartet "Bella figlia dell'amore" (Act III) is an ingenious musical analysis of the diverging reactions of four characters in the same moment: the Duke's music rises with urgency and impatience, Gilda's droops with disappointment, Rigoletto's remains measured and paternal, while the promiscuous Maddalena is literally all over the place. In the context of the opera, the merely lovely music becomes inspired drama.

Met History

Rigoletto was first heard at the Met within a month of the company's inaugural performance, on November 16, 1883. The 1903–04 season opened with the company debut of Enrico Caruso as the Duke—a role he went on to sing to sing a total of 38 times before his premature death in 1921. The opera's title role was identified for many years with Italian baritone Giuseppe De Luca, who gave 96 performances between 1916 and 1940. Other notable Met Rigolettos have included Leonard Warren (1943–59), Robert Merrill (1952–72), and Cornell MacNeil (who surpassed De Luca's record with 102 appearances between 1959 and 1980). A new production in 1951, with Warren in the title role and Hilde Güden as Gilda, in her first Met appearance, also featured the company debut of designer Eugene Berman. Audience favorite Roberta Peters sang Gilda 88 times between 1951 and 1985. A new staging by Otto Schenk premiered in 1989 with June Anderson in her Met debut as Gilda, Luciano Pavarotti as the Duke, and Leo Nucci as Rigoletto. The current production, which marked the debuts of director Michael Mayer and the entire creative team, opened in January 2013, with Michele Mariotti conducting Diana Damrau, Piotr Beczala, and Željko Lučić. It was revived the following season with Dmitri Hvorostovsky in the title role.

Program Note

As with Beethoven, Verdi's body of work is often divided by contemporary commentators into three artistic periods. In the first, stretching from 1839 to 1850, Verdi was at his most prolific, quickly completing 15 operas that established him with audiences of the time as one of the world's leading opera composers and the successor to Bellini, Donizetti, and Rossini, all of whom had recently died or retired. The towering masterpieces that guaranteed Verdi's position alongside opera's few all-time great composers, however, did not appear until the second and third periods of his career, marked by a significant break away from, or at least a highly innovative re-interpretation of, the traditional forms and expectations of Italian opera, to which his early works had mostly adhered. Keeping with the Beethoven analogy, *Rigoletto* was Verdi's "Eroica," marking the beginning of the composer's middle period and clearly surpassing in originality and achievement all of his previous work. At its 1851 premiere and throughout the ensuing 13-performance run at Venice's Teatro de Fenice, *Rigoletto* was an enormous success, and it traveled quickly after that. By 1855, the opera had been produced throughout Italy, across Europe, and as far afield as New York, Havana, and Montevideo, Uruguay. This international success, combined with the premieres of *Il Trovatore* and *La Traviata*—which followed close on *Rigoletto*'s heels in 1853—put to rest any remaining doubt regarding Verdi's operatic primacy.

But despite *Rigoletto*'s eventual success, it was very nearly killed before its birth, needing something of a political miracle just to see the light of day. After receiving the commission from La Fenice, Verdi—an ardent humanist, democrat, and patriot who longed for Italy to be free from the autocratic rule of France and Austria—turned to an uncomfortable source of inspiration: a play by Victor Hugo called *Le Roi s'amuse* ("The King Amuses Himself"). Scathing and bleak, it centers on the amorous exploits of the historical French king François I and the downfall of his physically deformed and morally corrupt jester Triboulet, who encourages and makes light of the king's lechery. The hunchbacked antihero ultimately reaps the poisonous crop he has sown when François discovers and rapes his sheltered daughter, whom he has hidden away from the corruption of the court. Worse yet, in a botched attempt to arrange the king's murder in revenge, Triboulet causes instead the death of his own daughter.

Naturally, Austrian censors (who had jurisdiction over northern Italy, most of which was a province of the Habsburg Empire at the time) were not impressed with Verdi and librettist Francesco Maria Piave's work. Three months before the scheduled premiere, the administration of La Fenice received a letter from the authorities expressing the regional governor's disappointment that Verdi and Piave "should not have chosen a more worthy vehicle to display their talents than the revolting immorality and obscene triviality of *La Maledizione* [*The Curse*, *Rigoletto*'s original title]." The letter communicated that any performance of the

The Program CONTINUED

opera was absolutely forbidden, and instructed that no one's time be wasted with protestations or appeals. Luckily this last directive was ignored, and after extensive revisions to the work's setting and its characters' identities—the scene moved from the French court to Mantua, King François became the local duke, Triboulet became Rigoletto, and so on—the newly titled *Rigoletto* won its approval for performance from a censor who, by a crucial twist of fate, was an opera lover and an admirer of Verdi's work.

Though the play's political bent surely played its part in attracting Verdi's attention, it was *Le Roi s'amuse's* emotional, psychological, and narrative power and the depth and inherent contradiction of Triboulet's character that most appealed to Verdi, an intensely intellectual and extremely well-read man for whom literature, poetry, and drama held as much significance as music. (The collection of authors on whose work he based his operas reads like a cross-section of history's great writers: Hugo, Byron, Schiller, Voltaire, Dumas, and most of all, Shakespeare, a formative influence and continual source of inspiration for Verdi, who claimed to have read and re-read the playwright's works since childhood.) It is therefore hard to overestimate the composer's level of admiration for Hugo's play, which he described in a letter to Piave as "one of the greatest creations of modern theatre. The story is great, immense, and includes a character who is one of the greatest creations that the theatres of all nations and all times will boast... Triboulet is a creation worthy of Shakespeare."

The genius of Verdi's transformation of Hugo's spoken drama into *Rigoletto*—and indeed of the stylistic step forward represented by this first work of Verdi's second creative period—is the closeness of music, text, and action. Form and content are streamlined and treated fluidly, so that neither the drama nor the music is distorted to fit the other, but rather the two are woven into a single organic whole. In the case of *Rigoletto*, this makes for a grim, vicious, and powerfully effective work, an opera noir in which the tension never flags and no respite is provided from the disturbing arc of the plot. Verdi and Piave have stripped Hugo's story and characters down to their bare essentials. From the opening scene—in which Monterone spits out his curse at a man so depraved that he would taunt an anguished father unable to protect his daughter—to the final scenes—in which Rigoletto himself tastes the impotence and torment of that very same situation and worse—not a single word of text or note of music is wasted. This is not a cathartic tragedy or a tale of noble sacrifice. There are no admirable characters here, no moral lesson, no redemption, and no silver lining. There is only a merciless depiction of the dark side of society and the price that must be paid for it.

With his music, Verdi takes all of this and makes it human, creating the psychological and emotional dimension that is mostly absent from the minimalist, clear-eyed text. Largely abandoning the predictable alternating structure of

recitative, aria, and ensemble numbers, Verdi instead drives constantly forward in an arioso-like mixture of the three, relying mostly on passages for two or more characters that flow seamlessly together. Trimming the fat of virtuoso vocal display, he strives for naturalness of expression. Consequently, what solo numbers there are must be handled by the performers with tasteful understatement to avoid seeming out of place and stalling the crucial momentum. As Verdi himself explained in response to a request for an additional showpiece aria for the soprano who first sang Gilda, “any new number would be superfluous... [and] would make no effect without the right time and place.... My intention was that *Rigoletto* should be one long series of duets, without arias and finales, because that is how I felt it. If anyone replies, ‘But you could have done this or that or the other,’ I can only say ‘That may be, but I did not know how to do any better.’” It comes as no surprise, therefore, that *Rigoletto*’s finest moment is the ingenious Act III quartet, combining the work’s emotional high point with its musical one and achieving a level of perfection matched by few other passages in all of opera. Perhaps the easiest way to put the effect of this compositional strategy in context is to think of it as a fictional blend of Wagner and Mozart—it looks forward to the former’s ideal of endless melody while simultaneously looking back toward Mozart’s breathless pacing.

One is also constantly amazed by Verdi’s inventiveness and ability to unmistakably conjure his desired emotions and impressions while leaving them unspoken. Through evocative scoring (the chorus’s imitation of wind during the storm in Act III), thematic manipulation (the curse leitmotif that is established in the opera’s very first measures and lurks beneath each of its character’s realizations of their fate), and pitch-perfect character painting (the very nature of each personality revealed by their music), Verdi’s score communicates subliminally with the listener. In Act II, for example, “while [Rigoletto] sings and moves us to pity,” musicologist Vincent Godefroy observes, “the orchestra is commenting on his daughter’s experience behind the locked door. ... Concentrate on the orchestra and you will hear the rape of Gilda.” Of similar genius is the treatment of “La donna è mobile,” by far the most frequently excerpted bit of *Rigoletto*. So carefree and charmingly tongue-in-cheek on its own, Verdi’s jaunty little tune is positively slimy in context, and when its distant strains return in the final scene to transform Rigoletto’s bloodthirsty gloating to horrible dread, the effect is viscerally sickening. These musical masterstrokes, resonating with the listener on a subconscious and primal level, ensure that even in our desensitized modern world, *Rigoletto* will never lose its power to send audiences home feeling profoundly impressed, mentally unsettled, and most likely a bit queasy.

—Jay Goodwin



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DIE ENTFÜHRUNG AUS DEM SERAIL (The Abduction from the Seraglio)

Aleksandrs Antonenko as Otello

PHOTO: KRISTIAN SCHULLER/METROPOLITAN OPERA

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The Cast



Roberto Abbado

CONDUCTOR (MILAN, ITALY)

THIS SEASON *Rigoletto* at the Met, *Macbeth* in Bologna, *Simon Boccanegra* on tour in Hong Kong with Turin's Teatro Regio, *Samson et Dalila* and Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in Valencia, and *Benvenuto Cellini* in Rome.

MET APPEARANCES *Ernani*, *Fedora*, *La Traviata*, and *Adriana Lecouvreur* (debut, 1994).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He is Music Director at Valencia's Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia and Artistic Partner with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and performs regularly in the U.S. with symphony orchestras in Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, Atlanta, St. Louis, San Francisco, and Houston. He has recently led *La Gioconda*, *Maometto II*, and *Lucia di Lammermoor* at the Rome Opera, *Parsifal* in Bologna, *La Favorite* in concert at the Salzburg Festival, *Don Pasquale* in Valencia, and *Norma* in Turin. He has also led *La Gioconda*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and *La Donna del Lago* at La Scala, *I Vespri Siciliani* at the Vienna State Opera, *Aida* and *La Traviata* at Munich's Bavarian State Opera, *Simon Boccanegra* and *La Clemenza di Tito* in Turin, *La Donna del Lago* at the Paris Opera, *Don Giovanni* at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, and *Le Comte Ory*, *Attila*, *I Lombardi*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Anna Bolena*, and Henze's *Phaedra* at Florence's Maggio Musicale. In 2009 he was awarded the Franco Abbiati Award as Conductor of the Year.



Nancy Fabiola Herrera

MEZZO-SOPRANO (CANARY ISLANDS, SPAIN)

THIS SEASON Maddalena in *Rigoletto* at the Met, the title role of *Carmen* at Mexico's Teatro del Estado, Sara in *Roberto Devereux* for her debut at Moscow's Tchaikovsky Concert Hall, and concerts in Las Palmas and at Madrid's Teatro Real.

MET APPEARANCES Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly* (debut, 2005) and *Carmen*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include *Carmen* with Opera Australia and for her debut at Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre, *Dalila* in *Samson et Dalila* with Opera Oviedo, and Paula in Daniel Catán's *Florença en el Amazonas* at the Los Angeles Opera. She has also sung *Carmen* at Munich's Bavarian State Opera, Charlotte in *Werther* in Oviedo, Donna Rosa in Daniel Catán's *Il Postino* in Madrid, and de Falla's *La Vida Breve* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Toronto Philharmonic, and Philadelphia Orchestra. Additional performances include the world premiere of *Il Postino* with the Los Angeles Opera, Giovanna Seymour in *Anna Bolena* in Barcelona, Isabella in *L'Italiana in Algeri* at Las Palmas, and *Carmen* at the Arena di Verona, Semperoper Dresden, and Los Angeles Opera.

The Cast CONTINUED



Nadine Sierra

SOPRANO (FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA)

THIS SEASON Debuts at the Met and La Scala as Gilda in *Rigoletto* and the Paris Opera as Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, Amor in Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* at the Staatsoper Berlin, Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* with the San Francisco Opera, and Tytania in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Valencia's Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Gilda for debuts at the Atlanta Opera, Seattle Opera, Florida Grand Opera, and Naples's Teatro San Carlo, Tytania and Gilda with Boston Lyric Opera, Norina in *Don Pasquale* in Valencia, the title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor* in Zurich, and Musetta in *La Bohème* and the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro* with the San Francisco Opera. She has also appeared in concert with the Cleveland Orchestra and San Francisco Symphony, and was a winner of the 2007 Marilyn Horn Foundation Vocal Competition and the 2009 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. She made her San Francisco Opera debut in 2011 while a member of that company's Adler Fellowship Program in the dual roles of Juliet and Barbara in the world premiere of Christopher Theofanidis's *Heart of a Soldier*.



Piotr Beczala

TENOR (CZECZOWICE-DZIEDZICE, POLAND)

THIS SEASON The Duke in *Rigoletto* at the Met, Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* at the San Francisco Opera, the title role of *Werther* at the Paris Opera, Gustavo in *Un Ballo in Maschera* the Vienna State Opera and Munich's Bavarian State Opera, and he makes a role debut in the title part of *Lohengrin* at the Semperoper Dresden.

MET APPEARANCES Vaudémont in *Iolanta*, Gustavo, Edgardo, Lenski in *Eugene Onegin*, des Grieux in *Manon*, Roméo in *Roméo et Juliette*, the Prince in *Rusalka*, the title role of *Faust*, Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, and the Duke (debut, 2006).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has recently sung the Prince and the Duke at the Vienna State Opera, Faust at the Paris Opera, and Rodolfo at Covent Garden. He has also sung Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*, the Italian Tenor in *Der Rosenkavalier*, Vaudémont, and the Prince at the Salzburg Festival, the Duke at Covent Garden and La Scala, Werther in Frankfurt and Munich, Faust and the title role of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at the Vienna State Opera, and Alfredo in *La Traviata* in Milan, Munich, and Berlin.



Dimitry Ivashchenko

BASS (NOVOSIBIRSK, RUSSIA)

THIS SEASON Sparafucile in *Rigoletto* for his debut at the Met, the Four Villains in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* with Berlin's Komische Oper, and Prince Ivan in *Khovanshchina* with the Dutch National Opera.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* at the Edinburgh Festival with Berlin's Komische Oper, Timur in *Turandot* at the Bregenz Festival, the Water Gnome in *Rusalka* and Sarastro at Paris's Bastille Opera, Sarastro in Bari, and Tiresias in *Oedipus Rex* at Amsterdam's Concertgebouw. He has also sung the Water Gnome at the Vienna State Opera, Frère Laurent in *Roméo et Juliette* at the Salzburg Festival, Méphistophélès in *Faust* at the Hong Kong Opera, Daland in *Der Fliegende Holländer* in Geneva, Gurnemanz in *Parsifal* in Santiago, Pogner in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, and Sparafucile at the Bastille Opera and at Munich's Bavarian State Opera.



Željko Lučić

BARITONE (ZRENJANIN, SERBIA)

THIS SEASON Iago in *Otello*, Scarpia in *Tosca*, and the title role of *Rigoletto* at the Met, the title role of *Nabucco* with Lyric Opera of Chicago, Michele in *Il Tabarro* and the title role of *Gianni Schicchi* in Frankfurt, Germont in *La Traviata* at the Paris Opera, and Count di Luna in *Il Trovatore* at Covent Garden.

MET APPEARANCES The title roles of *Nabucco* and *Macbeth*, Amonasro in *Aida*, Count di Luna, Michele, Barnaba in *La Gioconda* (debut, 2006), Germont, and Gérard in *Andrea Chénier*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has sung Gérard at Covent Garden; Renato in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Amonasro, and Germont at La Scala; Scarpia and Nabucco at the Vienna State Opera; Iago in Zurich; the title role of *Falstaff* in Frankfurt; *Rigoletto* at the San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and La Scala; and Simon Boccanegra and *Macbeth* at the Bavarian State Opera. He has also sung *Macbeth* at the Salzburg Festival, Germont at the Vienna State Opera and Covent Garden, and Don Carlo in *Ernani* with the San Francisco Opera.

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