

RICHARD WAGNER

DIE MEISTERSINGER VON NÜRNBERG

CONDUCTOR
James Levine

PRODUCTION
Otto Schenk

SET DESIGNER
Günther
Schneider-Siemssen

COSTUME DESIGNER
Rolf Langenfass

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Gil Wechsler

CHOREOGRAPHER
Carmen De Lavallade

STAGE DIRECTOR
Paula Suozzi

GENERAL MANAGER
Peter Gelb

MUSIC DIRECTOR
James Levine

PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR
Fabio Luisi

Opera in three acts

Libretto by the composer

Saturday, December 13, 2014
12:00–6:00PM

The production of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*
is made possible by a generous gift from
Mrs. Donald D. Harrington

The revival of this production is made possible
by a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Corbin R. Miller
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The Metropolitan Opera

2014-15 SEASON

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The 413th Metropolitan Opera performance of
RICHARD WAGNER’S

DIE MEISTERSINGER VON NÜRNBERG

CONDUCTOR
James Levine

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

WALTHER VON STOLZING,
A KNIGHT FROM FRANCONIA
Johan Botha^o

EVA, POGNER’S DAUGHTER
Annette Dasch

MAGDALENE, HER ATTENDANT
Karen Cargill

DAVID, APPRENTICE TO SACHS
Paul Appleby*

VEIT POGNER, GOLDSMITH
Hans-Peter König

SIXTUS BECKMESSER,
TOWN CLERK
Johannes Martin Kränzle

HANS SACHS, SHOEMAKER
Michael Volle

KUNZ VOGELGESANG, FURRIER
Benjamin Bliss

KONRAD NACHTIGALL, TINSMITH
John Moore*

FRITZ KOTHNER, BAKER
Martin Gantner

HERMANN ORTEL, SOAP-MAKER
David Crawford

BALTHASAR ZORN, PEWTERER
David Cangelosi

AUGUSTIN MOSER, TAILOR
Noah Baetge

ULRICH EISSLINGER, GROCER
Tony Stevenson*

HANS FOLTZ, COPPERSMITH
Brian Kontes

HANS SCHWARZ, STOCKING-WEAVER
Ricardo Lugo

A NIGHT WATCHMAN
Matthew Rose

Saturday, December 13, 2014, 12:00–6:00PM

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BEATRIZ SCHILLER/METROPOLITAN OPERA

Johan Botha as
Walther in a scene
from Wagner's
*Die Meistersinger
von Nürnberg*

Chorus Master **Donald Palumbo**
Musical Preparation **Donna Racik, Linda Hall,
John Keenan, Dan Saunders, and Carol Isaac**
Assistant Stage Directors **Eric Einhorn and Stephen Pickover**
Stage Band Conductor **Jeffrey Goldberg**
Prompter **Carol Isaac**
Met Titles **Christopher Bergen**
German Coach **Marianne Barrett**
Painted Slides by **Robert Winkler**
Assistant to the Costume Designer **Elissa Tatigikis Iberti**
Scenery, properties, and electrical props constructed
and painted in **Metropolitan Opera Shops**
Costumes executed by **Metropolitan Opera
Costume Department**
Wigs and Makeup executed by **Metropolitan Opera
Wig and Makeup Department**
Boots and shoes by **Yefim and Dora Slusker and
Peerless Shoe Service**

◦ The appearance of
Johan Botha in this
performance is made
possible, in part, by
the Lauritz Melchior
Endowment Fund.

* Graduate of the
Lindemann Young Artist
Development Program

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Synopsis

Nuremberg, 16th century

Act I

St. Katherine's Church

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 1:30 PM)

Act II

The street between Sachs's workshop and Pogner's house

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 3:15 PM)

Act III

SCENE 1 Sachs's workshop

SCENE 2 The St. John's Day Festival, outside Nuremberg's walls

Act I

At St. Katherine's Church, the visiting young knight Walther von Stolzing approaches Eva, daughter of the wealthy goldsmith Pogner, who is attending mass with her companion, Magdalene. Eva tells her admirer that she is to be engaged the following day to the winner of a song contest held by the local guild of mastersingers. David, Magdalene's sweetheart and apprentice to the cobbler and mastersinger Hans Sachs, explains the rules of song composing to Walther, who is surprised by the complicated ins and outs of mastersinging. Meanwhile David's fellow apprentices set up for a preliminary trial singing. The masters arrive, including Eva's father, and Walther expresses his desire to become a mastersinger in order to ask for Eva's hand. The pedantic town clerk Beckmesser, who also wants to marry Eva, is immediately suspicious of the young knight. As proof that tradesmen value art, Pogner offers his daughter's hand as the prize for the next day's contest and explains that she can reject the winner, but must marry a mastersinger or can marry no one. Walther introduces himself and describes his natural, self-taught methods of musical composition, provoking mocking comments from Beckmesser. For his trial song, Walther sings an impulsive tune in praise of love and spring, breaking many of the masters' rules. Beckmesser vigorously keeps a count of his errors. Rejected by the masters, Walther leaves, while Sachs reflects on the unexpected appeal of Walther's song.

Act II

That evening in front of Pogner's house, David tells Magdalene about Walther's misfortune, and Eva gets the disappointing news from Magdalene. Across the street, Sachs sits down to work in his doorway, but the memory of Walther's song distracts him. Eva appears, hoping to learn more about the knight's trial. When Sachs mentions that Beckmesser hopes to win her the next day, she

suggests she wouldn't be unhappy if Sachs himself won the contest. Sachs, who has known Eva since she was a child, responds with paternal affection. Asked about Walther, he pretends to disapprove of the young man, which leads Eva to reveal her true feelings and to run off. In the street, she is met by Walther who convinces her to elope. The two hide as a night watchman passes. Sachs, who has overheard the lovers' conversation, decides to help them but prevent their flight. He lights the street with a lantern, forcing Eva and Walther to stay put. Meanwhile Beckmesser arrives to serenade Eva. As he is about to begin, Sachs launches into a cheerful cobbler's song, much to the clerk's irritation, claiming he needs to finish his work. The two men agree that both would make progress if Beckmesser were to sing while Sachs marked any broken rules of style with his cobbler's hammer. Beckmesser finally sings his song, directing it at Magdalene who is impersonating Eva at a window of Pogner's house. Sachs frequently interrupts with hammer strokes, to Beckmesser's mounting anger. Walther and Eva observe the scene from their hiding place, bewildered at first, then amused. Confusion increases when David appears and attacks Beckmesser for apparently wooing Magdalene. Finally the night-shirted neighbors, roused from sleep, join in the general tumult until the sound of the night watchman's horn disperses them. Pogner leads Eva inside while Sachs drags Walther and David into his shop. The night watchman passes through the suddenly deserted street.

Act III

The next morning in Sachs's workshop, David apologizes for his unruly behavior. Alone, Sachs reflects on the madness of the world. Walther arrives to tell Sachs of a wondrous dream he had. Recognizing a potential prize song, Sachs takes down the words and helps Walther to fashion them according to the rules of mastersinging. When they leave to dress for the contest, Beckmesser appears. He notices Walther's poem and, mistaking it for one of Sachs's own, pockets it. The returning cobbler tells him to keep it. Certain of his victory with a song written by Sachs, Beckmesser leaves. Now Eva arrives, pretending there is something wrong with her shoe. Walther returns, dressed for the festival, and repeats his prize song for her. Eva is torn between her love for Walther and her affection for Sachs, but the older man turns her towards the younger. When Magdalene arrives, Sachs promotes David to journeyman and asks Eva to bless the new song. All five reflect on their happiness—Sachs's tinged with gentle regret—then leave for the contest.

Guilds and citizens assemble in a meadow outside the city. The masters enter and the people cheer Sachs, who responds with a moving address in praise of art and the coming contest. Beckmesser is the first to sing. Nervously trying to fit Walther's verses to his own music he makes nonsense of the words, earning laughter from the crowd. He furiously turns on Sachs and runs off. Walther then steps forward and delivers the song. Entranced, the people proclaim him the winner, but Walther refuses the masters' necklace. Sachs convinces him to accept—tradition and its upholders must be honored, as must those who create innovation. Youth and age are reconciled, Walther has won Eva, and the people once again hail Sachs.

Richard Wagner

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg

Premiere: Munich Court Opera, Munich, 1868

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg is Richard Wagner's only comic opera, a monumental yet intimate love story that is also a journey through the artistic process. The story revolves around the creation of a song, written by a brash, self-taught poet. The plot follows a very typical operatic formula: young love winning out over meddling old men. The referee of this entanglement is Hans Sachs, one of the most memorable characters in opera and a real-life shoemaker, composer-poet, and author of drama, fiction, and essays. One of the longest operas in the repertory, *Die Meistersinger* makes enormous demands on soloists, conductor, chorus, and orchestra. It has astounded musicians and critics since its successful premiere.

The Creator

Richard Wagner (1813–83) was the complex, controversial creator of music-drama masterpieces that stand at the center of today's operatic repertory. Born in Leipzig, Germany, he was an artistic revolutionary who reimagined every supposition about music and theater. Wagner insisted that words and music were equals in his works. This approach led to the idea of the Gesamtkunstwerk, or "total work of art," combining music, poetry, architecture, painting, and other disciplines, a notion that has had an impact on creative fields far beyond opera.

The Setting

The opera takes place in the symbolically important town of Nuremberg, in southern Germany, around the year 1560. Nuremberg stood for many things: it was a political center of the Holy Roman Empire, an ill-defined state encompassing Germany and Austria whose name suggested international significance. Nuremberg was also known as a center of business and excellent craftsmanship, a tradition we see represented in the opera. Here, Nuremberg becomes an idealized representation of everything good about German tradition—an egalitarian hotbed of art and thought where a shoemaker really could be (and was) respected as an artist and a philosopher.

The Music

The score of *Die Meistersinger* is a sublime achievement, at once lyric, grand, and amazingly detailed. It shows Wagner's absolute command of his craft, from the orchestra (first shown in the stentorian and irresistible prelude) to vocal solos (the evolution of the tenor's song from his first solo in Act I to its two incarnations in Act III, and Hans Sachs's meditation on human folly, the famous "Wahn" Monologue in Act III) to ensembles (the transcendently gorgeous quintet in Act III). The many choruses also demonstrate the scope of Wagner's genius, most notably the foursquare chorale that opens the work, the near anarchy of the complex riot scene in Act II, and the playful apprentices' songs in Act III.

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg at the Met

The Met gave the United States premiere of this opera in 1886 under Anton Seidl, the remarkable Hungarian-American conductor who assisted Wagner in Bayreuth. The cast featured leading stars of the Met's German era, including Emil Fischer, who sang the role of Hans Sachs 34 times over six seasons. Notable subsequent interpreters of the role include Edouard de Reszke (1895–1902), Friedrich Schorr, Herbert Janssen, Otto Edelman, and Thomas Stewart. Conductors include Walter Damrosch (1890–1902) and Arturo Toscanini (who led 19 performances between 1910 and 1915), George Szell (1945–46), and Karl Böhm (1959). Music director James Levine conducted the premiere of the current production in 1993 and for 29 subsequent performances. Among the memorable sopranos who have appeared in *Meistersinger* at the Met are Johanna Gadski, Elisabeth Rethberg, Eleanor Steber, Lisa Della Casa, Astrid Varnay, Pilar Lorengar, and Karita Mattila, while notable tenors include Jean de Reszke, Sándor Kónya, Leo Slezak, Jess Thomas, and Ben Heppner.



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A scene from *Aida*

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Program Note

In the spring of 1861, Richard Wagner endured the very worst humiliation of his mature career—a humiliation of Beckmesserian proportions. The high-profile revival of his early opera *Tannhäuser*, thoroughly revised for its Paris premiere, caused such a scandalous uproar that Wagner pulled up stakes and canceled the production after only three performances. That failure reinforced his burning sense of resentment against the opera capital of the world, where he had already experienced crushing rejection nearly two decades before.

Later that summer, prospects fell through for the premiere of his most recent work, *Tristan und Isolde* (completed in 1859), which was to have taken place in Vienna. Dozens of rehearsals confirmed the score's reputation as "unperformable." Meanwhile, Wagner's perennial troubles with his estranged first wife, the actress Minna Planer, along with alarming new accumulations to his mountain of debt, all intensified the feeling that he had reached an impasse more daunting than ever before in his career. The inauguration of the Bayreuth Festival still lay 15 years in the future.

"I feel that I need a break from the very real seriousness of my everyday preoccupations in order to create something quickly that will bring me into more immediate contact with the practicalities of our contemporary theaters," wrote Wagner in October 1861 to his publisher, Franz Schott, by way of explaining his sudden proposal to write "an easier, less demanding, and therefore more quickly completed work." The composer even ventured that he would be able to deliver the score "finished and ready for performance by next winter."

In fact it would take Wagner another six years to complete *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. This was not the first time he miscalculated the dimensions required for a new creation, including the length of its genesis and the demands the finished work would make on both performers and audiences—let alone on opera company budgets. In 1857, around two-thirds of the way through *Siegfried*, Wagner had set aside work on the *Ring* in order to immerse himself in *Tristan*, which he similarly predicted at first would be an easy-to-produce moneymaker. The *Meistersinger* project prolonged Wagner's postponement of the *Ring* (though he did interrupt the new opera to continue orchestrating the music he'd already drafted for *Siegfried*).

What might explain Wagner's surprising determination to devote energy to a genre he initially described outright as "grand comic opera"? He had attempted it only once before, in his early twenties, with *Das Liebesverbot*, an adaptation of Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*. Comedy seems thoroughly incompatible with the demands of "heavy" Wagnerian music drama. Even if he eventually dropped that label from *Meistersinger*, the historical specificity of its setting—"Nuremberg, about the middle of the 16th century"—represents an exception among Wagner's mature music dramas. In contrast to *Meistersinger*, these works reject "historical" opera in favor of the indeterminate, timeless setting of myth and legend.

For one thing, Wagner had already stored up the idea for *Meistersinger* in the middle of his tenure as music director in Dresden. This was well before he formulated the criteria for his revolutionary vision of the music drama, which

evolved in tandem with his work on the *Ring* tetralogy. While vacationing at the spa town of Marienbad in July 1845, and fresh from completing *Tannhäuser*, Wagner sketched out a substantial prose draft for what he later termed “an especially cheerful subject” that, like *Tannhäuser*, also revolved around a climactic song contest. He noted that this “vivid picture of Hans Sachs and the mastersingers of Nuremberg” appealed because it might serve as a light-hearted counterbalance to the tragedy of *Tannhäuser*.

Perhaps his recent fixation on the earlier opera’s abortive Paris production re-triggered the idea of *Meistersinger* as a temporary relief from the stress of tragedy (and from Wagner’s own litany of sufferings in this period). Moreover, the composer’s travels through Nuremberg in August, just after a major choral festival had been held there, may have reawakened his interest in the significance of the city as an idealized symbol for a high point in German culture; only since 1860 had a partial amnesty allowed Wagner, a political refugee in Switzerland throughout the 1850s, to set foot again on German soil.

Over the intervening years, Wagner’s appraisal of the potential lurking in this material—and above all in the character of the shoemaker-poet Hans Sachs—had altered significantly. It is possible that he still regarded the project as an uncomplicated comic diversion when he first took it off the shelf again. But more likely Wagner was merely trying to sell it as such to Schott to justify a much-needed cash advance when, in his pitch letter of 1861, he predicted that “the style of the piece, in the poem and the music alike, will be thoroughly light and popular.”

During the next several months, Wagner crafted a libretto that on one level is populist and straightforward, though deliberately old-fashioned (evoking the simplicity of the short rhymed verse Goethe employed in Part I of *Faust*, which itself emulates the idiom cultivated by Sachs in his poems). Yet the libretto’s layering of esoteric allusions at times approaches the polyphonic complexity of the music—a hallmark of this score already foreshadowed by the prelude, which Wagner composed, contrary to his usual practice, before he had even completed the libretto. The *Meistersinger* text weaves together a fabric characteristically drawn from a wide array of sources. Among these are the work of the contemporary literary historian Georg Gottfried Gervinus, Jacob Grimm’s history of master singing, a biography and play about the real-life Nuremberger Hans Sachs (1494–1576), Sachs’ own poetry and plays, a Goethe poem about Sachs, and the fiction of such early German Romantics as E.T.A. Hoffmann that make use of the atmospheric setting of old Nuremberg.

From this mass of disparate material Wagner constructed a remarkably coherent drama whose specific setting serves as readily as the mythic contexts of his other music dramas as a universal metaphor for the human situation. The opera’s interplay of ideas and dramatic motifs pushes *Meistersinger* far beyond the realm of “light comedy,” even as it integrates such standard-issue comic patterns as the rivalry of an unsuitable older suitor (Beckmesser) for the desirable Eva and the triumph of the young couple against the odds. Yet the more comforting and familiar comedic elements provide a kind of Trojan horse for deeper reflections. These indeed are

consonant with the essentially tragic philosophical outlook Wagner had evolved in recent years, which had compelled him to write *Tristan* while also reshaping his thinking about the *Ring*.

The most immediately obvious embodiment of this outlook is the profounder characterization of Hans Sachs, in comparison with Wagner's 1845 sketch. Sachs is developed with more complexity than anyone else in the opera's large cast—to the point that he has come to be considered the most sympathetic, most humane of Wagner's signature bass-baritone characters. Deeper reflections likewise shape the entire dramaturgy of the third act—the longest single act in all Wagner—with its resolution in both the private and the public spheres of the principal issues at stake throughout the opera: the relationship between innovation and tradition, inspiration and discipline, the artist and the community. The composer's identification with the revolutionary young hero Walther, apparent in his earlier vision of *Meistersinger*, has by now been redirected onto the older, far more self-aware widower Sachs—echoing a similar shift in the respective significance of Siegfried and Wotan in the *Ring*. Yet no other character in Wagner approaches the warmth and humanity of Sachs or the gentle but palpable anguish of his renunciation of desire for Eva, the necessary step before the opera can continue on to the final scene of the song contest.

Far from offering a "cheerful" comic interlude or even distraction from his problems, Wagner's new understanding of *Meistersinger* came to incorporate the very core of his vision of art as the modern replacement for outmoded religion, of art as the agent that can reveal the truth of the world and that can order our personal and social relationships. *Meistersinger* begins with a representation of the community at worship, joined in song, but culminates with a twofold glorification of art. The first comes in the people's spontaneous acclamation of the young interloper Walther von Stolzing as a mastersinger and winner of the song contest (and consequently of Eva Pogner's hand in marriage), while the second—to even more resounding effect, because it concludes the opera—gives the spotlight to Hans Sachs, whose name is proclaimed by the crowd in the final chorus.

The power of this victorious outcome and of *Meistersinger's* overall sense of affirmation owes much to a darker undercurrent that is integral to the entire work. Recent interpretations have come to focus on a dimension that sets the opera's perceived accessibility and "sunny" nature in disturbing relief: the post-Holocaust decoding, initiated by Theodor Adorno and extended by other scholars over the past quarter-century, of Beckmesser and his comeuppance as a metaphor for Wagner's relentless anti-Semitism. According to this line of argument, it was no coincidence that Wagner chose to reissue his notoriously toxic pamphlet *Jewishness in Music* in 1869 (and for the first time signed under his own name), the year after *Meistersinger* had its resoundingly successful premiere in Munich.

Beckmesser's "artistic failings are precisely those ascribed to the Jews" in the pamphlet, writes the Wagner expert Barry Millington. On the other hand, runs the counterargument, Jews had been expelled from the historical Nuremberg

in 1499, and the respected position held by Beckmesser as a leader of the community makes it implausible that Wagner intended to single him out as the dangerously unassimilable “alien” caricatured in his anti-Semitic diatribe. Beckmesser’s humiliation, in this reading, reflects the sadistic treatment inherent in the mechanism of comedy (think Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*) and is enhanced by Wagner’s scorn for traditionalist critics, while the Marker’s garbled song parodies Italian coloratura—another “foreign” influence to be avoided.

Further complicating the issue is the unfortunate reception history by which *Meistersinger* found special favor in Hitler’s Third Reich, thus unavoidably tainting the associations conjured by Sachs’ final paean to the purity of “sacred German art.” Instead of a simplistic either/or approach, it would be more realistic to acknowledge a conflation of these various elements in Wagner’s characterization of Beckmesser, including the irrational hatred that may have unconsciously been mixed in during Wagner’s creative process. In his book *Nuremberg: The Imaginary Capital*, Stephen Brockman argues that Beckmesser should “be seen not literally as a Jew but as a dramatically necessary structural element of the opera.” At the same time, Beckmesser “plays the same role that Jews play in German anti-Semitism, and for this reason the identification of Beckmesser as a Jew is a highly productive misreading, as demonstrated by the controversy it has generated.”

One reason Wagner’s composition of *Meistersinger* took so long was that he needed to find the right musical language to express a milieu that, while inspired by a specific historical setting, was ultimately a thoroughly reimagined world far removed from the Renaissance Nuremberg that flourished as a center of banking and international trade. Commentators are fond of emphasizing the dramatic contrasts between *Tristan*’s chromatic night world and the gloriously bright C major that frames *Meistersinger* and its celebration of St. John’s Eve. Yet the songs, marches, choruses, quasi-Lutheran chorales, and radiant third-act quintet hardly represent “reversions” to a less-complicated musical language. More than any other creation by Wagner, *Meistersinger* is “about” music itself and the entire range of what music can convey, deep below the surface text of what the characters are singing—including, famously, a hair-raising quotation from *Tristan* itself in the third act.

This “meta-musical” aspect encompasses a remarkable spectrum, from complex ensembles to the psychological intimacy of the portrait of Sachs in the third act. The effectiveness of Wagner’s process, as the philosopher Michael Tanner observes, is to keep moving our focus “from the outside—consideration of the whole monumental work—to areas within it.” The result is that it becomes a “mistake” to settle for which among its “possible perspectives is the right one. But Wagner has ensured that we shall not be able to rest from the attempt.”

—Thomas May

The Cast



James Levine

MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR (CINCINNATI, OHIO)

MET HISTORY Since his 1971 debut conducting *Tosca*, he has appeared with the Met in 2,500 performances, concerts, and recitals—more than any other conductor in the company's history. Of the 85 operas he has led at the Met, 13 were company premieres (including *Stiffelio*, *I Lombardi*, *I Vespri Siciliani*, *La Cenerentola*, *Benvenuto Cellini*, *Porgy and Bess*, *Erwartung*, *Moses und Aron*, *Idomeneo*, and *La Clemenza di Tito*). He also led the world premieres of Corigliano's *The Ghosts of Versailles* and Harbison's *The Great Gatsby*.

THIS SEASON In his 44th season at the Met he conducts the new production of *Le Nozze di Figaro* and revivals of *Ernani*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Les Contes d' Hoffmann*, *Un Ballo in Maschera*, and *The Rake's Progress*; three concerts with the MET Orchestra at Carnegie Hall with soloists Maurizio Pollini, Elīna Garanča, and Yefim Bronfman; and two chamber concerts with the MET Chamber Ensemble at Carnegie's Weill and Zankel Halls.



Karen Cargill

MEZZO-SOPRANO (ARBROATH, SCOTLAND)

THIS SEASON Magdalene in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* at the Met, Waltraute in *Götterdämmerung* with the Canadian Opera, and concerts with the Philadelphia Orchestra, London Symphony, Netherlands Philharmonic, and Scottish Chamber Orchestra.

MET APPEARANCES Anna in *Les Troyens* and Waltraute (debut, 2012).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Waltraute at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, the First Norn in *Götterdämmerung* at Covent Garden, Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and Isabella in *L'Italiana in Algeri* with Scottish Opera, and Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly* with English National Opera. She appears regularly in concerts with the BBC Symphony and London Philharmonic Orchestras, Hallé Philharmonic, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, and London Symphony Orchestra. She is an associate artist of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra where she has sung Berlioz's *La Mort de Cléopâtre*, *L'Enfance du Christ*, and *Les Nuits d'Été*, Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*, Wagner's *Wesendonck Lieder*, and Béatrice in Berlioz's *Béatrice et Bénédicte*.



Annette Dasch

SOPRANO (MUNICH, GERMANY)

THIS SEASON Eva in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* at the Met, the title role of Martinů's *Juliette* in Zurich, Elsa in *Lohengrin* at the Bayreuth Festival, and concerts with the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Lisbon's Gulbenkian Orchestra, and the Bavarian Radio

Symphony Orchestra.

MET APPEARANCES The Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (debut, 2009).

The Cast CONTINUED

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS She has sung Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* at La Scala, Berlin State Opera, and Munich's Bavarian State Opera, the Countess at Covent Garden and Paris's Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* at the Salzburg Easter Festival and in Munich, Antonia in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at the Paris Opera, Eva in Budapest, and Elsa in *Lohengrin* at La Scala, the Bayreuth Festival, and in Munich. She has also appeared with the Vienna Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, Dresden Staatskapelle, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, and the Orchestra de la Suisse Romande.



Paul Appleby

TENOR (SOUTH BEND, INDIANA)

THIS SEASON David in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* and Tom Rakewell in *The Rake's Progress* at the Met and Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* for his debut with the San Diego Opera and in concert with the Milwaukee Symphony.

MET APPEARANCES Brian in *Two Boys*, Chevalier de la Force in *Dialogues des Carmélites*, Hylas in *Les Troyens*, Demetrius in *The Enchanted Island*, and Brighella in *Ariadne auf Naxos* (debut, 2011).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Ferrando in *Così fan tutte* in Frankfurt and for his debut with the Canadian Opera Company, Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte* for his debut with Washington National Opera, and a concert with the New York Philharmonic. He has also sung Fritz in Offenbach's *La Grande-Duchesse de Gérolstein* with the Santa Fe Opera, Ferrando with Boston Lyric Opera, Tom Rakewell in Frankfurt, Agenore in *Il Re Pastore* with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, and Lysander in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Gomatz in *Zaïde* with Wolf Trap Opera. He is a graduate of the Met's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.



Johan Botha

TENOR (RUSTENBURG, SOUTH AFRICA)

THIS SEASON Walther in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* at the Met, Radamès in *Aida* in Hamburg, Bacchus in *Ariadne auf Naxos* and the title role of *Parsifal* at the Vienna State Opera, the title role of *Tannhäuser* at Lyric Opera of Chicago, *Rinaldo* in concert in Dresden, the title role of *Otello* in Cologne, and Siegmund in *Die Walküre* at the Bayreuth Festival.

MET APPEARANCES Radamès, Siegmund, Canio in *Pagliacci* (debut, 1997), Florestan in *Fidelio*, Calàf in *Turandot*, and the title roles of *Otello*, *Don Carlo*, and *Lohengrin*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Among his recent performances are Siegmund at the Vienna State Opera, *Otello* with Munich's Bavarian State Opera, Walther at Lyric Opera of Chicago, and *Parsifal* at the Salzburg Easter Festival. Additional performances include Pollione in *Norma* in Berlin, Apollo in Strauss's *Daphne* and the title role of *Andrea Chénier* at the Vienna State Opera, and the Emperor in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* at Covent Garden and La Scala. He has also been heard at Salzburg Festival, Barcelona's Liceu, Los Angeles Opera, Paris's Bastille Opera and Théâtre du Châtelet, and in Dresden and Frankfurt.



Martin Gantner

BARITONE (FREIBURG, GERMANY)

THIS SEASON Kothner in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* for his debut at the Met, the Music Master in *Ariadne auf Naxos* at the Paris Opera and in Zurich, and Telramund in *Lohengrin* and Don Pizarro in *Fidelio* in Zurich.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Don Pizarro at the Vienna State Opera, Faninal in *Der Rosenkavalier* and Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus* at Munich's Bavarian State Opera, the Speaker in *Die Zauberflöte* at the Salzburg Festival, Wolfram in *Tannhäuser* in Bologna, and Jochanaan in *Salome* in St. Gallen. He has also sung Dr. Falke in *Die Fledermaus* at Lyric Opera of Chicago, the Music Master at Los Angeles Opera, Nick Shadow in *The Rake's Progress* in Zurich, Albert in *Werther* at the Vienna State Opera, and Eisenstein at the Berlin State Opera. He was named Kammersänger of Munich's Bavarian State Opera in 2005.



Hans-Peter König

BASS (DÜSSELDORF, GERMANY)

THIS SEASON Pogner in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* at the Met, Hagen in *Götterdämmerung* at Munich's Bavarian State Opera, Zaccaria in *Nabucco* at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni* in Düsseldorf, King Marke in *Tristan und Isolde* in Toulouse, and King Henry in *Lohengrin* and the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni* in Duisburg.

MET APPEARANCES Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* (debut, 2010), Daland in *Der Fliegende Holländer*, and Fafner, Hunding, and Hagen in the *Ring* cycle.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS A member of Düsseldorf's Deutsche Oper am Rhein, he was awarded the title of Kammersänger there for his outstanding contributions to music. His repertoire encompasses leading bass roles of Wagner, Verdi, Mozart, Tchaikovsky, and Strauss, among others, which he has sung with many of the world's leading opera companies (including the Grammy Award-winning *Ring* cycle at the Met). He has appeared at a guest artist at Covent Garden, Paris's Bastille Opera, La Scala, Barcelona's Liceu, and Florence's Maggio Musicale, as well as in Dresden, Tokyo, Hamburg, and São Paulo and at festivals in Bayreuth and Baden-Baden.



Johannes Martin Kränzle

BARITONE (AUGSBURG, GERMANY)

THIS SEASON Beckmesser in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* for his debut at the Met, the Music Master in *Ariadne auf Naxos* in Zurich, the title role of Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle* in Wiesbaden and Paris, and Amfortas in *Parsifal* and Don Giovanni in Frankfurt.

The Cast CONTINUED

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Since joining the Frankfurt Opera in 1998, he has appeared with that company in many leading roles including Wolfram in *Tannhäuser*, Tomsy in *The Queen of Spades*, and Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte*. He has also sung Andrei in *War and Peace* in Cologne, Gryaznoy in Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Tsar's Bride* at La Scala, Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte* with the San Francisco Opera, the Count in *Le Nozze di Figaro* in Hamburg, Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus* and Danilo in *The Merry Widow* in Geneva, Nietzsche in the world premiere of Wolfgang Rihm's *Dionysos* at the Salzburg Festival, Beckmesser at the Glyndebourne Festival, and Alberich in the *Ring* cycle at the Berlin State Opera and La Scala. He was named *Opernwelt* magazine's 2011 singer of the year.



Matthew Rose

BASS (BRIGHTON, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON Colline in *La Bohème* and the Night Watchman in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* at the Met and Callistene in Donizetti's *Poliuto* and Collatinus in Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia* at the Glyndebourne Festival.

MET APPEARANCES Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Talbot in *Maria Stuarda*, and Colline (debut, 2011).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Bottom at La Scala, Lyon Opera, Covent Garden, Houston Grand Opera, and for his 2006 debut at the Glyndebourne Festival; Sparafucile in *Rigoletto*, Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte*, and Talbot at Covent Garden; Leporello in *Don Giovanni* and Nick Shadow in *The Rake's Progress* at the Glyndebourne Festival; and Claggart in *Billy Budd* for the English National Opera. He has also sung Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro* at Munich's Bavarian State Opera and Welsh National Opera, Leporello at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, and Henry VIII in *Anna Bolena* in Bordeaux.



Michael Volle

BARITONE (FREUDENSTADT, GERMANY)

THIS SEASON Hans Sachs in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* at the Met, Amfortas in *Parsifal* and Wotan in the *Ring* cycle with the Vienna State Opera, Mandryka in *Arabella* in Barcelona, and Scarpia in *Tosca*, Dr. Schön/Jack the Ripper in *Lulu*, and the title role of *Wozzeck* with the Berlin State Opera,

MET APPEARANCES Mandryka (debut, 2014).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has sung Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Kurwenal in *Tristan und Isolde*, Amfortas, *Wozzeck*, and Eugene Onegin at Munich's Bavarian State Opera and Zurga in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles*, Rodrigo in *Don Carlo*, Beckmesser in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Eugene Onegin, Golaud in *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Barak in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, Wolfram in *Tannhäuser*, and Hans Sachs in Zurich. He has also appeared at Covent Garden, Deutsche Oper Berlin, La Scala, Paris Opera, and the Bayreuth and Salzburg Festivals. He was named *Opernwelt* magazine's 2014 singer of the year.