

FRANCIS POULENC

DIALOGUES DES CARMÉLITES

CONDUCTOR
Yannick Nézet-Séguin

PRODUCTION
John Dexter

SET DESIGNER
David Reppa

COSTUME DESIGNER
Jane Greenwood

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Gil Wechsler

REVIVAL STAGE DIRECTOR
David Kneuss

GENERAL MANAGER
Peter Gelb

JEANETTE LERMAN-NEUBAUER
MUSIC DIRECTOR
Yannick Nézet-Séguin

Opera in three acts

Libretto by the composer,
based on the play by Georges Bernanos

Friday, May 3, 2019
7:30–10:40 PM

First time this season

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was made possible by a generous gift
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The Metropolitan Opera

2018–19 SEASON

The 58th Metropolitan Opera performance of

FRANCIS POULENC'S

DIALOGUES DES CARMÉLITES

CONDUCTOR

Yannick Nézet-Séguin

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

CHEVALIER DE LA FORCE

David Portillo

MARQUIS DE LA FORCE

Jean-François Lapointe

DEBUT

BLANCHE DE LA FORCE

Isabel Leonard

THIERRY

Eduardo Valdes

MADAME DE CROISSY

Karita Mattila

SISTER CONSTANCE

Erin Morley*

MOTHER MARIE

Karen Cargill

JAVELINOT

Paul Corona

MADAME LIDOINE

Adrianne Pieczonka

CARMELITE NUNS

Elizabeth Brooks

Lianne Coble-Dispensa

Andrea Coleman

Maria D'Amato

Sara Heaton

Mary Hughes

Kate Mangiameli

Ashley Mason

Elizabeth Sciblo

Rosalie Sullivan

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A CHAPLAIN

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SISTER MATHILDE

Emily D'Angelo**

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Richard Bernstein

MOTHER JEANNE

Tichina Vaughn*

A JAILER

Patrick Carfizzi

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Friday, May 3, 2019, 7:30–10:40PM



Isabel Leonard
as Blanche in
Poulenc's *Dialogues
des Carmélites*

Chorus Master **Donald Palumbo**
Musical Preparation **Donna Racik, Derrick Inouye,
Marie-France Lefebvre, and Bryan Wagorn***
Assistant Stage Director **Sarah Ina Meyers**
Prompter **Donna Racik**
Met Titles **Sonya Friedman**
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Synopsis

France, April 1789 to July 1794.

Act I

The first signs of the French Revolution are beginning to shake the country. In his library, the Marquis de la Force and his son, the Chevalier, are worried about Blanche, the Chevalier's fearful, nervous sister, whose carriage has been held up by a mob on her way home. When Blanche arrives, she makes light of the incident, but her anxiety is revealed when a servant's shadow frightens her as she leaves the room. Shaken, she returns to tell her father that she has made up her mind to become a nun.

Weeks later at the Carmelite convent in Compiègne, the aged and ailing prioress Madame de Croissy interviews Blanche and makes it clear to the girl that the convent is a house of prayer, not a refuge. Nevertheless, the prioress is touched by Blanche's resolve to embrace her new life.

In the workroom of the convent, Blanche and the young Sister Constance discuss their fear of death, which Constance claims to have overcome. Blanche admits her envy of her companion's straightforward and easygoing nature. Constance shocks Blanche by telling her that she knows that they will both die young and on the same day.

In the infirmary, Madame de Croissy is lying on her deathbed, struggling to appear calm. She blesses Blanche and consigns her, as the youngest member of the order, to the care of the loyal Mother Marie. The prioress confesses her terror in the hour of death, then falls lifeless.

Act II

That night in the chapel, Constance and Blanche keep vigil by the prioress's bier. Blanche is overcome by fear and is about to run off when Mother Marie appears. Realizing that Blanche is genuinely afraid, she tries to calm her. Constance hopes that Mother Marie will be the new prioress. She tells Blanche that she wonders why a God-fearing person like Madame de Croissy had to die such an agonizing death. Perhaps, she says, people don't die for themselves but for others. Someone else will be surprised one day to find death easy.

Madame Lidoine has been appointed the new prioress. In the chapter room, she addresses the convent, counseling patience and humility.

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 9:00PM)

Act II (CONTINUED)

A visitor is announced—it is Blanche's brother, who is about to flee the country. He urges Blanche to leave the convent and return to their father. Blanche replies that her duty is to her sisters.

In the sacristy, the chaplain, forbidden to perform his duties, celebrates his last Mass. The nuns discuss the fear that has grabbed the country, and Mother Marie wonders if self-sacrifice will be their destiny. Madame Lidoine reminds them that martyrs are not chosen by their own will, only by God's. Two commissioners enter and tell the sisters that they have been expelled from the convent. One of them, speaking quietly to Mother Marie, adds that he will do what he can to help them get away safely. One of the sisters gives Blanche a figurine of the Christ Child. When revolutionary cries are heard from outside, Blanche nervously drops the figure, breaking it. She is horrified by this omen.

Act III

In the devastated chapel, Mother Marie suggests, in Madame Lidoine's absence, that they all take a vow of martyrdom by unanimous decision. Noting Blanche's reaction, the others suspect that she will vote against it. When the secret ballot reveals one dissenter, Constance claims it was she and asks to reverse her vote so that the vow can proceed. Blanche, afraid to live or to die, runs away. Soldiers lead the sisters from the convent.

Blanche is forced to work as a servant in the ransacked mansion of her father, who has been sent to the guillotine. Mother Marie finds her there and tries to persuade her to return to the sisters.

The nuns have been arrested. At the Conciergerie prison, Madame Lidoine joins the sisters in their vow of martyrdom. Constance says that she has dreamed of Blanche's return. A jailer enters and reads the death sentence. Madame Lidoine blesses the sisters. When Mother Marie learns from the chaplain that the nuns will die, she resolves to join them, but the chaplain reminds her that it is for God to decide whether or not she will be a martyr.

A crowd has gathered on the Place de la Révolution. The Carmelites walk toward the guillotine, led by Madame Lidoine and singing the "Salve Regina." With each stroke of the blade, their voices are silenced, one by one, finally leaving only Constance. On her way to the scaffold, she sees Blanche step up from the crowd, take up the chant, and follow her to her death.

Francis Poulenc

Dialogues des Carmélites

Premiere: Teatro alla Scala, Milan, 1957

One of the most successful operas of the 20th century, *Dialogues des Carmélites* is a rare case of a modern work that is equally esteemed by audiences and experts. The drama unfolds in a gripping and straightforward narrative framework of 12 scenes with musical interludes, relating a tragic story based on real events from the French Revolution: A community of Carmelite nuns decides to face death at the guillotine rather than renounce their vows. The opera focuses on a young member of the order, the aristocratic Blanche de la Force, who must overcome a pathological timidity in order to answer her life's calling. The score reflects two key aspects of its composer's personality: Francis Poulenc was an urbane Parisian with a profound mystical dimension, and the opera addresses both the characters' internal lives and their external realities—it is in equal measure historical, psychological, and spiritual.

The Creators

French composer Francis Poulenc (1899–1963) is known for a wide variety of works in many genres, including piano and chamber music, songs, ballets, three operas, and religious music that successfully combines mysticism with modern sensibilities. Poulenc wrote the *Carmélites* libretto himself, based on an unproduced screenplay (that was then turned into a stage play) by Georges Bernanos (1888–1948), a French author with an interest in politics and religion. This, in turn, was based on the 1931 novella *Die Letzte am Schafott* (*The Last Woman on the Scaffold*, known in English as *The Song at the Scaffold*) by German writer Gertrud von Le Fort (1876–1971). Le Fort's work spanned the realms of spirituality, religious history, and psychology. Her identification with the fictional lead character of Blanche can be seen in the surname that she chose for her, “de la Force.”

The Setting

The opera takes place between 1789 and 1794, in Paris and in the town of Compiègne in northeastern France—the site of the Carmelite nuns' convent. Its historical basis is the martyrdom of a group of 16 Carmelite nuns and lay sisters from Compiègne, who chose to offer themselves as victims for the restoration of peace to France during the Revolution. They were guillotined on July 17, 1794. Their gesture was regarded by many as crucial in swaying public opinion and bringing about the fall of the rule of Robespierre and the Reign of Terror, which

in fact ended days later. The execution and the circumstances leading to it were described in a memoir by one of the nuns who survived, Sister Marie of the Incarnation (who appears as a character in the opera).

The Music

Poulenc's genius with the setting of text is apparent throughout the opera, much of which consists of recitative that closely follows speech patterns. Subtle yet distinct modulations in the orchestra often cue changes of mind and heart. While there is an abundance of creative harmonic invention, the score is fundamentally tonal—a fact for which, in the “experimental” 1950s, Poulenc felt it necessary to apologize with his trademark wit: “You must forgive my Carmelites—it appears they can only sing tonal music.” Musical motifs reveal both character traits and the circumstances that formed them: Sister Constance is introduced with sprightly music suited to her optimistic (yet perceptive) personality. A nervous passage marked “allegro” accompanies Blanche's father's recollection of the panic that caused his wife's death while giving premature birth to Blanche. It later becomes symbolic of Blanche's fearful nature. Poulenc's interest in religious music is apparent in moments that range from the austere (the Requiem for the Prioress at the beginning of Act II) to the dramatic (the priest leading the nuns in their final public prayer later in the same act). The most arresting combination of the internal, spiritual, and dramatic musical worlds occurs in the celebrated finale: The fervent prayer of the “Salve Regina” is sung over a repeating figure in the orchestra, as each of the nuns meets her fate and their voices are silenced one by one.

Met History

The opera premiered at the Met on February 5, 1977, in the present production by John Dexter, sung in English. The cast included Maria Ewing as Blanche, Régine Crespin (who had sung Madame Lidoine in the June 1957 premiere of the original French version at the Paris Opera) as Madame de Croissy, Shirley Verrett as Madame Lidoine, and Mignon Dunn as Mother Marie. Michel Plasson, making his Met debut, conducted. Later revivals featured Frederica von Stade (1983), Dawn Upshaw (1994), Patricia Racette (2002–03), and Isabel Leonard (2013) as Blanche; Leona Mitchell (1978–81), Jessye Norman (1987), Teresa Stratas (1994), Christine Goerke (2002–03), and Racette (2013) as Madame Lidoine; Florence Quivar (1983–94) and Stephanie Blythe (2002–03) as Mother Marie; and Dunn (1983–87) and Dame Felicity Palmer (2002–13) as Madame de Croissy.

Program Note

“I am working like a *madman*, I do not go out, I do not see anyone,” wrote Francis Poulenc soon after he’d begun composing *Dialogues des Carmélites* in 1953. “I do not want to think of anything else ... I am crazy about my subject, to the point of believing that I have actually known these women.”

Poulenc’s passionate involvement with his characters suggests a romantic creative sensibility that had become unfashionable by the mid-20th century. Certainly, it’s a far cry from the playful irony and easy-going, flippancy modernism that the composer had made his trademark when he emerged in the years immediately following the First World War. Earning a reputation as an enfant terrible and a disciple of Satie and Stravinsky (he performed one of the keyboard parts in the world premiere of the latter’s *Les Noces*), Poulenc became one of the more engagingly colorful artistic personalities of his native Paris during the era between the wars.

Yet, the glittering surfaces and detached poses typical of many of those early scores only partially conceal a longing for “old-fashioned” expressiveness. In a similar vein, Poulenc continued to spice the sacred music that came later in his career, after he experienced a religious conversion, with playful touches; he once likened his treatment of the Gloria, written in 1959, to Benozzo Gozzoli’s festive Renaissance frescoes of angels “with their tongues sticking out.” And before Poulenc was ready to take on the spiritual and psychological challenges posed by *Carmélites*, he made his inaugural foray into opera with *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* (1947), a setting of Apollinaire’s gender-bender surrealist farce that culminates in a paean to sexuality.

Carmélites is the second of the composer’s three operas and the single most ambitious work of his entire career. While Poulenc’s other two operas—*Les Mamelles* and the single-character *La Voix Humaine* (1959)—are modest in scale, *Carmélites* represents his contribution to the grand opera tradition and reveals the artist’s most sustained exploration of serious themes. At the same time, it notably lacks many of the traditional operatic ingredients: a passionate love story, readily identifiable arias, and the full spectrum of vocal types, featuring instead a mostly female cast with just a few brief roles for male voices.

In the story’s overriding focus on the fear of death and redemptive grace, Poulenc found a compelling mirror of his own experience. In 1936, the composer had been shaken to his core by the sudden death in a freak accident of a close friend, who was struck and decapitated by a passing car. Making a pilgrimage to the historic shrine of the wooden Black Madonna in Rocamadour in southwestern France, Poulenc underwent an epiphany and returned to the Catholic faith of his ancestors. Soon after, he began writing sacred choral music.

In the wake of World War II—and particularly of his experiences with the Nazi occupation of France, during which he composed the defiant, profoundly humanist cantata *La Figure Humaine*—Poulenc must have sensed

a newfound resonance in the historically based scenario of *Carmélites*. But the impetus to attempt an operatic treatment of this material came about by chance, thanks to a suggestion from his Italian publisher. After turning down a commission by La Scala to write a ballet on a religious topic, Poulenc announced his desire to write a large-scale opera for the company instead. The publisher immediately proposed adapting *Dialogues des Carmélites*, a play by the recently deceased French writer Georges Bernanos that was making the rounds in the early 1950s.

Poulenc was in fact familiar with the story, having seen the play. It originated as a screenplay—the “dialogues” to be spoken by the characters—for a film based on German writer Gertrud von Le Fort’s 1931 novella *Die Letzte am Schafott* (*The Last Woman on the Scaffold*). This, in turn, was a treatment of an actual event that occurred in the purges during the final weeks of the Reign of Terror in 1794 France. Le Fort drew on the memoir of a nun who had survived after the other sisters under her charge at a Carmelite convent in Compiègne were summarily guillotined as counterrevolutionaries. (In 1906, Pope Pius X beatified the entire group of nuns.)

The chain of authorship would end up causing a serious headache for Poulenc, since he wasn’t able to secure unequivocal rights to the story until composition was well underway, worrying all along that the whole project would be scuttled. Further complicating progress on the opera was the composer’s “abominable state of nerves”—the result of his own underlying anxieties, near-breakdowns, and anguish over the demise of a relationship. His lover Lucien Roubert had become fatally ill with cancer and died just as Poulenc completed the score. All told, he composed *Carmélites* between 1953 and 1955, finishing the orchestration by April 1956—a lavish investment of time compared to his usual working speed.

Poulenc devised his own libretto straight from Bernanos’s text, which simply involved arranging it into a viable operatic structure and cutting out about two-thirds of the material. Significantly, he did not reorganize the play to align with familiar operatic formulas of recitatives, arias, and ensemble numbers. Preserving the integrity of Bernanos’s poetically lucid lines served as the composer’s guiding aesthetic principle. “If I am to succeed with this work it will only be because the music identifies completely with the Bernanos *spirit*,” Poulenc noted when he was starting out. “Very light orchestration in order to permit the text to be understood.”

Indeed, *Dialogues des Carmélites* offers a fresh perspective on the age-old tug-of-war between the claims of music versus words in opera—or rather, a modern reconsideration of what the scholar Wilfrid Mellers describes as “the Monteverdian concept of a play in music, scrupulously faithful to the nuances of the text, which are emotionally intensified, but not radically changed, by the score.” Poulenc set himself a test before committing himself to the opera: He

chose a passage to set to music in order to determine whether he could supply a musical dimension for such a libretto. This was Madame de Croissy's speech to Blanche at the start of the second scene in act one. "As unbelievable as this may appear," the composer recalled, "I immediately found the melodic curve of this lengthy speech."

Much of the word-setting throughout *Carmélites* evokes a kind of heightened speech that illuminates the inner lives of the principal characters—whether in moments of contemplation or tormented doubt, as in the scene of Croissy's harrowing death. The composer moreover adds texture and characterization through his use of vocal type and tessitura, as in his individuation of the light soprano in depicting the child-like innocence of Sister Constance. Drawing on his rich experience as a master of the art song and his sensitivity to the warmth of the human voice, Poulenc unfailingly homes in on "the melodic curve" as well as the natural rhythmic momentum of the words.

At times, the contours of familiar operatic rhetoric emerge: the aria-like intensity with which Blanche announces her decision to enter the convent, or of Madame Lidoine, the second prioress, as she consoles the nuns after their first night in prison, and the exchange between Blanche and her brother in the convent, which echoes the ebb and flow of a love duet.

Poulenc meanwhile unifies the score and suggests subtle connections between the characters and their struggles through a series of recurrent motifs and stylistic references—which are, however, much more freely used than Wagnerian leitmotifs. The opening music, for example, presents an open-ended rising figure associated with the ancien régime that returns transformed at the very end, while the moody baroque sarabande introducing the first prioress is reconfigured into the relentless march of the final scene at the scaffold.

It has been frequently observed that Poulenc's score is far-rangingly eclectic. Harmonic progressions or bits of orchestral texture from Stravinsky and similar neoclassical idioms, archaisms reminiscent of Debussy, the austerity of reimagined Renaissance music: All these are part of his musical fabric, along with Poulenc's own past—even including his predilection for popular idioms from the music hall and the like (oddly apparent in the confrontation between the revolutionary commissioners and Mother Marie). The composer himself pointed to Debussy as an inspiration and to Monteverdi, Verdi, and Mussorgsky, "who served here as my models." Still, Poulenc weaves these sources into a coherent music drama in which Blanche's inner pilgrimage is played out against an epic framework of violent upheaval.

As far as Verdi is concerned, Poulenc may have had in mind the remarkable theatrical instinct that animates his sense of pacing, of contrast, of scenic resonance. He came to opera relatively late in his career but had been associated since his early days as a member of Les Six with Jean Cocteau and other leading theatrical spirits. The pièce de résistance in *Carmélites* is of course his treatment

of the final scene. What might have all too easily turned into a cheap climax of Grand Guignol overwhelms through the understated but searing juxtaposition of elements developed throughout the opera. Poulenc composes an eloquent Requiem grotesquely and unpredictably interrupted by the rhythm of slaughter.

Far from the mindless cult bent on martyrdom that Poulenc has sometimes been accused of presenting, *Carmélites* is replete with powerfully realized characters who have attracted leading artists since the work was premiered to great success at La Scala in 1957. Poulenc conceived the role of Blanche for Denise Duval (who appeared in the Paris premiere), and Leontyne Price made her operatic debut singing Madame Lidoine in the U.S. premiere at San Francisco Opera, also in 1957. John Dexter's legendary production, which introduced *Carmélites* to the Met in 1977, has itself become an indelible part of the afterlife of Poulenc's masterpiece. And that afterlife is bound to continue, since, as Wilfrid Mellers remarks, in this opera "a figure humaine speaks through a voix humaine, to which human beings respond with hearts as open as their ears."

—Thomas May

Thomas May is a writer, critic, educator, and translator. His books include Decoding Wagner and The John Adams Reader, and he blogs at memeteria.com.



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The Cast



Yannick Nézet-Séguin

CONDUCTOR (MONTREAL, CANADA)

THIS SEASON *Dialogues des Carmélites*, *La Traviata*, and *Pelléas et Mélisande* at the Met; and concerts with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Montreal's Orchestre Métropolitain, Berlin Philharmonic, Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, and Met Orchestra at Carnegie Hall.

MET APPEARANCES *Elektra*, *Parsifal*, *Der Fliegende Holländer*, *Otello*, *Don Carlo*, *Rusalka*, *La Traviata*, *Faust*, and *Carmen* (debut, 2009).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He is in his first season as the Met's Jeanette Lerman-Neubauer Music Director. He is music director of the Philadelphia Orchestra (2012) and artistic director and principal conductor of the Orchestre Métropolitain (OM) (2000). In 2018, he became honorary conductor of the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, where he was music director for ten seasons, and in 2016, he was named an honorary member of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe (COE). Between 2008 and 2014, he was principal guest conductor of the London Philharmonic Orchestra. His operatic credits include *Die Zauberflöte*, *La Clemenza di Tito*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, *Così fan tutte*, and *Don Giovanni* in concert in Baden-Baden, most of them with the COE; *Parsifal* in concert with the OM; *Lohengrin* and *Der Fliegende Holländer* at the Vienna State Opera; *Rusalka* at Covent Garden; and *Roméo et Juliette* at the Salzburg Festival and La Scala.



Karen Cargill

MEZZO-SOPRANO (ARBROATH, SCOTLAND)

THIS SEASON Mother Marie in *Dialogues des Carmélites* and Erda in the *Ring* cycle at the Met; Waltraute in *Götterdämmerung* at Covent Garden; Brangäne in *Tristan und Isolde* in concert in Montpellier, France; and concert appearances with the Orquesta Nacional de España, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, and Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin.

MET APPEARANCES Magdalene in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Waltraute (debut, 2012), and Anna in *Les Troyens*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Geneviève in *Pelléas et Mélisande* at the Glyndebourne Festival, Fricka in *Die Walküre* in concert at the Edinburgh International Festival, Judith in *Bluebeard's Castle* at Scottish Opera, and Waltraute and the Second Norn in *Götterdämmerung* at the Canadian Opera Company. She has also sung Brangäne at English National Opera, Ursule in Berlioz's *Béatrice et Bénédicte* at Japan's Seiji Ozawa Matsumoto Festival, Waltraute at Deutsche Oper Berlin, and Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* at Scottish Opera.



Isabel Leonard

MEZZO-SOPRANO (NEW YORK, NEW YORK)

THIS SEASON Blanche de la Force in *Dialogues des Carmélites*, Mélisande in *Pelléas et Mélisande*, and the title role of Nico Muhly's *Marnie* at the Met and a Met Orchestra concert at Carnegie Hall.

MET APPEARANCES Cherubino in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, Charlotte in *Werther*, Rosina in *The Barber of Seville* and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*, Blanche de la Force, Miranda in Thomas Adès's *The Tempest*, and Stéphanie in *Roméo et Juliette* (debut, 2007).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* at Washington National Opera and the Vienna State Opera, the title role of *La Cenerentola* at the Vienna State Opera, Concepcion in Ravel's *L'Heure Espagnole* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* in Aix-en-Provence, Charlotte in Bologna, Adalgisa in *Norma* at the Canadian Opera Company, and Ada Monroe in the world premiere of Jennifer Higdon's *Cold Mountain* at the Santa Fe Opera and at Opera Philadelphia. She has also appeared at the Bavarian State Opera, Paris Opera, Salzburg Festival, Glyndebourne Festival, and Lyric Opera of Chicago. She was the 2011 recipient of the Met's Beverly Sills Artist Award, established by Agnes Varis and Karl Leichtman.



Karita Mattila

SOPRANO (SOMERO, FINLAND)

THIS SEASON Madame de Croissy in *Dialogues des Carmélites* at the Met, Plotina in the world premiere of Rufus Wainwright's *Hadrian* at the Canadian Opera Company, Kostelnička in *Jenůfa* at the Bavarian State Opera, the Foreign Princess in *Rusalka* at the Paris Opera, Leocadia Begbick in Weill's *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* in Aix-en-Provence, and recitals at the Oslo Opera House and Verbier Festival.

MET APPEARANCES Since her 1990 debut as Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*, she has sung nearly 150 performances of 16 roles, including Kostelnička and the title role in *Jenůfa*, Emilia Marty in *The Makropulos Case*, Lisa in *The Queen of Spades*, Tatiana in *Eugene Onegin*, Elsa in *Lohengrin*, Chrysothemis in *Elektra*, Eva in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Leonore in *Fidelio*, and the title roles of *Tosca*, *Salome*, *Manon Lescaut*, and *Kát'a Kabanová*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS She has sung at most of the world's major opera houses and concert halls, including notable recent appearances at San Francisco Opera, the Zurich Opera House, Covent Garden, the Paris Opera, the Helsinki Festival, Houston Grand Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Carnegie Hall, and Royal Albert Hall.



Erin Morley

SOPRANO (SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH)

THIS SEASON Sister Constance in *Dialogues des Carmélites*, the Woodbird in *Siegfried*, and Pamina in *The Magic Flute* at the Met; Cunegonde in *Candide* with the Philadelphia Orchestra; and concert appearances in Berlin and Philadelphia.

MET APPEARANCES Since her 2008 debut as the First Madrigal Singer in *Manon Lescaut*, she has sung nearly 100 performances of 12 roles, including Olympia in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, Sophie in *Der Rosenkavalier*, Sister Constance, Woglinde in *Das Rheingold* and *Götterdämmerung*, and the Woodbird.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Zerbinetta in *Ariadne auf Naxos* at the Santa Fe Opera, Vienna State Opera, and Glyndebourne Festival; Cunegonde at LA Opera and in concert with Orchestra of St. Luke's; and Sophie at the Vienna State Opera and in concert with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. She has also sung the title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor* in Nancy, France; Konstanze in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and Sophie at the Paris Opera; Angelica in *Orlando* with the English Concert; Fiakermilli in *Arabella* at the Bavarian State Opera; and Zerbinetta at Minnesota Opera. She is a graduate of the Met's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.



Adrienne Pieczonka

SOPRANO (BURLINGTON, CANADA)

THIS SEASON Madame Lidoine in *Dialogues des Carmélites* at the Met, the title role of *Ariadne auf Naxos* and the Marschallin in *Der Rosenkavalier* at the Vienna State Opera, and Leonore in *Fidelio* in concert in Paris.

MET APPEARANCES Leonore, Chrysothemis in *Elektra*, Amelia Grimaldi in *Simon Boccanegra*, Sieglinde in *Die Walküre*, and Lisa in *The Queen of Spades* (debut, 2004).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include the title role of *Tosca* at Staatsoper Berlin, Covent Garden, the Vienna State Opera, and the Canadian Opera Company; the Marschallin, the Empress in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, and Amelia in *Un Ballo in Maschera* at the Bavarian State Opera; Chrysothemis at the Vienna State Opera, San Francisco Opera, Staatsoper Berlin, and in Barcelona; and Amelia at Deutsche Oper Berlin. She has also sung Chrysothemis at Deutsche Oper Berlin, La Scala, Covent Garden, and in Aix-en-Provence; the Countess in *Capriccio* at the Paris Opera; Tosca at Deutsche Oper Berlin; Madame Lidoine at Dutch National Opera; Leonore at the Salzburg Festival and in Madrid; Senta in *Der Fliegende Holländer* at the Bayreuth Festival, Bavarian State Opera, Covent Garden, and in Hamburg and Turin; and Ariadne at the Bavarian State Opera.

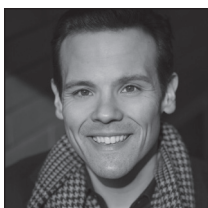


Jean-François Lapointe

BARITONE (SAGUENAY–LAC-SAINT-JEAN, CANADA)

THIS SEASON Marquis de la Force in *Dialogues des Carmélites* for his debut at the Met, Golaud in *Pelléas et Mélisande* in Strasbourg, Ford in *Falstaff* in Monte Carlo, and concert appearances in Quebec, Tokyo, Montreal, and Newfoundland.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Hérode in Massenet's *Hérodiade*, Alphonse XI in Donizetti's *La Favorite*, Rodrigo in *Don Carlo*, and the title role of Thomas's *Hamlet* in Marseille; Ascanio in Berlioz's *Benvenuto Cellini* in concert and Valentin in *Faust* in Geneva; Wolfram in *Tannhäuser* in Monte Carlo; and Albert in *Werther* in Bologna. He has sung Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Zurga in *Les Pêcheurs des Perles* in Nancy, France; Bardi in Godard's *Dante* in concert in Versailles; Marquis de la Force at Dutch National Opera; and the title role of *Guillaume Tell* in Geneva. He has also appeared at La Scala, Deutsche Oper Berlin, the Paris Opera, the Canadian Opera Company, the Royal Danish Opera, Cincinnati Opera, and in Barcelona, Madrid, Bilbao, Brussels, Frankfurt, Bordeaux, Toulouse, Orange, Turin, and Helsinki, among many others.



David Portillo

TENOR (SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS)

THIS SEASON Chevalier de la Force in *Dialogues des Carmélites* at the Met, Alfredo in *La Traviata* at Opera San Antonio, Arbace in *Idomeneo* at Lyric Opera of Chicago, Idamante in *Idomeneo* in Madrid, Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte* at the Glyndebourne Festival, *Carmina Burana* in Geneva and Chicago, and concert appearances with the San Antonio Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Los Angeles Master Chorale.

MET APPEARANCES Camille de Rosillon in *The Merry Widow*, Eduardo in Thomas Adès's *The Exterminating Angel*, Jaquino in *Fidelio*, and Count Almaviva in *The Barber of Seville* (debut, 2015).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Tamino in Frankfurt, Pasquale in Haydn's *Orlando Paladino* at the Bavarian State Opera, the Count of Libenskof in Rossini's *Il Viaggio a Reims* at Deutsche Oper Berlin, Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* at the Dallas Opera, Count Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* at Houston Grand Opera, Lurcanio in Handel's *Ariodante* with the English Concert, Pedrillo in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* at Dutch National Opera, Don Ramiro in *La Cenerentola* at San Diego Opera, and Dr. Richardson in the world premiere of Missy Mazzoli's *Breaking the Waves* at Opera Philadelphia.

Facilities and Services



ASSISTIVE LISTENING SYSTEM AND BINOCULARS

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



BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

Large print programs are available free of charge from the ushers. Braille synopses of many operas are available free of charge. Please contact an usher. Tickets for no-view score desk seats may be purchased by calling the Metropolitan Opera Guild at 212.769.7028.



BOX OFFICE

Monday–Saturday, 10AM–8PM; Sunday, noon–6PM. The Box Office closes at 8PM on non-performance evenings or on evenings with no intermission. Box Office Information: 212.362.6000.

CHECK ROOM

On Concourse level (Founders Hall).

FIRST AID

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

LECTURE SERIES

Opera-related courses, pre-performance lectures, master classes, and more are held throughout the performance season at the Opera Learning Center. For tickets and information, call 212.769.7028.

LOST AND FOUND

Security office at Stage Door. Monday–Friday, 2PM–4PM; 212.799.3100, ext. 2499.

MET OPERA SHOP

The Met Opera Shop is adjacent to the North Box Office, 212.580.4090. Open Monday–Saturday, 10AM–final intermission; Sunday, noon–6PM. metoperashop.org



PUBLIC TELEPHONES

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

RESTAURANT AND REFRESHMENT FACILITIES

The Grand Tier Restaurant features creative contemporary American cuisine, and the Revlon Bar offers panini, crostini, and a full service bar. Both are open two hours prior to the Metropolitan Opera curtain time to any Lincoln Center ticket holder for pre-curtain dining. Pre-ordered intermission dining is also available for Met ticket holders. For reservations please call 212.799.3400. diningatmetopera.com



RESTROOMS

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

SEAT CUSHIONS

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

SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

For information contact the Metropolitan Opera Guild Education Department, 212.769.7022.

SCORE-DESK TICKET PROGRAM

Tickets for score desk seats in the Family Circle boxes may be purchased by calling the Metropolitan Opera Guild at 212.769.7028. These no-view seats provide an affordable way for music students to study an opera's score during a live performance.

TOUR GUIDE SERVICE

Backstage tours of the opera house are held during the Met season on most weekdays at 3PM, and on select Sundays at 10:30AM and/or 1:30PM. For tickets and information, call 212.769.7028. Tours of Lincoln Center daily; call 212.875.5351 for availability. metguild.org/tours

WEBSITE

metopera.org



WHEELCHAIR ACCOMMODATIONS

Telephone 212.799.3100, ext. 2204. Wheelchair entrance at Concourse level.

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

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

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

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

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