RICHARD WAGNER

DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER

CONDUCTOR
Valery Gergiev

PRODUCTION
François Girard

SET DESIGNER
John Macfarlane

COSTUME DESIGNER
Moritz Junge

LIGHTING DESIGNER
David Finn

PROJECTION DESIGNER
Peter Flaherty

CHOREOGRAPHER
Carolyn Choa

DRAMATURG
Serge Lamothe

Opera in three acts

Libretto by the composer, based on the novel Aus den Memoiren des Herren von Schnabelewopski by Heinrich Heine

Monday, March 2, 2020
8:00–10:25 PM

New Production Premiere

The production of Der Fliegende Holländer was made possible by a generous gift from Veronica Atkins

GENERAL MANAGER
Peter Gelb

JEANETTE LERMAN-NEUBAUER
MUSIC DIRECTOR
Yannick Nézet-Séguin

A co-production of the Metropolitan Opera; Dutch National Opera, Amsterdam; The Abu Dhabi Festival; and Opéra de Québec
The Metropolitan Opera
2019–20 SEASON

The 160th Metropolitan Opera performance of
RICHARD WAGNER’S

DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER

CONDUCTOR
Valery Gergiev

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

DALAND
Franz-Josef Selig

STEERSMAN
David Portillo

DUTCHMAN
Evgeny Nikitin

MARY
Mihoko Fujimura DEBUT

SENTA
Anja Kampe DEBUT

ERIK
Sergey Skorokhodov

SENTA DANCER
Alison Clancy

Der Fliegende Holländer is performed without intermission.

This performance is being broadcast live on Metropolitan Opera Radio on SiriusXM channel 75 and streamed at metopera.org.
A scene from Wagner’s *Der Fliegende Holländer*

Chorus Master Donald Palumbo
Interactive Video Development Jesse Garrison / Nightlight Labs
Associate Video Producer Terry Gilmore
Musical Preparation John Keenan, Dan Saunders, Bradley Moore*, and Carol Isaac
Assistant Stage Directors Gina Lapinski, Stephen Pickover, and Paula Williams
Met Titles Sonya Friedman
Assistant Choreographer Anita Griffin
Assistant Costume Designer Dana Radmacher
Stage Band Conductor Bradley Moore*
German Coach Marianne Barrett
Prompter Carol Isaac
Scenery, properties, and electrical props constructed and painted by Metropolitan Opera Shops
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Shoes provided by Haar Theatrical Footwear, Ravensburg
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.

Before the performance begins, please switch off cell phones and other electronic devices.

* Graduate of the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program

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Met Titles
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The Metropolitan Opera is pleased to salute Bloomberg in recognition of its generous support during the 2019–20 season.

Bloomberg Philanthropies
Synopsis

Act I
The Norwegian coast, 19th century. A storm has driven Daland’s ship several miles from his home. Sending his crew off to rest, he leaves the watch in charge of a young steersman, who falls asleep as he sings about his beloved. A ghostly figure appears and, with increasing despair, reflects on his fate: Once every seven years he may leave his ship to find a wife. If she is faithful, she will redeem him from his deathless wandering. If not, he is condemned to sail the ocean until Judgment Day. Daland discovers the stranger, who introduces himself as “a Dutchman” and tells him of his plight. The Dutchman offers gold and jewels for a night’s lodging, and when he learns that Daland has a daughter, he asks for her hand in marriage. Happy to have found a rich son-in-law, Daland agrees and sets sail for home.

Act II
Daland’s daughter, Senta, is captivated by the portrait of a pale man in black—the Flying Dutchman. Her friends, working under the watchful eye of Mary, Senta’s nurse, tease Senta about her suitor, Erik, who is a hunter, not a sailor. When the superstitious Mary refuses to sing a ballad about the Dutchman, Senta sings it herself. The song reveals that the Dutchman received his curse after delivering a blasphemous oath. To everyone’s horror, Senta suddenly declares that she will be the woman to save him. Erik enters with news of the sailors’ return. Alone with Senta, he offers her his love, but she remains distant. Realizing how much the Dutchman’s picture means to her, he tells her of a frightening dream he had in which he saw her embrace the Dutchman and sail away on his ship. Senta declares that this is what she must do, and Erik rushes off in despair. A moment later, the Dutchman enters. Senta stands transfixed. Daland follows and asks his daughter to welcome the stranger, whom he has brought to be her husband. Daland leaves, and the Dutchman, who is equally moved by the meeting, asks Senta if she will accept him. Unaware that she realizes who he is, he warns her of making a rash decision, but she vows to be faithful to him unto death. Daland is overjoyed to learn that his daughter has accepted the suitor.
Act III
At the harbor, the villagers celebrate the sailors’ return. Suddenly, otherworldly apparitions appear. The villagers flee in terror. Quiet returns, and Senta appears, followed by the distressed Erik. He pleads with her not to marry the Dutchman since she has already pledged her love to him. The Dutchman, who has overheard them, lets go of all hope and prepares to return to sea. When Senta tries to stop him, he explains that she will escape damnation—the fate of those who betray him—only because she has not yet proclaimed her vows before God. He reveals his identity, and Senta ecstatically replies that she knows who he is. As he departs, she throws herself into the sea, faithful unto death.

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Looking for more music by Richard Wagner? Check out Met Opera on Demand, our online streaming service, to enjoy other outstanding performances from past Met seasons—including the 2013 Live in HD transmission of François Girard’s landmark staging of Parsifal, classic telecasts of the complete Ring cycle, and eight radio broadcasts of Der Fliegende Holländer dating back to 1950. Start your seven-day free trial and explore the full catalog of more than 700 complete performances at metoperaondemand.org.
In Focus

Richard Wagner

Der Fliegende Holländer

Premiere: Königliches Hoftheater, Dresden, 1843
Although Wagner had already scored a public success with his epic Rienzi (1840), Der Fliegende Holländer (The Flying Dutchman) is the earliest of his operatic creations to remain in the standard repertory. In fact, Wagner stated that his remarkable career as an innovative and revolutionary composer truly hit its stride with this opera, and the public has generally agreed with his assessment. The two lead roles represent archetypes to which the composer would return, in one form or another, in most of his later works: the otherworldly stranger and the woman who sacrifices herself for his salvation. In this opera, the mysterious sea captain, named the Flying Dutchman (which is also the name of his ship), is cursed to sail forever unless he attains a woman’s faithful love. Senta, a young girl in a small coastal village, is obsessed with this ghostly legend and determined to end the Dutchman’s suffering. The work’s unearthly ambience is impressive but is only one of its many facets: The score evokes both the world of nature and of the supernatural, and the core of the drama lies in the conflict between the two.

The Creators
Richard Wagner (1813–1883) was the complex, controversial creator of music-drama masterpieces that stand at the center of today’s operatic repertory. Born in Leipzig, Germany, he started composing in the tradition of German Romantic opera but became an artistic revolutionary who reimagined every supposition about music and theater. Wagner wrote his own libretti and insisted that words and music were equals in his works. This approach led to his conception of 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 is set on the Norwegian coast, amidst the country’s famously imposing fjords and difficult to traverse waterways.

The Music
The score of Der Fliegende Holländer is an extraordinary combination of operatic lyricism, dramatic insight, and magnificent effects. At the time that the opera was written, Wagner had not yet developed his theories of music-drama, which would form the basis for his later works. Many of the features of
conventional opera (recitatives, arias, ensembles), therefore, can still be found, but the way that Wagner integrates them into the fabric of the score clearly foreshadows his later technique of a continuous musical flow. Daland’s Act II aria is reminiscent of the great German Romantic composers and recalls the works of Weber or even Beethoven. Dramatically, this connects the character (Senta’s very earthbound father) with the world of the familiar. The same can be said of Senta’s fiancé, Erik, whose romance in Act III displays a conventional lyricism that wouldn’t seem out of place in any number of other composers’ operas, even in the Italian repertoire. Conversely, the music for the two lead characters is highly unusual and dramatically descriptive: The Dutchman’s long narrative in the first act is a set of alternately stentorian and hushed vocal phrases declaimed over a violently undulating orchestral base. It is a perfect musical encapsulation of “man versus sea.” Senta’s Act II ballad has elements of both external intensity and inner turmoil, as fits a woman at odds with the physical world around her. When these characters meet, the near-silence, punctuated by murmurs in the kettledrums like disembodied heartbeats, forms one of the most unusual and haunting lovers’ encounters in opera. The clash of the two musical worlds is nowhere more dramatically realized than in the thrilling double chorus in Act III, when the human sailors try to drown out the infernal singing from the Dutchman’s ghost ship.

**Met History**
Anton Seidl, a former assistant to Wagner in Bayreuth, conducted the opera’s Met premiere in 1889. A new production first seen in 1907 lasted for almost half a century. The great Bayreuth star Friedrich Schorr commanded the title role in 18 legendary performances at the Met throughout the 1930s. Six of these co-starred Norwegian soprano Kirsten Flagstad as Senta. In 1950, a new production by Herbert Graf marked the sensational Met debut of Hans Hotter as the Dutchman, opposite Astrid Varnay as Senta. George London and Leonie Rysanek earned some of the longest ovations heard at the Met in memorable performances beginning in 1960, eight of which were led by Karl Böhm. James Levine conducted the premiere of a new production by Jean-Pierre Ponnelle in 1979, with José van Dam alongside Carol Neblett in her Met debut as Senta. Levine also led the 1989 premiere of a new staging by August Everding, starring James Morris, who went on to sing the title role another 29 times through 2000. Notable Sentas in recent years have included Hildegard Behrens (1992–94), Nina Stemme (2000), and Deborah Voigt (2010). Music Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin conducted the 2017 revival of Everding’s production, with Michael Volle as the Dutchman and Amber Wagner as Senta. During the 2019–20 season, Valery Gergiev conducts a new production by François Girard, starring Evgeny Nikitin in the title role, alongside Anja Kampe, Mihoko Fujimura, Sergey Skorokhodov, David Portillo, and Franz-Josef Selig.
In the summer of 1839, Richard Wagner and his wife, Minna, slipped out of Riga (in present-day Latvia) in the middle of the night, desperate to escape their creditors. Their passports had been seized, so they had to find a sea captain who would allow them to stow away on his boat as fugitives. They were headed to Paris, the operatic capital of the world, where Wagner, with his usual self-confidence, was convinced he would find fame and fortune writing for the Opéra. He was utterly undaunted by the fact that he was 26 years old, had written only two unperformed operas, and his entire career consisted of a few years conducting in very provincial cities. He had completed the first two acts of an opera called Rienzi, and he was sure that the Opéra would seize the opportunity to produce it.

It ultimately took Wagner three months to reach Paris, but in a stop along the way at Boulogne on the northern coast of France, he met the composer Giacomo Meyerbeer, one of the most powerful figures in the operatic world. Wagner read him the libretto to the first three acts of Rienzi, and Meyerbeer saw its dramatic potential and promised to look at the music of the first two acts. But once Wagner got to Paris, he soon discovered that even with letters of introduction from Meyerbeer, no one was interested in his music. The next three years were desperate ones. He managed to eke out a bare existence writing occasional articles, doing a bit of hackwork for music publishers, and borrowing money from friends. Realizing that he might have a better chance getting a short work accepted at the Opéra as a curtain raiser for a ballet evening, he wrote a prose sketch of a one-act piece based on the legend of the Flying Dutchman.

In the summer of 1840, Meyerbeer took Wagner to meet the new director of the Opéra, Léon Pillet. Wagner was not pleased when it was suggested that he might think about collaborating with another composer on a ballet, but at the end of the meeting, he left his prose sketch for Der Fliegende Holländer with Pillet. When Wagner later inquired about writing the work, he was told that this was utterly impossible, but that Pillet liked his sketch enough that he offered to buy it and have other people turn it into an opera. Wagner, naturally, refused. But when friends pointed that the legend of the Flying Dutchman was so well known that anyone could turn it into an opera, Wagner realized that the proposition would at least allow him to get some money from the Opéra, and he accepted Pillet’s 500 francs. As it turned out, Paul Foucher and Bénédict-Henry Révoil used very little of Wagner’s sketch in their libretto for Le Vaisseau Fantôme, then set to music by a composer named Pierre-Louis Dietsch. The opera lasted only 11 performances before sinking into oblivion.

Wagner finished Rienzi by the end of 1840 and promptly began working on his own Der Fliegende Holländer, which he composed in seven weeks during July and August 1841. Later in life, Wagner reflected that “so far as my knowledge goes, I can find in the life of no artist so striking a transformation, in
so short a time, as is evident between *Rienzi* and *Der Fliegende Holländer*, the former of which was hardly finished when the latter was begun.” He is right—if he does say so himself.

Hans von Bülow, who conducted the premieres of Wagner’s *Tristan und Isolde* and *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, once quipped that *Rienzi* was “the best opera Meyerbeer ever wrote”—a colorful five-act spectacle in the tradition of French grand opera, full of processions, fervent arias and ensembles, and even an extended ballet. When it premiered in Dresden on October 20, 1842, it was such an enormous success (despite its extreme length) that it was soon taken up by other German cities and made Wagner famous. Two and a half months later, January 2, 1843, the same theater gave the first performance of *Der Fliegende Holländer*—with quite a different response. *Rienzi* was written to please a fickle audience; *Dutchman* was Wagner’s first attempt at writing a music drama which, as he wrote to a friend a few months later, “abandoned the modern arrangement of dividing the work into arias, duets, finales, etc., and instead relates the legend in a single breath, just as a good poem should.” In fact, Wagner did write some arias and other individual musical numbers in *Dutchman*, but they are written more to convey the psychological aspects of the characters than to give singers a chance for vocal display—something the opera’s early audiences simply did not understand.

While Wagner was music director of the opera in Riga, he had read Heinrich Heine’s *The Memoirs of Herr von Schnabelewopski*, the seventh chapter of which concerns the legend of the Flying Dutchman. As he later put it, Heine’s novel “made an indelible impression on my mind; yet at the time, it did not gather enough force to compel me into using it creatively.” What Wagner did not take from the novel was Heine’s delicious sense of humor and irony: “The devil, in his stupidity, has no faith in female constancy, and allowed the enchanted captain to land once in seven years and get married, and so find opportunities to save his soul. Poor Dutchman! He is often only too glad to be saved from his marriage and his wife-saviour, and get again on board.”

Instead, like almost all later Wagner operas, *Der Fliegende Holländer* relates a legend in which a tortured man finds redemption through the love of a woman (who almost always dies). This is the first of his operas in which Wagner uses leitmotifs in the music to convey the drama. In later works, his use of leitmotifs would become much more subtle and sophisticated, but right at the beginning of the *Dutchman* overture, we hear the vigorous 11-note motif of the Dutchman himself, first played by horns and bassoons, then by trombones and tuba. The second major leitmotif is announced at the beginning of the quiet section of the overture. The lyrical 16-note phrase, played (“sweetly,” the score instructs) first by the English horn, then by the oboe, is associated with Senta and the idea of redemption.
Dutchman is also the first of Wagner’s operas in which the music depicts the forces of nature as a character. In Munich in 1864, conductor Franz Lachner complained about “the wind that blew out at you whenever you opened the score.” The overture depicts the sea perfectly with its billowing and crashing waves, and in the third act, when the Dutchman’s crew stirs to life after being taunted by the Norwegian sailors, the orchestra vividly conveys the stage directions of a violent storm raging around the Dutchman’s ship and a ferocious wind whistling through the ship’s rigging. During Wagner’s flight from Riga, a voyage that should have taken eight days took three and a half weeks thanks to storms and rough seas that more than once threatened to sink the boat. At one point, the captain took refuge in a Norwegian fjord. In My Life, Wagner recounted the scene:

A feeling of indescribable content came over me when the enormous granite walls echoed the hail of the crew as they cast anchor and furled the sails. The sharp rhythm of this call clung to me like an omen of good cheer and shaped itself presently into the theme of the seamen’s song in my Fliegende Holländer. The idea of this opera was, even at that time, ever present in my mind, and it now took on a definite poetic and musical color under the influence of my recent impressions. Well, our next move was to go on shore. I learned that the little fishing village at which we landed was called Sandwike [which later became the setting for his opera].

The first part of Der Fliegende Holländer to be composed was Senta’s ballad in Act II, the psychological core of the work. Wagner was adamant in his view of the role: “Let not the dreamy side of her nature be conceived in the sense of a modern, sickly sentimentality! Senta, on the contrary, is an altogether robust Northern maid, and even in her apparent sentimentality she is thoroughly naive. Only in the heart of an entirely naive girl … could the picture of the pallid seaman call forth so wondrous strong a bent as the impulse to redeem the doomed.”

Dutchman was the first of Wagner’s operas to carry on—and expand upon—the brooding world of German Romanticism. Writers like E. T. A. Hoffmann and Ludwig Tieck, painters like Caspar David Friedrich, and composers like Carl Maria von Weber, especially in his seminal opera Der Freischütz, explored the intersection of simple village life and the supernatural, often conveyed by the wild forces of nature. Each of the three acts of Der Fliegende Holländer begins in the mundane world of the here and now, then moves into the realm of the fantastical—the spirit realm, where unseen forces rule. The Steersman’s song that begins Act I is like a folk song; so is the beginning of Senta’s ballad. In fact, in the diary of Wagner’s second wife, Cosima, she noted on October 17, 1878, that “[Wagner] is also thinking of revising Senta’s ballad, the beginning of which he finds is quite properly like a folk song but not characteristic of Der Holländer.” (He later lost the new version of the ballad and never did get around
to revising the opera as he had planned.) Act III begins with the festive chorus of the Norwegian crew and their sweethearts teasing each other. But in each of the acts, the arrival of the Dutchman or his crew introduces the supernatural, with—eventually—tragic consequences for the “normal” characters.

Wagner was firm that these everyday characters not be caricatures. Erik “must not be a sentimental whiner: On the contrary, he is stormy, impulsive, and somber. Whoever should give a sugary rendering to his cavatina in the third act would do me a sorry service, for it ought instead to breathe distress and heartache.” Nor did he want the role of Daland to be comic: “He is a rough-hewn figure from the life of everyday, a sailor who scoffs at storm and danger for the sake of gain.”

Bestriding it all is the mystical figure of the Dutchman himself. Wagner goes into great detail—literally phrase by phrase—on what he wants from the singer at his entry in Act I and during his first aria, both musically and physically. “If this monologue, in keeping with its aim, has thoroughly attuned and touched the hearer,” he explained, “the further success of the whole work is for the major part ensured—whereas nothing that comes after could possibly make up for anything neglected here.”

It is no wonder that the roles of the Dutchman and Senta have always attracted some of the greatest singing actors of their time. Wagner gave them a marvelous opportunity to draw the audience into the very heart of their riveting characters and to explore a world that mirrors parts of the human psyche. It was the first step on a journey that would change opera forever. Rienzi made Wagner famous in his day; Der Fliegende Holländer put him on the road to immortality.

—Paul Thomason

Paul Thomason, who writes for numerous opera companies and symphony orchestras in the U.S. and abroad, has contributed to the Met’s program books since 1999.
The Cast and Creative Team

Valery Gergiev
CONDUCTOR (MOSCOW, RUSSIA)

This season Der Fliegende Holländer at the Met, La Damnation de Faust with the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Iolanta and Parsifal in concert in Paris, Lucia di Lammermoor at Russia’s Buryat Opera and Ballet Theatre, The Queen of Spades and Mazeppa in concert in Tokyo, Lohengrin at the Vienna State Opera, Verdi’s Requiem in Barcelona, Attila and Il Trovatore in concert in Baden-Baden, and numerous performances at St. Petersburg’s Mariinsky Theatre.


CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Between 1997 and 2008, he was the Met’s principal guest conductor. He is artistic and general director of St. Petersburg’s Mariinsky Theatre, music director of the Munich Philharmonic, and artistic director of the Stars of the White Nights Festival and Moscow Easter Festival. From 1995 to 2008, he was principal conductor of the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, and from 2007 to 2015, he was principal conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra.

François Girard
DIRECTOR (QUEBEC, CANADA)

This season Der Fliegende Holländer at the Met.

MET PRODUCTIONS Parsifal (debut, 2013).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS His work in opera includes a double bill of Weill and Brecht’s The Lindbergh Flight and The Seven Deadly Sins in Lyon and later at the Edinburgh Festival and in Wellington, Parsifal and Kaija Saariaho’s Émilie in Lyon, Siegfried and a double bill of Stravinsky’s Oedipus Rex and Symphony of Psalms for the Canadian Opera Company, the oratorio Lost Objects for Brooklyn Academy of Music’s Bang on a Can Festival, and Der Fliegende Holländer in Quebec. He directed Serge Lamothe’s adaptation of Kafka’s The Trial at Ottowa’s National Arts Centre. His films include the feature-length biopic Thirty-Two Short Films About Glenn Gould (1993), The Red Violin (1998, Academy Award for Best Original Score), Silk (2007), Boychoir (2014), Hochelaga, Land of Souls (2017), and The Song of Names (2019). He was writer and director of Cirque du Soleil’s Zarkana (New York, Madrid, Moscow, and Las Vegas) and director of Zed, Cirque du Soleil’s permanent show in Tokyo.
WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

COSÌ FAN TUTTE

Phelim McDermott’s “colorful, inventive, sometimes riotous” (The New York Times) production returns, filling the stage with the magic of 1950s Coney Island. Harry Bicket conducts a winning ensemble cast, featuring Nicole Car, Serena Malfi, Ben Bliss, and Luca Pisaroni as the opera’s four young lovers.

FEB 15 mat, 18, 21, 23 mat, 27 MAR 4, 7 mat, 11, 14

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The Cast and Creative Team CONTINUED

John Macfarlane
SET DESIGNER (GLASGOW, SCOTLAND)

THIS SEASON Der Fliegende Holländer and sets and costumes for Agrippina at the Met.

MET PRODUCTIONS Tosca, Maria Stuarda, and Hansel and Gretel (debut, 2007).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS His recent operatic credits include Der Fliegende Holländer in Quebec; Erwartung and Bluebeard’s Castle, Peter Grimes, Die Zauberflöte, and Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk at Covent Garden; Elektra and Rusalka at Lyric Opera of Chicago; The Rake’s Progress at Scottish Opera and in Turin; Agrippina and Don Giovanni in Brussels; Hansel and Gretel and The Queen of Spades at Welsh National Opera; Idomeneo at the Vienna State Opera; von Weber’s Euryanthe at the Glyndebourne Festival; War and Peace and La Clemenza di Tito at the Paris Opera; Boris Godunov at Dutch National Opera; and Les Troyens at English National Opera; among others. He has collaborated with choreographers Glen Tetley and Jiří Kylián, and his designs have also appeared at the Netherlands Dance Theatre, Danish Royal Ballet, London’s Royal Ballet, Canadian Royal Ballet, Birmingham Royal Ballet, Australian National Ballet, and Dance Theatre of Harlem. He exhibits regularly as a painter and printmaker in Europe and the United States.

Moritz Junge
COSTUME DESIGNER (LONDON, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON Der Fliegende Holländer at the Met and Wozzeck in Aix-en-Provence.

MET PRODUCTIONS Norma, Roberto Devereux, and Cavalleria Rusticana and Pagliacci (debut, 2015).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has designed sets and costumes for The Love for Three Oranges (Staatstheater Mainz), Così fan tutte (Opera Australia), and Thomas Adès’s Powder Her Face (Theater Aachen); and costumes for Les Troyens (Covent Garden, San Francisco Opera, and La Scala); Charles Wuorinen’s Brokeback Mountain (Theater Aachen); Anna Bolena (Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe); Aida and Thomas Ades’s The Tempest (Covent Garden); Don Carlo (Bolshoi Theatre); Rusalka (Lyric Opera of Chicago); L’Anatomie de la Sensation (Paris Opera Ballet); numerous works for the Royal Ballet, including Woolf Works, Live Fire Exercise, Limen, Infra (also for the Joffrey Ballet and Mariinsky Ballet), and Chroma (also for Alvin Ailey, Royal Danish Ballet, and Bolshoi Ballet); Outlier (New York City Ballet); The Messiah (English National Opera and Opera de Lyon); Dyad 1929 (Australian Ballet); Renature (Nederlands Dans Theater); La Cenerentola (Glyndebourne Festival); In the Republic of Happiness (Royal Court); The Kitchen, Dido, Queen of Carthage, and The Hour We Knew Nothing of Each Other (National Theatre); Judgment Day (Almeida); and All About My Mother (Old Vic).
GIUSEPPE VERDI

LA TRAVIATA

Lisette Oropesa—hailed by The New York Times for possessing “a voice by turns brightly crystalline and arrestingly powerful”—takes on one of the pinnacles of the soprano repertoire as the tragic heroine Violetta. Bertrand de Billy conducts an exciting cast that also features Piero Pretti as Alfredo and Luca Salsi as Germont.

FEB 26, 29  MAR 5, 9, 13, 19

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**David Finn**  
LIGHTING DESIGNER (SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA)

**THIS SEASON**  Der Fliegende Holländer at the Met and Le Nozze di Figaro at Opera Australia.  
**MET PRODUCTIONS**  Tosca and Parsifal (debut, 2013).

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS**  At the age of 16, he began working for puppeteer Burr Tillstrom and the famed television program Kukla, Fran and Ollie. His extensive operatic credits include productions at Covent Garden, Staatsoper Berlin, Dutch National Opera, San Francisco Opera, the Salzburg Festival, Scottish Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Opera Australia, the Santa Fe Opera, the Canadian Opera Company, and in Turin, Paris, Brussels, Florence, and Stuttgart. He has collaborated on dance works by Twyla Tharp, Paul Taylor, Merce Cunningham, Sasha Waltz, José Limón, James Kudelka, Helgi Tomasson, and Dana Reitz and was resident designer for Mikhail Baryshnikov’s White Oak Dance Project between 1993 and 2000. He has designed for the Paris Opera Ballet, London’s Royal Ballet, La Scala Ballet, Royal Danish Ballet, Scottish Ballet, Birmingham Royal Ballet, Bavarian State Ballet, and Atlanta Ballet, as well as Martin Scorsese’s The Age of Innocence and ZED and Michael Jackson ONE with Cirque du Soleil. In 1999, he directed The Green Monster for PBS’s POV series.

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**Peter Flaherty**  
VIDEO DESIGNER (BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS)

**THIS SEASON**  Der Fliegende Holländer at the Met.  
**MET PRODUCTIONS**  Parsifal (debut, 2013).

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS**  His work as a director and interactive artist has shown in more than a hundred international venues, including theaters, galleries, and museums. He recently conceived and directed The Dial, an interactive narrative combining augmented reality and projection mapping, which premiered at Sundance in 2019. He created and directed The Surrogate, which was a SXSW Interactive Innovation Award finalist. He is now in production for Empire at Sea, an augmented-reality drama about a group of climate-change researchers on an isolated oil rig that must confront the fallout from the Big One, with Intel Studios. On Broadway, he created the video and projection design for Roundabout Theatre’s Sondheim on Sondheim, which was later adapted for HBO’s documentary film Six by Sondheim. His large-scale video installation Pass Back a Revolver premiered at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Philadelphia. He has received grants from the Rockefeller MAP Fund, New York State Council on the Arts, Doris Duke Foundation, and Jerome Foundation, among others. He is a Professor and Head of the Interactive Media for Performance MFA Program at CalArts.
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Carolyn Choa
CHOREOGRAPHER (HONG KONG, CHINA)

THIS SEASON  Der Fliegende Holländer at the Met.

MET PRODUCTIONS  Parsifal and Madama Butterfly (debut, 2006).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS  In March 2019, she conceived, directed, and choreographed Beauty and Sadness, Elena Langer and David Pountney’s operatic adaptation of Yasunari Kawabata’s last published novel, in Hong Kong. Her choreography credits include The Bartered Bride (Belfast Opera), Eugene Onegin and Lakmé (Royal College of Music), The Land of Smiles (Royal Academy of Music), Kommilitonen (Juilliard), Pilgrim’s Progress (English National Opera), and the films The English Patient and The Talented Mr. Ripley. She has directed and choreographed Madama Butterfly at English National Opera and the Lithuanian National Opera and Die Fledermaus at the Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts. She was nominated for an Asian Women of Achievement Award and shared an Olivier Award for Outstanding Contribution to Opera with Anthony Minghella. She is co-editor and translator of The Vintage Book of Contemporary Chinese Fiction and created a number of art installations, including the opening of the Shangri-La Hotel at the Shard in London and a filmed solo for the Brontes Parsonage Museum in Yorkshire.

Serge Lamothe
DRAMATURG (QUEBEC, CANADA)

THIS SEASON  Der Fliegende Holländer at the Met.

MET PRODUCTIONS  Parsifal (debut, 2013).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS  A novelist, poet, and dramatist, he has worked with director François Girard on a number of projects including Der Fliegende Holländer at Opéra de Québec (2019); Cirque du Soleil’s Zed (Tokyo, 2008) and Zarkana (Radio City Music Hall, Moscow, and Madrid in 2011 and Las Vegas beginning in 2012); and Lyon Opera’s The Lindbergh Flight and The Seven Deadly Sins (Brecht/Weil, 2006), Émilie (Saariaho, 2010), and Parsifal (2012). His theatrical adaptations include Kafka’s The Trial (Théâtre du Nouveau Monde, Montreal, 2004), Yasushi Inoue’s Hunting gun (Usine C, Montreal, 2010; Parco Theater, Tokyo, 2011—Kinokuniya and Yomiuri Awards), and Yukio Mishima’s The Temple of the Golden Pavilion (directed by Amon Miyamoto, Kanagawa Arts Theater and Lincoln Center Festival, 2011). His original play, The Prince of Miguasha, was granted the Yves Thériault Award by Radio Canada in 2003, and his independent works include the books Oshima (2019), Mektoub (2016), Ma Terre est un Fond d’Océan (2016), Les Enfants Lumières (2012), Les Urbanishads (2010), and Metarevers (2009).
The Cast and Creative Team CONTINUED

**Mihoko Fujimura**
MEZZO-SOPRANO (GIFU-KEN, JAPAN)

**THIS SEASON**
Mary in *Der Fliegende Holländer* for her debut at the Met, the Nurse in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* at the Vienna State Opera, and Fricka in *Die Walküre* in Tokyo.

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS**
Her recent performances include Charlotte in *Werther* and Fricka in *Das Rheingold* in Tokyo, Fricka in *Die Walküre* and Haruko in the world premiere of Toshio Hosokawa’s *Stilles Meer* in Hamburg, Fricka in *Die Walküre* in Beijing, and Fricka in the *Ring* cycle at the Vienna State Opera. She made her debut at the Bayreuth Festival in 2002 as Fricka in the *Ring* cycle, and at Bayreuth, she has also appeared as Waltraute and Erda in the *Ring* cycle, Brangäne in *Tristan und Isolde*, and Kundry in *Parsifal*. She has sung at many of the world’s leading opera houses, including Covent Garden, La Scala, the Bavarian State Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, the Salzburg Festival, and in Florence, Paris, Dresden, Genoa, Buenos Aires, and Madrid. On the concert stage, she has appeared with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Berlin Philharmonic, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra Filarmonica della Scala, London Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Boston Symphony Orchestra, and Philadelphia Orchestra, among others.

**Anja Kampe**
SOPRANO (ZELLA-MEHLIS, GERMANY)

**THIS SEASON**
Senta in *Der Fliegende Holländer* for her debut at the Met, Sieglinde in *Die Walküre* at Staatsoper Berlin, Katerina Ismailova in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* in Frankfurt, Leonore in *Fidelio* in Zurich, Kundry in *Parsifal* and Minnie in *La Fanciulla del West* at the Bavarian State Opera, Marie in *Wozzeck* at Aix-en-Provence, and concerts with the Berlin Philharmonic.

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS**
In 2018, she was named a Kammersängerin at the Bavarian State Opera, where her roles have included Senta, Leonore, Sieglinde, and Katerina Ismailova, among others. Recent performances include Isolde in *Tristan und Isolde* at Staatsoper Berlin and in Buenos Aires, Minnie in Hamburg, Senta in Dresden and at the Dallas Opera, Sieglinde at the Bayreuth Festival, Kundry at the Paris Opera and Vienna State Opera, and Leonore in concert in Naples. She has also sung Senta at La Scala, the Vienna State Opera, Covent Garden, and in Barcelona, Hamburg, Zurich, Madrid, Brussels, and Tokyo; Sieglinde in Budapest; Brünnhilde in *Die Walküre* in concert at the Salzburg Festival; Leonore at La Scala; the title role of *Tosca* and Kundry at Staatsoper Berlin; and Kundry in Madrid.
Evgeny Nikitin

BASS-BARITONE (MURMANSK, RUSSIA)

This season The title role of Der Fliegende Holländer and the New Year’s Eve Gala at the Met, Klingsor in Parsifal in concert in Paris, the title roles of Attila and Prince Igor at St. Petersburg’s Mariinsky Theatre, Wotan in Siegfried in concert with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, and Varlaam in Boris Godunov at the Paris Opera.

Met Appearances Gunther in Götterdämmerung, Klingsor, Kurwenal in Tristan und Isolde, Rangoni and the title role in Boris Godunov, Orest in Elektra, Pogner in Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg, Colline in La Bohème, Fasolt in Das Rheingold, Creon / The Messenger in Stravinsky’s Oedipus Rex, and Dolokhov in War and Peace (debut, 2002).

Career Highlights He appears regularly at the Mariinsky Theatre, where his roles have included Scarpia in Tosca, Klingsor, Jochanaan in Salome, Philip II in Don Carlo, the title roles of Don Giovanni and Der Fliegende Holländer, Gunther, Ruslan in Glinka’s Ruslan and Lyudmila, Boris Godunov, Rangoni, Wotan in the Ring cycle, Kurwenal, and Orest, among many others. He has also appeared at the Vienna State Opera, Bavarian State Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Dutch National Opera, Switzerland’s Verbier Festival, Canadian Opera Company, and in Baden-Baden, Madrid, Rome, Naples, Florence, Zurich, Valencia, Barcelona, and Tokyo.

David Portilo

TENOR (SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS)

This season The Steersman in Der Fliegende Holländer and Tamino in The Magic Flute at the Met, Tamino in Die Zauberflöte at Washington National Opera, Mr. Rodriguez in the world premiere of Tobias Picker’s Awakenings at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, and Pasquale in Haydn’s Orlando Paladino at the Bavarian State Opera.


Career Highlights Recent performances include Tamino in Die Zauberflöte at the Glyndebourne Festival and in Frankfurt, Idamante in Idomeneo in Madrid, Arbace in Idomeneo at Lyric Opera of Chicago, Alfredo in La Traviata at Opera San Antonio, the Count of Libenskof in Rossini’s Il Viaggio a Reims at Deutsche Oper Berlin, Don Ottavio in Don Giovanni at the Dallas Opera, and Count Almaviva in Il Barbiere di Siviglia at Houston Grand Opera. He has also sung Lurcanio in Handel’s Ariodante with the English Concert, Pedrillo in Die Entführung aus dem Serail at Dutch National Opera, and Don Ramiro in La Cenerentola at San Diego Opera.
“SHEER SONIC GRANDEUR”

—WALL STREET JOURNAL

Recorded earlier this season, the Met’s landmark production of *Porgy and Bess* is now available on a three-CD set. Eric Owens and Angel Blue headline the Gershwins’ great American opera, with David Robertson conducting. CDs can be purchased at the Met Opera Shop, located near the box office, or online at metoperashop.org.
Franz-Josef Selig
BASS (Mayen, Germany)

This Season
Daland in Der Fliegende Holländer at the Met, the Chief Priest in Spontini’s La Vestale in Vienna, King Marke in Tristan und Isolde at Covent Garden, and Beethoven’s Missa Solemnis at Germany’s Kissinger Sommer.

Met Appearances
Daland, Fasolt in Das Rheingold, and Sarastro in Die Zauberflöte (debut, 1998).

Career Highlights
Recent performances include King Marke in Brussels, the Marquis of Calatrava / Padre Guardiano in La Forza del Destino in Frankfurt, Seneca in L’Incoronazione di Poppea at Staatsoper Berlin, Sarastro in concert and Gurnemanz in Parsifal in Baden-Baden, Daland at the Bavarian State Opera, and Arkel in Pelléas et Mélisande at the Paris Opera and Germany’s Ruhrrtriennale. He has also sung Arkel at the Vienna State Opera and in Aix-en-Provence and London, Osmin in Die Entführung aus dem Serail in Toulouse and Aix-en-Provence, Rocco in Fidelio and Gurnemanz in Madrid, Rocco and Osmin at the Bavarian State Opera, Seneca in Vienna, the Hermit in Der Freischütz in Paris, Gurnemanz in Frankfurt, Hunding in Die Walküre and Daland at the Bayreuth Festival, and King Marke at the Paris Opera, Canadian Opera Company, and in Madrid.

Sergey Skorokhodov
Tenor (St. Petersburg, Russia)

This Season
Erik in Der Fliegende Holländer at the Met; the Duke in Rigoletto, Cavaradossi in Tosca, Andrei Khovansky in Khovanshchina, Lenski in Eugene Onegin, Vaudémont in Iolanta, Erik, the title role of Don Carlo, Macduff in Macbeth, Edgardo in Lucia di Lammermoor, and Yanormir in Rimsky-Korsakov’s Mlada at St. Petersburg’s Mariinsky Theatre; Calaf in Turandot at the Canadian Opera Company; Andrei Khovansky at Staatsoper Berlin; and Foresto in Attila in concert in Baden-Baden.

Met Appearances
Ensemble in The Nose (debut, 2010)

Career Highlights
Since 2007, he has been a soloist at the Mariinsky Theatre, where his roles have included the title roles of Tannhäuser and Lohengrin, Alfredo in La Traviata, Ismaele in Nabucco, Grigori in Boris Godunov, and Zinovy in Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk, among many others. Recent performances include Andrei Khovansky at La Scala; Pollione in Norma in St. Gallen, Switzerland; Lohengrin in Essen, Germany; Erik in Bergen, Norway; Vaudémont in Mannheim; Boris in Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk at the Bavarian State Opera; Tsarevich Gvidon in Rimsky-Korsakov’s The Golden Cockerel in Madrid; and Vaudémont at Moscow’s Bolshoi Theatre.
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