

MODEST MUSSORGSKY

BORIS GODUNOV

CONDUCTOR
Sebastian Weigle

PRODUCTION
Stephen Wadsworth

SET DESIGNER
Ferdinand Wögerbauer

COSTUME DESIGNER
Moidele Bickel

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Duane Schuler

FIGHT DIRECTOR
Steve Rankin

GENERAL MANAGER
Peter Gelb

JEANETTE LERMAN-NEUBAUER
MUSIC DIRECTOR
Yannick Nézet-Séguin

Opera in seven scenes

Libretto by the composer, based on
the historical tragedy by Alexander
Sergeyevich Pushkin

Tuesday, September 28, 2021
7:00–9:20PM

First time this season

The production of *Boris Godunov* was made possible by generous gifts from **Karen and Kevin Kennedy, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Solomon, and Mr. and Mrs. Wilmer J. Thomas, Jr.**

The Metropolitan Opera

2021-22 SEASON

The 274th Metropolitan Opera performance of
MODEST MUSSORGSKY'S

BORIS GODUNOV

CONDUCTOR
Sebastian Weigle

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

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Richard Bernstein

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Brenton Ryan

MITIUKHA
Bradley Garvin

VARLAAM
Ryan Speedo Green*

SHCHELKALOV
Aleksy Bogdanov DEBUT

POLICE OFFICER
Kevin Burdette

PRINCE SHUISKY
Maxim Paster DEBUT

XENIA
Erika Baikoff** DEBUT

BORIS GODUNOV
René Pape

FEODOR
Megan Marino

PIMEN
Ain Anger DEBUT

NURSE
Eve Gigliotti

GRIGORY
David Butt Philip DEBUT

BOYAR IN ATTENDANCE
Mark Schowalter

HOSTESS OF THE INN
Tichina Vaughn*

HOLY FOOL
Miles Mykkanen

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Boris Godunov is presented without intermission.

Tuesday, September 28, 2021, 7:00-9:20PM



JONATHAN TITHEL / MET OPERA

A scene from
Mussorgsky's
Boris Godunov

Chorus Master **Donald Palumbo**

Musical Preparation **J. David Jackson, Caren Levine*,
Bradley Moore*, Carol Isaac, and Valeria Polunina***

Assistant Stage Directors **Sara Erde, Stephen Pickover,
and Paula Williams**

Prompter **Caren Levine***

Children's Chorus Director **Anthony Piccolo**

Met Titles **Sonya Haddad**

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Millinery by **Susanne Gaebel, Berlin**

Rehearsal space for the Children's Chorus provided by
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The original 1869 version of *Boris Godunov* is performed in the
critical edition by Michael Rot by arrangement with European
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Synopsis

Russia, between 1598 and 1605.

Scene I

Boris Godunov has retreated to the Novodevichy Monastery near Moscow. The Streltsy police force a crowd to beg Boris to become tsar of Russia. The boyar Shchelkalov announces that Boris still refuses the throne and laments Russia's insoluble misery. A procession of pilgrims prays to God for help. The Streltsy warn the crowd to be at the Kremlin the next morning ready to cheer.

Scene II

The following day, the bells of Moscow herald the coronation of Boris. The new tsar, overcome by fear and melancholy, implores God to look kindly on him. He invites the people to a feast. The people cheer.

Scene III

In the Chudov Monastery, the monk Pimen is writing the last chapter of his history of Russia. The novice Grigory awakens from a nightmare and expresses regret that he hasn't tasted glory in war and society. He questions Pimen about the dead Tsarevich Dmitry, rightful heir to Boris's throne. Pimen recounts the events of Dmitry's murder (the assassins implicated Boris before they died) and mentions that the tsarevich would have been Grigory's age. Alone, Grigory decides to flee the cloister and condemns Boris: "You will not escape the judgment of man or God!"

Scene IV

Now on a mission to expose Boris and proclaim himself the Tsarevich Dmitry, Grigory is trying to cross into Lithuania to find support for his cause. He falls in with two vagrant monks, Varlaam and Missail, at an inn near the border, and uses them as cover. No sooner has he asked directions to the border from the innkeeper, who warns that the frontier is heavily patrolled, than a police officer enters with a warrant for Grigory's arrest. The officer is illiterate, so Grigory reads the warrant, substituting a description of Varlaam for his own. But Varlaam can read. Grigory escapes, pursued by the Streltsy.

Scene V

In Boris's apartments, his daughter mourns the death of her fiancé. Boris comforts her tenderly, talks intimately with his son about inheriting the throne, then reflects to himself on his inconsolable sadness: All that he does for his people seems to go wrong, and he is blamed for everything after the murder of the tsarevich. Shuisky, a powerful boyar, brings news of a pretender to the Russian throne, supported by the Polish court and the Pope. When Boris learns

that the pretender claims to be Dmitry, he is deeply shaken. Shuisky reassures him again that the real tsarevich was in fact killed and tells of seeing the boy's body after his murder—over three days there was no sign of decay, only a mysterious radiance. Shuisky leaves and Boris gives way to his terror, imagining that he sees Dmitry's ghost. Torn by guilt and regret, he prays for forgiveness.

Scene VI

Outside the Cathedral of St. Basil in Moscow, starving peasants debate whether Tsarevich Dmitry still lives, as news reaches them that his troops are near. A group of children torment a holy fool and steal his last kopek. When Boris and his retinue come from the cathedral to distribute alms, the holy fool asks Boris to kill the children the way he killed Dmitry. Shuisky orders the holy fool seized, but Boris instead asks his accuser to pray for him. The holy fool refuses to intercede for a murderer. When Boris's retinue passes and the people disperse, the holy fool laments Russia's dark future.

Scene VII

In the Duma, the council of boyars passes a death sentence on the pretender. Shuisky arrives with an account of Boris's hallucinations of the murdered tsarevich. Boris suddenly storms in, disoriented and crying out to the dead child. When he regains his composure, Shuisky brings Pimen before the Duma. Pimen tells of a man who was cured of blindness while praying at Dmitry's grave. Boris collapses. He sends the boyars away, calling for his son. Naming him heir to his throne, he bids a loving farewell to his children and dies.



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Modest Mussorgsky

Boris Godunov

*Premiere: State Academic Theater of Opera and Ballet, Leningrad, 1928
(original 1869 version)*

One of Russian opera's most famous and remarkable works, *Boris Godunov* is cherished both for its epic scale and for its penetrating characterization of the title character, a ruler tortured by his guilty past. The source of the opera is a play by Pushkin based on historical events following the deaths of Tsar Ivan the Terrible and his sons Dmitry and Feodor, and rumors that the boyar Boris Godunov had ordered Dmitry's murder to gain the throne. Modern historians tend to believe Boris innocent of the tsarevitch's death, but both play and opera assume his guilt. In the opera, the story is enlivened by a large cast of fictional characters—monks, bureaucrats, commoners, and a holy fool with the ability to say what no one else can. The result is the portrait of a nation, from the top of its social ladder to the bottom, at a critical moment in its history. Yet it is the title role that defines this opera: complex, nuanced, a hero and a villain, a summit of the bass repertory, and one of the most magnificent characters in all opera.

The Creators

Modest Mussorgsky (1839–81) was a Russian composer famous for seeking an authentic national voice in his music. He is chiefly remembered for this opera and the unfinished *Khovanshchina*, the tone poem *Night on Bald Mountain*, the piano suite *Pictures at an Exhibition* (better known in Ravel's orchestration), and a number of songs. But the alcoholism that contributed to his early death hindered his output. For the libretto of *Boris Godunov*, the composer adapted the 1825 drama by Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin (1799–1837), who is considered the father of modern Russian literature. His writings have been the source of many other operas, including Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* and *The Queen of Spades*, Glinka's *Ruslan and Lyudmila*, and Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Golden Cockerel*.

The Setting

The opera takes place in Russia between 1598 and 1605, an immensely turbulent time following the end of the Rurik dynasty and preceding the emergence of the Romanov dynasty. Scene IV is set on the Russian border with Lithuania, but the rest of the opera is set in and around Moscow. Several of the places specified in the libretto can still be seen today, including the Kremlin's Terem Palace, which is now the official residence of the Russian president.

The Music

Mussorgsky's score, like the drama itself, operates on both the largest and the most intimate levels: Huge crowd scenes and monumental monologues are juxtaposed with snippets of smaller (but crucial) folk-based melodies. The people of Russia are represented by the chorus, but the portrait is not uniformly flattering. Genuinely patriotic moments are interspersed with outbursts expressing the crowd's ignorance, desperation, and inclination to mindless violence. The loftier and more resilient spirit of the Russian people is glimpsed in brief, poignant solos such as the songs of the Nurse and little Feodor in Scene V, the Innkeeper's song and Varlaam's drunken battle song in Scene IV, and the laments of the Holy Fool. Bass voices dominate the score, most notably the title character, with his chilling dramatic narratives. Mussorgsky's orchestration is rough and even abrasive at times, which provoked subsequent revisions by other composers, but his music is compelling and utterly Russian throughout.

Met History

Arturo Toscanini conducted *Boris's* Met premiere in 1913, sung in Italian with Adamo Didur in the title role and Louise Homer as Marina, using the Rimsky-Korsakov orchestration. The production had originally been commissioned by Sergei Diaghilev and performed in Paris, with scenery designed by the Russian artist Aleksandr Golovine. In the 1920s, Fyodor Chaliapin sang the title role in Russian while the rest of the cast and chorus sang in Italian. (This arrangement was repeated for the Ukrainian émigré bass Alexander Kipnis in 1942–43.) Ezio Pinza gave 25 notable performances as Boris from 1939 to 1947. A revised production, using Mussorgsky's original orchestrations but sung in English, premiered in 1953 with George London as Boris and Jerome Hines as Pimen (who would himself sing the title role 30 times over the next 20 years). Cesare Siepi was another celebrated Boris in the 1950s. A new Russian-language production by August Everding, also using Mussorgsky's original orchestrations, debuted in 1974, with Thomas Schippers conducting Martti Talvela in the title role. Other memorable interpreters include Paul Plishka (1983 and 1991), Samuel Ramey (1997–98, with Olga Borodina as Marina), and James Morris (2004). Stephen Wadsworth's production premiered in 2010, using Mussorgsky's original orchestration and based on the first published score (1875), with additions from the 1869 version. René Pape sang the title role, under the baton of Valery Gergiev. This season, the opera is presented in the composer's original 1869 version for the first time, with Pape reprising his portrayal.

Program Note

"In spite of his despotism, the wretched king is like a wounded lion surrounded by jackals and hyenas, who finally succeed in destroying [him]."

—Bass Fyodor Chaliapin on Boris Godunov as a tragic figure

On March 13, 1881, Tsar Alexander II was blown up in his carriage in St. Petersburg; he was memorialized with the Church of the Savior on Spilled Blood, built on the site of his death. On July 17, 1918, the last of the Romanovs, Tsar Nicholas II, his wife, four children, and servants were executed in a basement in Yekaterinburg.

Such interruptions in Russian dynastic succession almost inevitably coaxed a "True Tsar" out of the shadows. After the Romanovs were murdered, their bodies were buried in the nearby woods; no one knew exactly where, so it was not surprising when, in 1922, rumors emerged that an amnesiac who called herself Anna Anderson claimed to be the Grand Duchess Anastasia, who had escaped the massacre. Anderson defended her case until she died in 1984, but that didn't stop other Anastasia imposters from coming forward. Another less plausible and far more amusing tale is told by historian Alex de Jonge about Alexander Solzhenitsyn, who once shared a prison cell with an ex-chauffeur who claimed to have had a mystical vision in which an old man informed him that he was the future Emperor Michael.

The earliest of the pretenders dates to the time of Ivan the Terrible. The story begins on November 16, 1581, when Ivan, in a fit of anger, struck down his eldest son and heir, the Tsarevich Ivan Ivanovich. But Ivan also had a younger son, Dmitry, who was murdered at the age of seven, allegedly upon orders from Boris Godunov. When Ivan died in 1584, his only remaining son—the feeble-minded religious zealot Tsar Feodor I—assumed the throne, while Boris, for all intents and purposes, ruled as regent. After Feodor's death, a tsar had to be elected by parliament; the logical choice was Godunov, who had risen through the ranks from the military to the palace guard and secret police. Boris's connections at court had been reinforced when his sister, Irina Godunova, married Feodor. But his reign was ultimately sabotaged by a Dmitry imposter, the first of three "False Dmitrys," all of whom were murdered or executed. The country was stabilized with the ascension in 1613 of Michael, the first tsar of the House of Romanov.

Alexander Pushkin (1799–1837) offered a snapshot of these events in his play *Boris Godunov* (1825), which he drew from Nikolay Karamzin's *History of the Russian State* (1816–26), a multi-volume tract in defense of autocracy. Pushkin gleaned the facts from Karamzin but turned to Shakespeare for ways to fuse comedy and tragedy and allow characters from different classes to interact freely. Mussorgsky's decision to set Pushkin's play arose from a conversation with Vladimir Nikolsky, an authority on Pushkin, whom the composer met through Lyudmila Shestakova, sister of composer Mikhail Glinka. Shestakova provided

Mussorgsky with a copy of the play with facing blank pages where he could sketch out the libretto.

Pushkin's play comprises 24 scenes, which Mussorgsky reduced to seven diverse tableaux that alternate large choral scenes with intimate encounters. His characters define Russian civic hierarchy from tsar to peasant, including boyars (nobility), the chorus (the people), the wandering monks Varlaam and Missail, and a Holy Fool, who speaks truth to power. Pimen, the monastic chronicler and would-be puppeteer, wants to conclude his history of Russia with one more tale, that of Boris Godunov, whom he has accused of murdering the child Dmitry. Pimen's graphic retelling of the crime plants seeds of conspiracy in the mind of his novice Grigory (False Dmitry) and thus sets in motion the end of the story.

In 1857, Mussorgsky joined the dynamic circle of Russian composers that would become known as the "Mighty Handful," which also included Balakirev, Cui, Rimsky-Korsakov, and Borodin, none of whom had been conservatory trained. (The first conservatory in the country was founded in St. Petersburg in 1862 by Anton Rubinstein.) All of them had studied music privately or were self-taught, proud of their "second-class" musical roots; they considered themselves to be more authentically Russian than "elitist" composers like Tchaikovsky, who had ties to the court. That Russianness manifested itself in a more roughly hewn musical vocabulary that demoted the most basic element of classical Western tonality, the major-minor system, in favor of Russian folk tunes, elusive or sliding tonalities based on modal, pentatonic, octatonic, and whole-tone scales, as well as deliberate use of the parallel fourths and fifths forbidden in conservatory counterpoint classes.

For Mussorgsky, in particular, the idea of Russianness was tied to language. His inspiration was Dargomyzhsky's opera *The Stone Guest*, set almost entirely to Pushkin's original text, thus allowing the music to rise out of the natural inflections of the Russian language. There was no prior "libretticizing" of the words—that is, conversion into the regular rhyming verses that define traditional musical phrase lengths and predictable stopping points or cadences. Mussorgsky considered Dargomyzhsky's approach a new genre, which he called "dialogue opera." He explained his ideas to Shestakova with great clarity and specificity:

This is what I would like—that my characters should speak on stage as living people speak—but moreover, so that the character and strength of my characters, supported by the orchestra, which provides the musical framework for their mode of speech, should achieve their aim directly—that is, my music must be the artistic reproduction of human speech in all its subtlest inflections, that is, *the sounds of human speech* as the external manifestations of thought and feeling must, without exaggeration and forcing, become truthful, precise *music*, but artistic, highly artistic. This is the idea toward which I strive.

The genesis of *Boris Godunov* was complex, akin to Verdi's *Don Carlos* and Offenbach's *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* insofar as Mussorgsky's own revisions and later tinkering by others produced masses of material, enough to create confusion over what actually constitutes the "real" work. Mussorgsky, however, did compose a complete first version in 1869 (which survived, and is the version being performed at the Met this season). It was rejected by the committee of Russia's Imperial Theaters on the grounds that it lacked a strong female character. Mussorgsky revised the opera in 1871–72, adding three completely new scenes, a substantive role for soprano or mezzo-soprano, and more traditional ensembles and set pieces that, as musicologist Richard Taruskin argues, were the ideological antithesis of the first *Boris* and its theoretical and musical goals. The life of Mussorgsky's score became infinitely more complicated after his death, as it was re-orchestrated (and more) by Rimsky-Korsakov, Shostakovich, and Karol Rathaus, resulting in a performance history that obscured Mussorgsky's initial ideas.

The sound world of the original *Boris Godunov* is very dark, owing to a cast of male principles and a preponderance of bass and baritone voices. The low range is offset by the distinctly ethereal sound of boy sopranos, as well the characters of Boris's children Feodor (mezzo-soprano or boy soprano) and Xenia (soprano). The orchestra is very much, in the Wagnerian sense, a psychological tool, expressing the inner world of the story: a government gone awry, the people manipulated and exploited, a ruler who has lost his faculties. The tone of the opera is set in the very first measures by two bassoons playing a modal melody that hints at a desolate landscape. The opening scene unfolds in different musical dialects: declamatory style for the police and chorale style for the crowd, anti-tonality vs. tonality. The opera proceeds in a continuous texture knitted together by recurring musical motives, often associated with particular characters and situations.

Throughout *Boris*, there is a pervasive sense of things being out of kilter. The best example is the coronation scene, in which the illegitimacy of Boris's ascension—and his all-too-keen awareness of it—manifests in a cacophony of bells and brass chords lying a tritone apart, a sinister parody of the traditional music that would typically be heard at a state or religious occasion; it's just "off" enough that the listener can imagine at the same time how a "correct" version would sound. The only relief is the simple folk tune the populace sings in praise of the new tsar (lovers of chamber music will recognize it from Beethoven's String Quartet No. 8 in E Minor, Op. 59, No. 2).

Tonal slippage, deep instrumental timbres, and irregular dialogue define a steady undercurrent of malaise. Even Varlaam's drinking song is angular, only occasionally glancing at rhymes and folkish tunefulness. In this environment, the Holy Fool's simple plaint seems, like its agent, an outlier. Most of all, the perversion of norms defines the character of Boris, whose mind is elsewhere as

the Monomakh's Cap—the iconic crown first worn by Ivan the Terrible—is placed on his head, while he mutters to himself, "My soul is sad. A secret terror haunts me." His growing psychosis erupts in a stream-of-consciousness flow of words that resonates with the soliloquies of Shakespearean murderers like Macbeth, who recoils at the apparition of a bloody child, and Richard III, haunted by the ghosts of the two young princes. Boris, drawn into the vortex of his guilt, gasps, suffocating before a vision of the dead Dmitry.

By the end of his life, Mussorgsky's own mental health had been failing for more than a decade; he was also an alcoholic, and by March 1881, his friends convinced him to check into a military hospital. As biographer David Brown described the situation, "The early stages of epilepsy were diagnosed, his ramblings suggested touches of insanity, and the doctors pronounced his state terminal, predicting he might live a year—or a day." His decline was physical, mental, financial, and precipitous: He had barely a penny to his name and, near the end, sometimes even had to beg for shelter. Various reports from friends mention seizures, paralysis, and labored breathing. The artist Ilya Repin came to visit the composer in the hospital and painted a portrait of a man in disrepair: disheveled hair and beard, rumpled dressing gown, the red nose of a long-term drinker. He looks away from the artist, his blue eyes weary, haunted; the background is a white void. Repin completed the portrait in four sittings; on the 28th of March, just two weeks after the murder of Alexander II, Mussorgsky was dead at age 42.

—Helen M. Greenwald

Helen M. Greenwald is chair of the department of music history at New England Conservatory and editor of the Oxford Handbook of Opera.

A Note from the Director

Mussorgsky's original version of *Boris Godunov* is fiercely, even defiantly original. The dates tell a story.

Boris Godunov died in 1605. The Romanovs came to power in 1613 and ruled Russia until 1917.

Meanwhile, Pushkin wrote his play *Godunov* in 1825, and it was published in 1831—but as it was illegal to depict the Romanov tsars on the stage until 1837, Pushkin's play wasn't cleared for performance by the censors until 1866. It wasn't performed until 1870.

Mussorgsky had already composed his adaptation of *Boris* by then, but the opera was rejected by the Imperial Theaters in St. Petersburg—allegedly due to its lack of a prima donna part, though the censors also required the composer to drop the St. Basil's Cathedral scene (in which the Holy Fool calls the tsar a murderer), and the music was unlike anything they'd heard before.

Boris was first rejected because it's a many-layered political provocation, and the politics were embedded in the music. Rather than embrace classical European rules of harmony, song, and storytelling, Mussorgsky turned toward Russia and its own musical roots, especially the music of the Russian language as it was spoken, declaimed, murmured, and shouted. "He likes what is coarse, unpolished, and ugly," Tchaikovsky wrote of Mussorgsky, "He plays with his lack of polish; he even seems proud of his lack of skill, writing just as it comes to him." But Tchaikovsky also recognized that Mussorgsky, "with all his ugliness, speaks a new idiom. Beautiful it may not be, but it is new." Mussorgsky wrote the world as he experienced and heard it, in music that took its shape from the rush of language, the heat of each character's passions, the disorienting irony and brutality in Russia's history—and, last but not least, from Mussorgsky's own increasingly alcoholic and spiritually disillusioned mindscape.

This first version, with its seven disjointed scenes, is way ahead of its time. The word-setting and sharp musical corners feel close to Janáček's. The music of those Russian language patterns pushes the harmonies to brave new places—pointing the way toward Janáček, Debussy, and Bartók, who also took harmony out of the mainstream while setting their languages. Producers, publishers, critics, and fellow composers long celebrated a lack of proper couth in the score, especially in the orchestration, though many of them also worked to correct it. Finally, the Met will hear it as Mussorgsky imagined it—spare, gutsy, haunting.

Also, *Boris*'s moral quandaries and ambiguities, and the harsh, unsentimental way Mussorgsky picks at them, have a vivid post-Freudian feel. Sometimes I feel I've stumbled into a Britten tragedy: Peter Grimes, and the Governess in *The Turn of the Screw*, are *Boris*'s direct descendants.

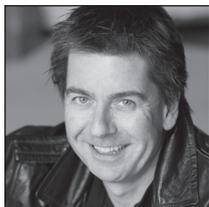
The seven scenes of this *Boris* work steadily to entrap the title character in an existential cell, more swiftly and more surely than in the later version. As he comes to terms with the murder of the former tsarevich, Boris loses his grip—on government, on family, on reality. Some think he's responsible for the murder,

some think he's innocent, but he himself realizes that even if he didn't murder the boy, he might as well have—public opinion has turned decisively against him, and his own beloved son, the current tsarevich, will pay for it. It drives him mad. He pours this pain and misgiving into a series of monologues that are the bloody heart of the opera.

A word about the figure of the Holy Fool. Destitute, filthy, sometimes naked, seemingly mad, holy fools roamed the cities and became famous in 16th-century Russia. They were a kind of religious ascetic and savant, who might approach a tsar without fear and reproach him for abuses of power, as Nicholas of Pskov did when Ivan the Terrible came to sack the city. He wandered out of the gates to Ivan and said "You call eating meat during a fast a sin, but you yourself have killed thousands and think it is not a sin?" Ivan, shamed, left Pskov alone and later beatified several holy fools. St. Basil's Cathedral itself is named for a holy fool, Basil the Blessed, for whom Ivan himself was a pallbearer. Mussorgsky's Fool sees the arc of Russian history, and sins both epic and commonplace, and he reaches out to Boris as no other character does.

—*Stephen Wadsworth*

The Cast



Sebastian Weigle

CONDUCTOR (BERLIN, GERMANY)

THIS SEASON *Boris Godunov* at the Met and Vienna State Opera; Humperdinck's *Königskinder*, Rimsky-Korsakov's *Christmas Eve*, *The Merry Widow*, *Carmina Burana*, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, and *Lohengrin* in Frankfurt; *Elektra* in concert with Tokyo's Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra; and concerts with the Frankfurter Opern- und Museumsorchester.

MET APPEARANCES *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Fidelio*, and *Die Zauberflöte* (debut, 2000).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has served as music director of Oper Frankfurt since 2008, and in 2019, he became chief conductor of the Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra. He held tenures as music director of Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceu from 2004 to 2009 and as music director of Staatsoper Berlin between 1997 and 2002. He has also taken the podium at Covent Garden, Deutsche Oper Berlin, the Bayreuth Festival, the Bavarian State Opera, Budapest's Wagner Festival, the Salzburg Festival, Opera Australia, and with the Staatskapelle Berlin, Staatskapelle Dresden, Berlin Symphony Orchestra, Deutsche Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, Vienna Symphony, NHK Symphony Orchestra, and Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra, among many other leading opera companies and orchestras.



Ain Anger

BASS (KIHELKONNA, ESTONIA)

THIS SEASON Pimen in *Boris Godunov* for his debut and Prince Gremin in *Eugene Onegin* at the Met, the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni* and Philip II in *Don Carlo* at the Vienna State Opera, and Méphistophélès in *Faust* at Estonian National Opera.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS In 2020, he was named a Kammersänger of the Vienna State Opera, where, since his 2004 debut, he has sung more than 40 roles, including Dosifei in *Khovanshchina*, King Henry in *Lohengrin*, Hunding in *Die Walküre*, Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte*, Zaccaria in *Nabucco*, and Fiesco in *Simon Boccanegra*. Recent performances elsewhere include Daland in *Der Fliegende Holländer* and Fafner in *Das Rheingold* at the Bavarian State Opera; Hunding in Tokyo and in concert with the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra; Daland at Estonian National Opera, Latvian National Opera, and in Madrid; Hagen in *Götterdämmerung* at the Edinburgh International Festival; and the Commendatore at the Paris Opera. He has also sung Prince Gremin, Hunding, and Fafner in *Das Rheingold* and *Siegfried* at the Bavarian State Opera; Hunding at Covent Garden; Pimen in Paris; King Marke in *Tristan und Isolde* in concert with the Cleveland Orchestra; and Daland at La Scala.



Aleksey Bogdanov

BARITONE (ODESSA, UKRAINE)

THIS SEASON Shchelkalov in *Boris Godunov* for his debut at the Met; Plutone in *L'Orfeo* with Europa Galante in Hamburg, Barcelona, and Vienna; and the title role of *Rigoletto* at Nashville Opera.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include *Rigoletto* at Central City Opera; *Scarpia* in *Tosca* at Austin Opera and Hawaii Opera Theatre; *Crespel* and *Luther* in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* in Barcelona; *Sharpless* in *Madama Butterfly* at Austin Opera; *Amonasro* in *Aida* with the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras; *Beck Weathers* in *Joby Talbot's Everest*, the title role of *Rachmaninoff's Aleko*, and *Starbuck* in *Jake Heggie's Moby Dick* at Chicago Opera Theater; and *Rance* in *La Fanciulla del West* at Maryland Lyric Opera. He is an alumnus of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program at Washington National Opera, where his roles have included *Lieutenant Horstmayer* in *Kevin Puts's Silent Night*, *Escamillo* in *Carmen*, *Peter* in *Hänsel und Gretel*, and *General John A. Rawlins* and *Governor George Wallace* in the premiere of the revised version of *Philip Glass's Appomattox*. He has also appeared at the Glimmerglass Festival, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Atlanta Opera, and with the National Symphony Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, and Columbus Symphony Orchestra, among others.



David Butt Philip

TENOR (SOMERSET, UNITED KINGDOM)

THIS SEASON *Grigory* in *Boris Godunov* for his debut and *Laertes* in *Brett Dean's Hamlet* at the Met, *Come Home: A Celebration of Return* at Washington National Opera, and *Beethoven's Missa Solemnis* in Rouen, France.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include *Bacchus* in *Ariadne auf Naxos* in concert at the Edinburgh International Festival; *Boris* in *Kát'a Kabanová* at the Glyndebourne Festival; *Florestan* in *Fidelio* and *Grigory* at Covent Garden; the *Prince* in *Rusalka*, *Froh* in *Das Rheingold*, and *Essex* in *Britten's Gloriana* in Madrid; *Rodolfo* in *La Bohème* as part of English National Opera's Drive & Live; *Don José* in *Carmen* at English National Opera; *Florestan* in Prague; and the title role of *Zemlinsky's Der Zwerg* at Deutsche Oper Berlin. He created the role of *Laertes* in the world premiere of *Hamlet* at the Glyndebourne Festival and has also sung the opera's title role on tour with the company and in Cologne. He has appeared in concert with the Hallé, London Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, London's Philharmonia, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Boston Symphony Orchestra, and Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra, among others.



Ryan Speedo Green

BASS-BARITONE (SUFFOLK, VIRGINIA)

THIS SEASON *Varlaam* in *Boris Godunov*, *Uncle Paul* in *Terence Blanchard's Fire Shut Up in My Bones*, *Jake* in *Porgy and Bess*, *Colline* in *La Bohème*, and *Truffaldin* in *Ariadne auf Naxos* at the Met; *Rocco* in *Fidelio* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic; and *Escamillo* in *Carmen*

at Washington National Opera.

MET APPEARANCES *Jake*, the *King* in *Aida*, *Colline*, *Oroe* in *Semiramide*, "Rambo" in *John Adams's The Death of Klinghoffer*, the *Bonze* in *Madama Butterfly*, the *Jailer* in *Tosca*, the *Second Knight* in *Parsifal*, and the *Mandarin* in *Turandot* (debut, 2012).

The Cast CONTINUED

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS In 2014, he became a member of the ensemble at the Vienna State Opera, where his roles have included Banquo in *Macbeth*, Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte*, Don Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Truffaldin, Fasolt in *Das Rheingold*, and Colline, among many others. Other recent performances include the Speaker in *Die Zauberflöte* and Colline at Palm Beach Opera, Jake at Vienna's Theater an der Wien, and Osmin in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* at Houston Grand Opera. He is a graduate of the Met's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program and was a 2021 recipient of the Met's Beverly Sills Artist Award, established by Agnes Varis and Karl Leichtman.



René Pape

BASS (DRESDEN, GERMANY)

THIS SEASON The title role of *Boris Godunov* at the Met; Mozart's Requiem and excerpts from the *Ring* cycle with the Staatskapelle Dresden; Gurnemanz in *Parsifal* and King Marke in *Tristan und Isolde* at the Vienna State Opera; Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte*, King Henry in *Lohengrin*, Sir John Falstaff in Nicolai's *Die Lustigen Weiber von Windsor*, Orest in *Elektra*, and Timur in *Turandot* at Staatsoper Berlin; Verdi's Requiem with the Berlin Philharmonic; and King Marke in Wiesbaden.

MET APPEARANCES Since his 1995 debut as the Speaker in *Die Zauberflöte*, he has sung more than 200 performances of 22 roles, including Gurnemanz, Sarastro, King Marke, Banquo in *Macbeth*, Méphistophélès in *Faust*, Philip II in *Don Carlo*, and Boris Godunov, as well as a solo recital in 2014.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Verdi's Requiem at Austria's Grafenegg Festival and with the Teatro alla Scala Orchestra, King Marke at the Verbier Festival and the Czech Republic's Weinviertel Festival, Fiesco in *Simon Boccanegra* and Gurnemanz at St. Petersburg's Mariinsky Theatre, Sarastro in Dresden, Hunding in *Die Walküre* in Madrid, Philip II at the Paris Opera, Fiesco at the Salzburg Festival, and King Marke and Banquo at Staatsoper Berlin.



Maxim Paster

TENOR (KHARKOV, UKRAINE)

THIS SEASON Shuisky in *Boris Godunov* for his debut at the Met.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He appears frequently at Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre, where his roles have included the Second Jew in *Salome*, Sopiel in Rimsky-Korsakov's *Sadko*, the First Ship Owner in Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Tale of Tsar Saltan*, Shuisky, Chekalinsky in *The Queen of Spades*, Tsar Berendey in Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Snow Maiden*, and Mephistopheles in Prokofiev's *The Fiery Angel*. He has also sung Shuisky at Deutsche Oper Berlin, the Bavarian State Opera, and in Paris and Samara, Russia; the Moderator in Prokofiev's *Betrothal in a Monastery* at Staatsoper Berlin; the Public Scribe in *Khovanshchina* at La Scala; Tsar Berendey at the Paris Opera; Mephistopheles in Rome; and Zinovy in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* at the Salzburg Festival. On the concert stage, he has sung Verdi's Requiem in Gothenburg, Rachmaninoff's *The Bells* in Cagliari, Janáček's *Glagolitic Mass* at the Bolshoi Theatre and in Valencia, and Stravinsky's *The Wedding* in Leipzig.