RICHARD WAGNER

DIE MEISTERSINGER
VON NÜRNBERG

CONDUCTOR
Antonio Pappano

PRODUCTION
Otto Schenk

SET DESIGNER
Günther Schneider-Siemssen

COSTUME DESIGNER
Rolf Langenfass

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Gil Wechsler

CHOREOGRAPHER
Carmen De Lavallade

REVIVAL STAGE DIRECTOR
Paula Suozzi

Opera in three acts

Libretto by the composer

Thursday, November 4, 2021
6:00–11:50 PM

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

The revival of this production is made possible by a gift from Rolex, and Ted Snowdon & Duffy Violante

GENERAL MANAGER
Peter Gelb

JEANETTE LERMAN-NEUBAUER
MUSIC DIRECTOR
Yannick Nézet-Séguin
The Metropolitan Opera
2021–22 Season

The 419th Metropolitan Opera performance of

RICHARD WAGNER’S

DIE MEISTERSINGER
VON NÜRNBERG

CONDUCTOR
Antonio Pappano

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

WALther von Stolzing,
A Knight from Franconia
Klaus Florian Vogt

Eva, Pogner’s Daughter
Lise Davidsen

Magdalene, Her Attendant
Claudia Mahnke

David, Apprentice to Sachs
Paul Appleby*

Veit Pogner, a Goldsmith
Georg Zeppenfeld

Sixtus Beckmesser,
The Town Clerk
Johannes Martin Kränzle

Hans Sachs, a Cobbler
Michael Volle

Kunz Vogelgesang, a Furrer
Miles Mykkanen

Konrad Nachtigall,
A Tinsmith
Mark Delavan

FRITZ KOTHNER, A BAKER
Martin Gantner

Hermann Ortel,
A Soap Maker
Bradley Garvin

Balthasar Zorn, a Pewterer
Chaz’men Williams-Ali

Augustin Moser, a Tailor
Robert Watson

Ulrich Eisslinger, a Grocer
Scott Scully

Hans Foltz, a Coppersmith
Richard Bernstein

Hans Schwarz,
A Stocking Weaver
Scott Conner

A Night Watchman
Alexander Tsymbalyuk

This performance is being broadcast live on Metropolitan Opera Radio on SiriusXM channel 355.

Thursday, November 4, 2021, 6:00–11:50PM
Chorus Master  Donald Palumbo
Musical Preparation  Linda Hall, Dan Saunders, Carol Isaac, Jonathan C. Kelly, Patrick Furrer, and Israel Gursky
Assistant Stage Directors  Gregory Keller and Gina Lapinski
Assistant to the Costume Designer  Elissa Tatifikis Iberti
Stage Band Conductor  Joseph Lawson
Fights Staged by  Chris Dumont
Prompter  Carol Isaac
German Coach  Marianne Barrett
Met Titles  Christopher Bergen
Painted Slides by  Robert Winkler
Scenery, properties, and electrical props constructed and painted in Metropolitan Opera Shops
Costumes executed by Metropolitan Opera Costume Department
Wigs and Makeup constructed and executed by Metropolitan Opera Wig and Makeup Department
Boots and shoes by Yefim and Dora Slusker and Peerless Shoe Service

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.

Met Titles
To activate, press the red button to the right of the screen in front of your seat and follow the instructions provided. To turn off the display, press the red button once again. If you have questions, please ask an usher at intermission.
Synopsis

Act I

_Nuremberg, in the 16th century._ At St. Katherine’s Church, the visiting knight Walther von Stolzing approaches Eva, daughter of the wealthy goldsmith Pogner, who is attending a service with her companion, Magdalene. Eva tells her admirer that she is to be engaged the following day to the winner of a song contest held by the local guild of mastersingers. David, Magdalene’s sweetheart and apprentice to the cobbler and mastersinger Hans Sachs, explains the rules of song composing to Walther, who is surprised by the complicated ins and outs of mastersinging. Meanwhile, David’s fellow apprentices set up for a preliminary trial singing. The masters arrive, including Eva’s father, and Walther expresses his desire to become a mastersinger in order to ask for Eva’s hand. The pedantic town clerk, Beckmesser, who also wants to marry Eva, is immediately suspicious of the young man. As proof that tradesmen value art, Pogner offers his daughter’s hand as the prize for the next day’s contest and explains that she can reject the winner but must marry either a mastersinger or no one. Walther introduces himself and describes his natural, self-taught methods of musical composition, provoking mocking comments from Beckmesser. For his trial song, Walther sings an impulsive tune in praise of love and spring, breaking many of the masters’ rules. Beckmesser vigorously keeps a count of his errors. Rejected by the masters, Walther leaves, while Sachs reflects on the unexpected appeal of Walther’s song.

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 7:25PM)

Act II

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

**Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 9:05PM)**

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

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

Premiere: Königliches Hof- und Nationaltheater, Munich, 1868

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

The Creator

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

The Setting

The opera takes place in the symbolically important town of Nuremberg, in southern Germany, around the year 1560. Nuremberg stood for many things: It was a political center of the Holy Roman Empire, an ill-defined state encompassing Germany and Austria whose name suggested international significance. It was also known as a center of business and excellent craftsmanship, a tradition we see represented in the opera. Here, Nuremberg becomes an idealized representation of everything good about German tradition—an egalitarian hotbed of art and thought in which a cobbler really could be (and was) respected as an artist and a philosopher.
The Music
The score of Meistersinger is a sublime achievement, at once lyric, grand, and amazingly detailed. It shows Wagner’s absolute command of his craft, from the orchestra (first shown in the stentorian and irresistible prelude) to vocal solos (the evolution of the tenor’s song from his first solo in Act I to its two incarnations in Act III and Hans Sachs’s meditation on human folly, the famous “Wahn” Monologue in Act III) to ensembles (the transcendentally gorgeous quintet in Act III). The many choruses also demonstrate the scope of Wagner’s genius, most notably the foursquare chorale that opens the work, the near anarchy of the complex riot scene in Act II, and the playful apprentices’ songs in Act III.

Met History
The Met gave the United States premiere of this opera in 1886 under Anton Seidl, the remarkable Hungarian-American conductor who assisted Wagner in Bayreuth. The cast featured leading stars of the Met’s German era, including Emil Fischer, who sang the role of Hans Sachs 34 times over six seasons. Notable subsequent interpreters of the role include Edouard de Reszke (1895–1902), Friedrich Schorr, Herbert Janssen, Otto Edelmann, Thomas Stewart, and James Morris. Conductors include Walter Damrosch (1890–1902) and Arturo Toscanini (who led 19 performances between 1910 and 1915), George Szell (1945–46), and Karl Böhm (1959). James Levine conducted the premiere of the current production in 1993 and for 36 subsequent performances. Among the memorable sopranos who have appeared in Meistersinger at the Met are Johanna Gadski, Elisabeth Rethberg, Eleanor Steber, Lisa Della Casa, Astrid Varnay, Pilar Lorengar, and Karita Mattila, while notable tenors include Jean de Reszke, Sándor Kónya, Leo Slezak, Jess Thomas, and Ben Heppner.

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg on Demand
Looking for more Meistersinger? Check out Met Opera on Demand, our online streaming service, to enjoy other outstanding performances from past Met seasons—including both a Live in HD transmission and a classic telecast of Otto Schenk’s picturesque staging, as well as historic radio broadcasts, such as a 1953 performance conducted by Fritz Reiner. Start your seven-day free trial and explore the full catalog of more than 750 complete performances at metoperaondemand.org.
In the spring of 1861, Richard Wagner endured the very worst humiliation of his mature career—a humiliation of Beckmesserian proportions. The high-profile revival of his early opera Tannhäuser, thoroughly revised for its Paris premiere, caused such a scandalous uproar that Wagner pulled up stakes and canceled the production after only three performances. That failure reinforced his burning sense of resentment against the opera capital of the world, where he had already experienced crushing rejection nearly two decades before.

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

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

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

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

For one thing, Wagner had already stored up the idea for Meistersinger in the middle of his tenure as music director in Dresden. This was well before he formulated the criteria for his revolutionary vision of the music drama, which
evolved in tandem with his work on the *Ring* tetralogy. While vacationing at the spa town of Marienbad in July 1845, and fresh from completing *Tannhäuser*, Wagner sketched out a substantial prose draft for what he later termed “an especially cheerful subject” that, like *Tannhäuser*, also revolved around a climactic song contest. He noted that this “vivid picture of Hans Sachs and the mastersingers of Nuremberg” appealed because it might serve as a light-hearted counterbalance to the tragedy of *Tannhäuser*.

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

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

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

From this mass of disparate material Wagner constructed a remarkably coherent drama whose specific setting serves as readily as the mythic contexts of his other music dramas as a universal metaphor for the human situation. The opera’s interplay of ideas and dramatic motifs pushes *Meistersinger* far beyond the realm of “light comedy,” even as it integrates such standard-issue comic patterns as the rivalry of an unsuitable older suitor (Beckmesser) for the desirable Eva and the triumph of the young couple against the odds. Yet the more comforting and familiar comedic elements provide a kind of Trojan horse for deeper reflections. These indeed are
consonant with the essentially tragic philosophical outlook Wagner had evolved in recent years, which had compelled him to write Tristan while also reshaping his thinking about the Ring.

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

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

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

Beckmesser’s “artistic failings are precisely those ascribed to the Jews” in the pamphlet, writes the Wagner expert Barry Millington. On the other hand, runs the counterargument, Jews had been expelled from the historical Nuremberg in
1499, and the respected position held by Beckmesser as a leader of the community makes it implausible that Wagner intended to single him out as the dangerously unassimilable “alien” caricatured in his anti-Semitic diatribe. Beckmesser’s humiliation, in this reading, reflects the sadistic treatment inherent in the mechanism of comedy (think Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*) and is enhanced by Wagner’s scorn for traditionalist critics, while the Marker’s garbled song parodies Italian coloratura—another “foreign” influence to be avoided.

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

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

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

—Thomas May

*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

Antonio Pappano
CONDUCTOR (LONDON, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON  Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg at the Met; Rigoletto, Le Nozze di Figaro, Samson et Dalila, Cavalleria Rusticana and Pagliacci, and Otello at Covent Garden; concerts, including a performance of Turandot, with Rome’s Orchestra dell’Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia; La Fanciulla del West at Staatsoper Berlin; and recitals with Waltraud Meier, Günther Groissböck, and Ian Bostridge.

MET APPEARANCES  Eugene Onegin (debut, 1997).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS  He is music director of the Royal Opera House, a post that he has held since 2002, and has served as music director of the Orchestra dell’Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia since 2005. He was recently named chief conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra, a position that he will assume beginning with the 2024–25 season. He was appointed music director of the Norwegian National Opera in 1990, served as music director of Brussels’s Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie between 1992 and 2002, and was principal guest conductor of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra from 1997 to 1999. He has also led performances at the Vienna State Opera, Bayreuth Festival, La Scala, Salzburg Festival, San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and Paris’s Théâtre du Châtelet, among many others.

Lise Davidsen
SOPRANO (STOKKE, NORWAY)

THIS SEASON  Eva in Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg, the title role of Ariadne auf Naxos, and Chrysothemis in Elektra at the Met; Leonore in Fidelio in Florence; Ellen Orford in Peter Grimes and Sieglinde in Die Walküre at the Vienna State Opera; concert appearances with the Orchestre de Paris, National Philharmonic of Russia, Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestra of the Teatro di San Carlo, Boston Symphony Orchestra, and Berlin Philharmonic; and recitals in Hamburg, Zurich, Madrid, Berlin, Vienna, and at the Bavarian State Opera.

MET APPEARANCES  Lisa in The Queen of Spades (debut, 2019).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS  Recent performances include Elisabeth in Tannhäuser and Sieglinde at the Bayreuth Festival, Elisabeth at the Bavarian State Opera and in Zurich, Sieglinde at Deutsche Oper Berlin, Leonore at Covent Garden and in concert in Montreal, Ellen Orford in concert at Bucharest’s George Enescu Festival, Lisa in Stuttgart, Ariadne in Aix-en-Provence and at the Vienna State Opera, and the title role of Cherubini’s Medea at Wexford Festival Opera. She has also sung Ariadne at the Glyndebourne Festival, Isabella in Wagner’s Das Liebesverbot in Buenos Aires, Santuzza in Cavalleria Rusticana at Norwegian National Opera, and Agathe in Der Freischütz in Zurich.
Claudia Mahnke
MEZZO-SOPRANO (MEERANE, GERMANY)

This season Magdalene in Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg for her debut at the Met, Auntie in Peter Grimes at the Bavarian State Opera, Herodias in Salome at the Vienna State Opera, and Judith in Bluebeard’s Castle, the Abbess in Suor Angelica, and a solo recital in Frankfurt.

Career highlights She is a Kammersängerin at Oper Frankfurt, where she has been a member of the ensemble since 2006. In Frankfurt, her roles have included Mother Marie in Dialogues des Carmélites, Herodias, Marie in Wozzeck, Selika in Meyerbeer’s L’Africaine, Charlotte in Werther, Lucretia in Britten’s The Rape of Lucretia, Didon in Les Troyens, Concepción in Ravel’s L’Heure Espagnole, Judith in Bluebeard’s Castle, Marguerite in La Damnation de Faust, Brangäne in Tristan and Isolde, Waltraute in Götterdämmerung, the Composer in Ariadne auf Naxos, and Kundry in Parsifal, among others. Between 1996 and 2006, she was a member of the ensemble at Staatsoper Stuttgart, where she was named a Kammersängerin in 2006. She has also appeared at the Bayreuth Festival, San Francisco Opera, LA Opera, Houston Grand Opera, and with leading opera companies in Cologne, Dresden, Hamburg, Madrid, Lyon, and Aix-en-Provence.

Paul Appleby
TENOR (SOUTH BEND, INDIANA)

This season David in Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg and Grimoaldo in Rodelinda at the Met, Bénédict in Béatrice et Bénédict in Cologne, Mendelssohn’s Elijah with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, and recitals through the United States.

Met appearances Don Ottavio in Don Giovanni, Pelléas in Pelléas et Mélisande, Belmonte in Die Entführung aus dem Serail, Tom Rakewell in The Rake’s Progress, David, Brian in Nico Muhly’s Two Boys, Chevalier de la Force in Dialogues des Carmélites, Hylas in Les Troyens, Demetrius in The Enchanted Island, and Brighella in Ariadne auf Naxos (debut, 2011).

Career highlights Recent performances include Tamino in Die Zauberflöte at the Glyndebourne Festival and in Madrid, Jonathan in Handel’s Saul at Houston Grand Opera, Joe Cannon in John Adams’s Girls of the Golden West and Pelléas at Dutch National Opera, and the title role of Candide in concert in Barcelona and with Orchestra of St. Luke’s. He has also sung Tom Rakewell and Belmonte at Dutch National Opera, Joe Cannon in the world premiere of Girls of the Golden West at San Francisco Opera, and Bénédict at the Paris Opera and Glyndebourne Festival. He is a graduate of the Met’s Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.
The Cast CONTINUED

Martin Gantner
BARITONE (FREIBURG, GERMANY)

THIS SEASON Kothner in Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg at the Met, Telramund in Lohengrin at Staatsoper Berlin, and Kurwenal in Tristan und Isolde in Zurich.

MET APPEARANCES Kothner (debut, 2014) and Beckmesser in Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Between 1993 and 2007, he was a member of the ensemble at the Bavarian State Opera, where he was named a Kammersänger in 2005. At the Bavarian State Opera, his roles have included Beckmesser, Telramund, the Music Master and Harlekin in Ariadne auf Naxos, Faninal in Der Rosenkavalier, Papageno in Die Zauberflöte, Guglielmo in Così fan tutte, Dr. Malatesta in Don Pasquale, Dr. Falke in Die Fledermaus, Silvio in Pagliacci, Prince Ottokar in Der Freischütz, and Marcello in La Bohème. Recent performances include the Music Master at the Edinburgh International Festival, in Hamburg, and in concert in Stuttgart; the Speaker in Die Zauberflöte at the Paris Opera; Telramund and Kurwenal at Deutsche Oper Berlin; Kurwenal in Bologna; Faninal in Dresden and Zurich; Beckmesser at the Bayreuth Festival; the title role of Krenek’s Der Diktator and Kaiser Overall in Ullmann’s Der Kaiser von Atlantis in Seville; Telramund in Stuttgart; and Don Fernando in Fidelio at La Scala.

Johannes Martin Kränzle
BARITONE (AUGSBURG, GERMANY)

THIS SEASON Beckmesser in Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg and the Music Master in Ariadne auf Naxos at the Met, Danilo in The Merry Widow in Frankfurt, Count Almaviva in Le Nozze di Figaro in Wiesbaden, Faninal in Der Rosenkavalier at the Bavarian State Opera, and concerts with the Frankfurter Opern- und Museumsorchester.

MET APPEARANCES Beckmesser (debut, 2014).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Between 1998 and 2016, he was a member of the ensemble at Oper Frankfurt, where his roles have included the Music Master, the Dark Fiddler in Delius’s A Village Romeo and Juliet, Amfortas in Parsifal, the title role of Don Giovanni, Wolfram in Tannhäuser, Tomsky in The Queen of Spades, and Don Alfonso in Così fan tutte, among many others. Recent performances include Don Alfonso at the Salzburg Festival; Beckmesser at the Bayreuth Festival; Alberich in Das Rheingold and Eisenstein in Die Fledermaus at the Bavarian State Opera; Rangoni in Boris Godunov and the title role of Don Pasquale in Zurich; Bluebeard in Bluebeard’s Castle with the New York Philharmonic; Papageno in Die Zauberflöte, Beckmesser, and Bluebeard in Wiesbaden; Ibn-Hakia in Iolanta at the Paris Opera; and Don Pizarro in Fidelio in Cologne.
Alexander Tsymbalyuk  
BASS-BARITONE (ODESSA, UKRAINE)

THIS SEASON  The Nightwatchman in Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg and Timur in Turandot at the Met, Prince Gremin in Eugene Onegin in Hamburg and Naples, and the Commendatore in Don Giovanni at the Paris Opera.

MET APPEARANCES  Timur, Lodovico in Otello, and Ferrando in Il Trovatore (debut, 2010).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS  Recent performances include Timur at the Bavarian State Opera, Count Rodolfo in La Sonnambula at Paris’s Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, Banquo in Macbeth at Staatsoper Berlin, the Commendatore in Hamburg, Giorgio in I Puritani and the Police Sergeant / Old Convict in Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk at the Paris Opera, and the Voice of Neptune in Idomeneo and Fafner in Das Rheingold in Madrid. He has also sung the title role of Boris Godunov in concert with the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra; Fasolt in Das Rheingold, the Police Sergeant / Old Convict, Dr. Bartolo in Le Nozze di Figaro, Raimondo in Lucia di Lammermoor, and Boris Godunov at the Bavarian State Opera; Sparafucile in Rigoletto at Lyric Opera of Chicago; Prince Gremin, King René in Iolanta, and Angelotti in Tosca at the Paris Opera; Angelotti in Baden-Baden; Ferrando at Covent Garden; and Timur at La Scala.

Klaus Florian Vogt  
TENOR (HEIDE, GERMANY)

THIS SEASON  Walther von Stolzing in Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg at the Met and Deutsche Oper Berlin; Siegmund in the first act of Die Walküre in concert at Latvia’s Riga Jurmala Music Festival; Paul in Korngold’s Die Tote Stadt at the Bavarian State Opera, Vienna State Opera, and in Dresden; and the title role of Tannhäuser in Hamburg.

MET APPEARANCES  The title roles of Parsifal and Lohengrin (debut, 2006), and Florestan in Fidelio.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS  Recent performances include Siegmund, Walther von Stolzing, and Lohengrin at the Bayreuth Festival; Tannhäuser, Lohengrin, and Florestan at the Bavarian State Opera; Lohengrin at the Vienna State Opera; Walther von Stolzing, Florestan, and Tamino in Die Zauberflöte in Dresden; Lohengrin and Paul in Hamburg; Paul at La Scala; Walther von Stolzing at the Salzburg Festival; the Prince in Rusalka at the Paris Opera; Tamino in concert in Baden-Baden; Lohengrin at Covent Garden, Deutsche Oper Berlin, and in Tokyo; and Florestan in Zurich and in concert in Vienna. He has also appeared at Staatsoper Berlin, Deutsche Oper am Rhein, Finland’s Turku Music Festival, and with major opera companies in Wiesbaden, Amsterdam, Barcelona, Baden-Baden, and Helsinki, among others.
Michael Volle  
BARITONE (FREUDENSTADT, GERMANY)

**This season** Hans Sachs in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* at the Met; the title role of *Falstaff*, the High Priest of Dagon in *Samson et Dalila*, the title role of *Don Giovanni*, and Jack Rance in *La Fanciulla del West* at Staatsoper Berlin; Scarpia in *Tosca* in Dortmund, Germany, and at Covent Garden; Wolfram in *Tannhäuser* in Dresden; Guy de Montfort in *Les Vêpres Siciliennes* at Deutsche Oper Berlin; Wotan in *Das Rheingold* in concert with the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra in Paris; Barak in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* at the Bavarian State Opera; and concert appearances throughout Europe.

**Met appearances** Wotan in the *Ring* cycle, Scarpia, the title role of *Der Fliegende Holländer*, Hans Sachs, and Mandryka in *Arabella* (debut, 2014).

**Career highlights** He has also sung Hans Sachs at the Bayreuth Festival, La Scala, the Salzburg Festival, and in Wiesbaden, Cologne, and Zurich. He has appeared with many of the world’s leading opera companies, including the Vienna State Opera, Paris Opera, Deutsche Oper am Rhein, Germany’s Heidenheim Opera Festival, the Bregenz Festival, and in Florence, Frankfurt, Baden-Baden, Tokyo, Mannheim, Leipzig, Luxembourg, Rome, Bucharest, Geneva, Barcelona, and Hamburg, among others.

Georg Zeppenfeld  
BASS (ATTENDORN, GERMANY)

**This season** Pogner in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* at the Met; Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte*, Alidoro in *La Cenerentola*, Hermann in *Tannhäuser*, Ramfis in *Aida*, and Baculus in Lortzing’s *Der Wildschütz* in Dresden; the Hermit in *Der Freischütz* at the Bavarian State Opera; Hermann in Hamburg; and a recital in Zurich.

**Met appearances** Sarastro (debut, 2009).

**Career highlights** Since 2001, he has been a member of the Semperoper Dresden, where he was named a Kammersänger in 2015. In Dresden, his roles have included the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni*, Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Rocco in *Fidelio*, Zaccaria in *Nabucco*, Lord Sidney in Rossini’s *Il Viaggio a Reims*, Arkel in *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Daland in *Der Fliegende Holländer*, Fasolt in *Das Rheingold*, Hunding in *Die Walküre*, Fafner in *Siegfried*, and Prince Gremin in *Eugene Onegin*. He has also appeared at many of the world’s leading opera houses and festivals, including the Bayreuth Festival, Bavarian State Opera, Vienna State Opera, La Scala, Covent Garden, Rome’s Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, Salzburg Festival, Glyndebourne Festival, Deutsche Oper Berlin, San Francisco Opera, and in Geneva, Bonn, Kassel, Düsseldorf, and Mannheim, among others.