

Vincenzo Bellini

La Sonnambula

CONDUCTOR
Evelino Pidò

PRODUCTION
Mary Zimmerman

SET DESIGNER
Daniel Ostling

COSTUME DESIGNER
Mara Blumenfeld

LIGHTING DESIGNER
T.J. Gerckens

CHOREOGRAPHER
Daniel Pelzig

GENERAL MANAGER
Peter Gelb

MUSIC DIRECTOR
James Levine

Melodramma in two acts

Libretto by Felice Romani

Saturday, March 21, 2009, 1:00–3:45pm

New Production

The production of *La Sonnambula*
was made possible by a generous gift from
Mr. and Mrs. Paul M. Montrone.

Additional funding for this production was received
from the Hermione Foundation, The Gilbert S. Kahn
and John J. Noffo Kahn Endowment Fund, Mr. and Mrs.
William R. Miller, and the National Endowment for the
Arts.

The Metropolitan Opera

2008–09 Season

This performance is broadcast live over The Toll Brothers–Metropolitan Opera International Radio Network, sponsored by **Toll Brothers, America's luxury home builder®**, with generous long-term support from **The Annenberg Foundation** and the **Vincent A. Stabile Endowment for Broadcast Media**, and through contributions from **listeners worldwide**.

This performance is also being broadcast live on Metropolitan Opera Radio on SIRIUS channel 78 and XM channel 79.

Natalie Dessay's performance is underwritten by the **Annenberg Principal Artists Fund**.

The 71st Metropolitan Opera performance of

Vincenzo Bellini's

La Sonnambula

Conductor
Evelino Pidò

CAST IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

Lisa
Jennifer Black *

Alessio
Jeremy Galyon

Amina
Natalie Dessay

Teresa
Jane Bunnell

Notary
Bernard Fitch

Elvino
Juan Diego Flórez

Count Rodolfo
Michele Pertusi

Saturday, March 21, 2009, 1:00–3:45pm

This afternoon's performance is being transmitted live in high definition to movie theaters worldwide.

The Met: Live in HD is generously supported by the **Neubauer Family Foundation**.



Ken Howard/Metropolitan Opera

Juan Diego Flórez
and Natalie Dessay
as Elvino and
Amina in Bellini's
La Sonnambula

Chorus Master **Donald Palumbo**
Associate Costume Designer **Elissa Tatigikis Iberti**
Assistants to the Costume Designer **Meleokalani Ortiz**
and **Joanna Melville**
Musical Preparation **Dennis Giaunque, Pierre Vallet,**
Carrie-Ann Matheson, Brenda Hurley,
Speranza Scappucci, and Steven White
Assistant Stage Directors **Gregory Keller, Gina Lapinski,**
and **Louisa Muller**
Stage Band Conductor **Jeffrey Goldberg**
Prompter **Carrie-Ann Matheson**
Met Titles **J. D. McClatchy**
Scenery, properties, and electrical props constructed and
painted in **Metropolitan Opera Shops**
Costumes constructed in **Metropolitan Opera Costume**
Department and by **Sabina Kern, Herrenmode Roos,**
Ursula Rusch, and Atelier Kern
Wigs executed by **Metropolitan Opera Wig Department**

La Sonnambula is performed by arrangement with Hendon Music, Inc., a Boosey & Hawkes company, Sole Agent in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico for Casa Ricordi/Universal Music Publishing Ricordi S.R.L., publisher and copyright owner.

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.

Yamaha is the official piano of the Metropolitan Opera.

Latecomers will not be admitted during the performance.

* Graduate of the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program

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.

Visit metopera.org

The Metropolitan Opera

YVES SAINT LAURENT

The Metropolitan Opera is pleased
to salute Yves Saint Laurent in
recognition of its generous support
during the 2008–09 Season

Synopsis

Mary Zimmerman's new production is set in a contemporary rehearsal room, where a traditional production of *La Sonnambula*, set in a Swiss village, is being prepared. In that rehearsal space, all the events and relations that Bellini's characters experience also happen to the rehearsing performers in their own "real" lives. In this staging, Amina and Elvino are played by two singers (also named Amina and Elvino) who are, like their fictional counterparts, lovers. The chorus constitutes the population of the Swiss village, and Lisa, the innkeeper of *La Sonnambula*, is the stage manager.

Act I

The story of Bellini's *La Sonnambula* takes place in a Swiss village. In the village square, preparations are under way for the wedding of Elvino and Amina. Only Lisa, who was once engaged to Elvino herself, is unhappy. The attentions of an earnest suitor, Alessio, only annoy her. Amina, everybody's favorite, enters. She expresses her joy and gratitude to all and especially to Teresa, her adoptive mother ("Come per me sereno"). Elvino rushes in late for the contract-signing, then gives Amina a ring that belonged to his mother ("Prendi, l'anel ti dono").

Suddenly, a mysterious stranger arrives (Count Rodolfo). Lisa offers to arrange accommodations for him for the night. To the puzzlement of all, he declares his love for this place that he has not seen in years ("Vi ravviso, o luoghi ameni"). Noticing Amina, he is struck by her resemblance to a great love of his youth. As it grows dark, the villagers become apprehensive and Teresa explains to the stranger that the place is haunted. Amused, the stranger says he'd like to see the ghost, then departs along with everyone save Elvino and Amina. The lovers quarrel over the stranger's attentions to Amina, but Elvino soon apologizes for his jealousy ("Son geloso del zeffiro errante").

That night at the inn, Lisa identifies the stranger as Count Rodolfo, the lost heir of the former local count. The two of them flirt, when suddenly there is a noise and Lisa hides in the cabinet, dropping her scarf. Amina enters where she is least expected, walking in her sleep. Rodolfo realizes that she must be the local "ghost." Lisa, however, doesn't understand that Amina is sleepwalking and assumes she is coming to meet Rodolfo as a lover. Lisa slips away. Moved by Amina's unconscious expressions of love for Elvino, Rodolfo leaves Amina innocently asleep on the bed. Unfortunately, the ever-inquisitive villagers come sneaking in to get another look at the stranger. Lisa appears with Elvino and Teresa, and everyone is shocked to find Amina in Count Rodolfo's bed. Awakened by the commotion, the girl protests her innocence ("D'un pensiero e d'un accento"). For a moment, the entire village is paralyzed with heartbreak over Amina's seeming betrayal. Unnoticed by the others, Teresa discovers and

takes up Lisa's scarf. Finally, Elvino, along with everyone else, turns on Amina and calls off the wedding ("Non più nozze").

Intermission

Act II

The next day, feeling repentant, the villagers decide to visit Count Rodolfo and ask him directly about Amina's case. They hurry off. Amina and Teresa enter and overhear Elvino lamenting ("Tutto è sciolto"). When he sees Amina, he reproaches her again and takes his ring from her. The villagers return to say that Rodolfo has confirmed Amina's innocence. He is on his way, but Elvino refuses to see his "rival" and leaves in despair. Amina is led away by Teresa.

Back in the village square, Alessio tries to convince Lisa that Elvino will never marry her, but at that moment the villagers appear, announcing Elvino's intentions to do just that. Lisa is overjoyed. Elvino enters to lead her to church, but they are interrupted by the arrival of Rodolfo, who again proclaims Amina's innocence, explaining to the incredulous crowd that she was only sleepwalking. Teresa appears, asking for quiet, as Amina has fallen asleep from exhaustion. She is shocked to see that Elvino is about to marry Lisa. Lisa declares that at least she was not found in another man's room. When Teresa produces the scarf, Elvino realizes that Lisa has lied to him.

Suddenly Amina appears, sleepwalking. In her sleep, she mourns the loss of Elvino, remembering the flowers he gave her that have since faded, and searches for her lost ring ("Ah! non credea mirarti"). Convinced of her innocence and unable to watch her suffer any longer, Elvino places the ring back on her finger. Waking, Amina's embarrassment turns to joy when she realizes that her dream has come true.

Vincenzo Bellini

La Sonnambula

Premiere: Teatro Carcano, Milan, 1831

This operatic gem from one of the great masters of melody is a benchmark of extraordinary vocalism. The title role of the sleepwalking girl was composed for the greatest diva of the day, Giuditta Pasta (for whom Bellini would write the intensely demanding tragic role of Norma later the same year). The part requires a rare combination of innocence, charm, and breathtaking vocal virtuosity. Bellini also had the most sensational tenor of the day on his roster for this opera: the legendary Giovanni Battista Rubini. The opera, an immediate success in its day despite a plot that stretched the bounds of plausibility, was categorized as *semiseria*, or “semi-serious.” Deeper than a comedy, but in no way a tragedy, *La Sonnambula* reaches its conclusion through genuine, poignant character development, rather than by intrigue or farce.

The Creators

Vincenzo Bellini (1801–1835) was a Sicilian composer who possessed an extraordinary gift for melody and a thorough understanding of the human voice. His meteoric career was cut short by his death at the age of 33, shortly after his opera *I Puritani* triumphed in its Parisian premiere. Felice Romani (1788–1865) was the official librettist of Milan’s Teatro alla Scala. Bellini’s frequent collaborator (he worked with the composer on all but two of his operas), he also wrote the libretti for Donizetti’s *L’Elisir d’Amore* and *Anna Bolena*, among many other works. The original source of the drama was a ballet–pantomime by Eugène Scribe (1791–1861), the prolific French dramatist whose work was influential in the development of grand opera and who provided libretti for such composers as Meyerbeer, Verdi, and Donizetti.

The Setting

The opera was originally set in a village in the Swiss Alps in the early 1800s, a deliberately fabled yet plausible setting that reflects the story’s balance between realism and dream-time. The Met’s new production, by director Mary Zimmerman, places the action in a modern-day rehearsal room where an opera company is rehearsing a production of *La Sonnambula*, an idea that takes its cue from the opera’s themes of sleep and wakefulness.

The Music

The soloists and chorus interact often in this opera, an unusual feature of Bellini’s works and one that successfully reflects the idea of a tight village community. This serves as the background for the solos and duets, in which Bellini achieves

a remarkable mastery of vocal expression. The graceful lyric elegance that was his domain is evident in the Act I tenor–soprano duet “Son geloso del Zefiro errante,” as the tenor asks forgiveness for his jealousy. Bellini’s genius, though, is not limited to melody: there are subtle yet dead-on characterizations woven into the music. The tenor’s conflicted feelings find full and nuanced expression in his Act II aria, “Ah! perchè non posso odiarti?” The great final scene for the soprano with the cantabile “Ah! non creda mirarti” and the cabaletta “Ah! non giunge uman pensiero” has long been famous as a concert and recital piece, but only within the context of the opera does it reveal Bellini’s dramatic accomplishment. It is an astounding depiction of a young girl’s emerging personality.

La Sonnambula at the Met

The opera joined the Met repertory within a month of the company’s 1883 opening, showcasing the talents of diva Marcella Sembrich. (She encored the final aria on the opera’s premiere night.) After Sembrich, *La Sonnambula* only made sporadic appearances at the Met to feature various coloratura divas: among them were Maria Barrientos (two performances in 1916) and Lily Pons (eight performances from 1932 to 1935). Rolf Gérard designed a new production of the work in 1963 conducted by Silvio Varviso that starred Joan Sutherland (who gave 26 performances between 1963 and 1969), and in the 1972 revival of the work, Renata Scottò took on the role for seven performances. Tenors who gave memorable performances in *La Sonnambula* at the Met include Enrico Caruso (1905–06), Beniamino Gigli (1932), Giacomo Lauri-Volpi (1933), and Nicolai Gedda (1963–72).

A Note from the Director

The plot of *La Sonnambula* is famously light and, even for the world of opera, a little incredible. Stripped to its barest essentials the story is this: a man and a woman are about to marry, but the woman sleepwalks into the hotel room of another man. She is discovered there by her fiancé, who, believing she has betrayed him and never having heard of sleepwalking, calls off the wedding. Then, a bit later, something happens to make him believe in her innocence, and all is well. While its dependence on the phenomenon of sleepwalking—and an entire village’s ignorance of that phenomenon—is unusual, the structure of the plot is archetypal: a young couple in the throes of blind love undergoes a great crisis so that they may enter marriage maturely, seeing each other clearly as the human beings they are. In *La Sonnambula* the love affair, crisis, and resolution are each experienced by a whole village.

While the music of *La Sonnambula*—so beautiful and tuneful—is often performed in concert and recorded, the opera itself is rarely staged and has not been seen at the Met in 36 years. This may be due to the challenge of its long first scene, which, contrary to the primary rule of theater, offers nearly 50 minutes of unalloyed joy with little incident and no conflict (the one person who doesn’t like Amina is pretending that she does, and the lovers’ quarrel that arises is resolved within moments). The challenge, if one takes the joyful spirit of *La Sonnambula* seriously (and I do), is to find a living, sustainable image of happiness.

Our solution in this production is to relocate the events of Bellini’s *La Sonnambula* from a 19th-century Swiss village to a contemporary rehearsal hall, where a small opera company happens to be rehearsing a traditional production of *La Sonnambula*. In that space, all of the events and relations of Bellini’s characters (except for the brief contract-signing scene, which is merely rehearsed) happen to the performers in their own real lives. The transposition is an attempt to create for both performers and characters an environment as familiar, communal, detailed, and alive as Bellini’s imaginary “village square” of old. Its hyper-reality is meant to lend dimension and plausibility to these characters while still allowing space for the charm of the original setting through the fact that “Switzerland” is what is being so faithfully and innocently rehearsed.

Dreaming sleepwalkers and stage performers have something in common. Both exist in two worlds at once, in an imaginary space lain right on top of a real one; both respond to things that are not there, that are not “true.” What the dreaming sleepwalker does unconsciously, the performer wills himself to do—that is, enter a state of a waking dream, believing in a conjured reality, while never quite forgetting where he actually is. On stage, all objects have a kind of double existence—“This chair is the throne of England,” “These plywood walls are a temple in Athens”—just as things so often do in dreams: “It was my house but it was a subway platform,” “It was a Swiss village but it was a rehearsal hall.” I believe that the serious playfulness of dreams, where multiple realities peacefully coexist, where transfiguration is commonplace and where

we so often both witness ourselves and are ourselves, is something we are compulsively imitating in the acts of making and experiencing theater and opera. In such acts we witness and undergo by proxy the most tremendous joy and extreme pain, only to awaken at the end, as Amina does, safe and sound.

—Mary Zimmerman

Program Note

During the summer of 1830, Vincenzo Bellini (1801–1835) spent a period convalescing from serious illness and exhaustion in the idyllic setting of Lake Como. Memories of the region's bucolic folksong and natural beauty would come in handy for the Sicilian composer's next opera, *La Sonnambula*. But before he settled on the gentle story of the sleepwalker, Bellini trained his sights on Victor Hugo's incendiary new play *Hernani*, which had shaken up Paris when it opened earlier that year.

A consortium of backers had engaged Bellini to write a work for the coming carnival season for Milan's Teatro Carcano (they bought out his contract with the rival La Scala). The creative team would also include two of the finest singers of the era—soprano Giuditta Pasta and tenor Giovanni Battista Rubini—as well as librettist Felice Romani. Bellini had already written for Rubini's incomparably agile high tenor in his 1827 opera *Il Pirata*, which also marked the beginning of the composer's partnership with Romani. A poet and classical scholar, Romani was among the most prolific librettists in operatic history. Bellini developed a hands-on, interventionist rapport with Romani, who penned the texts for eight of Bellini's ten operas.

After Bellini drafted a handful of numbers—this material eventually made its way into *La Sonnambula* and *Norma*—the Victor Hugo project was suddenly dropped. The usual explanation is that Romani sensed that reaching compromise with the censors over its provocative plot would cause fatal delays. (Verdi would later bring it to the opera stage with his own *Ernani* of 1844.) But it's also possible that Bellini decided the initial idea was too close in tone to the dark tragedy of Donizetti's *Anna Bolena*, details of which Romani, who was simultaneously writing its libretto, might have supplied.

Anna Bolena was scheduled to premiere a few months before Bellini's new opera at the same theater in Milan, with the same hot-shot team of Pasta and Rubini; its success would in fact elevate Donizetti into a serious rival. Although Bellini had assumed the mantle of foremost composer of Italian opera when Rossini bowed out of the game with *Guillaume Tell* in 1829, his competitive instinct remained sharp; he may well have determined to emphasize a striking contrast from *Anna Bolena* with his new offering.

With the *Hernani* idea abandoned and time slipping away before the scheduled opening—Bellini hated working under deadline pressure—the team agreed on an abrupt change of tack. For source material they now turned to a French ballet from 1827, *La Sonnambule*, with a scenario by Eugène Scribe, who had also co-written the short play of 1819 from which it derives. Harvesting opera plots from ballet pantomimes as well as stage plays was hardly unusual at the time. However, the balletic source of *La Sonnambula* seems uncannily apt for the peculiarly floating, dancelike grace of melodic line—with its turns and slides and pirouettes—that Bellini perfected in the score of this opera.

Romani tweaked the scenario to Bellini's satisfaction, moving the setting from Provence to a Swiss village and glossing over Count Rodolfo's past scandal. In the original, Amina is the illegitimate daughter left behind by the count (the libretto retains a hint of this when he recognizes her resemblance to the woman he loved in his youth). Bellini wanted to keep the pastoral world of *La Sonnambula* unruffled by external complications so that he could focus on the emotional experience of Amina and Elvino. Similarly, the potentially buffo elements that would have made this a true opera semiseria—Alessio's frustrated courtship of Lisa and the notary's cameo—are reduced to a minimum. (The term "opera semiseria," literally "half-serious opera," refers to an intermediate genre combining the comic with the serious.) Unencumbered by either gross comedy or the luridly tragic, Bellini is free to sustain the delicately shaded blend of pathos and ecstasy that is *La Sonnambula's* signature sound.

Italian opera culture of the time revolved around composing for specific singers. But Bellini took this to a more intense level in his collaboration with Rubini and Pasta. He developed personal friendships with them, enhancing his appreciation of their unique gifts in a way that affected his approach to vocalism. Pasta especially became a decisive influence on Bellini that summer at Lake Como, where her villa offered a pleasant oasis to discuss the composer's looming new opera. She may even have been involved in suggesting the sleepwalker idea as a substitute topic. Fresh from her success as Anna Bolena, Pasta created her first Bellini role with Amina, scoring another triumph for the composer when *La Sonnambula* premiered on March 6, 1831. In December of that year, as the Druid priestess Norma, she unveiled his most famous creation. Pasta also inspired Bellini to write his penultimate opera, *Beatrice di Tenda*, for her in 1833. *La Sonnambula* quickly made it across the Atlantic and was given as early as 1835 by the Park Theater in New York.

One of the lingering clichés of bel canto opera is that the plots are silly and irrelevant excuses for the music, which itself is of no dramatic consequence but rather serves as a shamelessly exhibitionistic showcase for the singers. But it wasn't so much for vocal dexterity that Bellini admired Pasta as for her extraordinary depth and "encyclopedic" emotional range as a singing actress—a precursor of Maria Callas. Bellini biographer John Rosselli remarks that Pasta "could be an eagle or a dove; she was never a canary." The composer took an

obsessive interest in translating textual details and shades of character from the libretto into his music and was at his most inspired when he could then entrust his roles to artists of Pasta's stature.

The extreme challenges inherent in Bellini's writing for both Amina and Elvino entail more than coloratura note spinning and stratospheric tessitura. Expressive singing is indeed the key—not as an end in itself, but as a means to clarify and heighten their progress as a couple. A melancholy steals into their first duet, already foreshadowing the trial to come. In a manner typical of the opera's ambiguity, Count Rodolfo is both the catalyst for their separation and the voice of reason against superstition and jealousy; he suggests an alternate explanation for the "phantom" intruding on the villagers' Arcadia.

But first Amina and Elvino must experience the pathos of loss. They do so by turning inward instead of behaving with melodramatic excess. The cruelty of Elvino's rejection is tempered by his own eloquently despairing—even trancelike—lament in "Tutto è sciolto." For Amina, Bellini reimagines the climactic mad scene of opera as a threshold state where the heroine, on the verge of an Ophelia-like breakdown, literally regains her balance.

The musical pattern of the sleepwalking scene—itself a neat metaphor for the danger that makes live performance so exciting—epitomizes Bellini's harmonious blend of dualisms in *La Sonnambula*. The exquisite simplicity of Amina's somnambulant aria, in A minor, gives way to a rushing B-flat major cabaletta, overflowing with intricate decoration, when she at last awakens to her reconciliation with Elvino. This mix of classical elegance and romantic ecstasy is surely one aspect that made Chopin such an ardent admirer of Bellinian melody. By the time Eden is at last restored in the collective rejoicing of the finale, Bellini has vindicated his ambitious vision of *bel canto*. —*Thomas May*

The Cast and Creative Team



Evelino Pidò
CONDUCTOR (TURIN, ITALY)

THIS SEASON *La Sonnambula* at the Met, *Il Trovatore* in Geneva, *Medea* in Catania and Turin, and a concert version of *Anna Bolena* in Lyon.

MET APPEARANCES *L'Elisir d'Amore* (debut, 1999).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He conducted the first modern performances of Rossini's *Zelmira* at the Rome Opera in 1989 and made his United States debut in 1993 with the Santa Fe

The Cast and Creative Team *continued*

Opera. He regularly appears at Covent Garden and with the Paris Opera and Lyon Opera, and has also led performances for the Los Angeles Opera, Paris's Châtelet and Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, and in opera houses in Lausanne, Geneva, Rome, Turin, Monte Carlo, and Tel Aviv. Orchestral engagements include appearances with the RAI Symphony Orchestra, Rome's Santa Cecilia Orchestra, London's Royal Philharmonic, the Orchestra Philharmonique de Radio France, and Geneva's Orchestre de la Suisse Romande.



Mary Zimmerman
DIRECTOR (LINCOLN, NEBRASKA)

THIS SEASON *La Sonnambula* and *Lucia di Lammermoor* at the Met.

MET APPEARANCES *Lucia di Lammermoor* (debut, 2007).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS She is the recipient of a 1998 MacArthur Fellowship, the 2002 Tony Award for Best Director of a Play, and ten Joseph Jefferson Awards (including Best Production and Best Direction). She is a member of Chicago's Lookingglass Theatre Company, an artistic associate of the Goodman Theatre and Seattle Repertory Theatre, and a professor of performance studies at Northwestern University. Works which she has adapted and directed include *Argonautika* (Lookingglass, Berkeley Rep., Shakespeare Theatre Co., McCarter Theatre), *Mirror of the Invisible World* (Goodman), *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci* (Goodman, BAM, Seattle Rep., Second Stage), *The Odyssey* (Lookingglass, Goodman, McCarter, Seattle Rep.), *The Arabian Nights* (Lookingglass, MTC, BAM), *Journey to the West* (Goodman, Huntington, Berkeley Rep.), *Metamorphoses* (Broadway, Lookingglass, Seattle Rep., Berkeley Rep., Mark Taper Forum, Second Stage), *Secret in the Wings* (Lookingglass, Berkeley Rep., McCarter, Seattle Rep.), *S/M* (Lookingglass), *Eleven Rooms of Proust* (Lookingglass, About Face), and a new opera with Philip Glass, *Galileo Galilei* (Goodman, London's Barbican Centre, and BAM) for which she co-wrote the libretto.



Daniel Ostling
SET DESIGNER (CHICAGO, ILLINOIS)

THIS SEASON *La Sonnambula* and *Lucia di Lammermoor* at the Met, *Amadeus* (Chicago Shakespeare), *The Brothers Karamazov* (Lookingglass Theatre in Chicago), *Eurydice* (Victory Gardens in Chicago), *The Arabian Nights* (Berkeley Repertory), *War Music* (ACT in San Francisco), *UP* (Steppenwolf Theatre).

The Cast and Creative Team *continued*

MET APPEARANCES *Lucia di Lammermoor* (debut, 2007).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Works extensively with director Mary Zimmerman, having designed numerous productions including *Metamorphoses*, for which he was nominated for a 2002 Tony Award. Recent designs include *The Glorious Ones* (Lincoln Center), *Argonautika* (Berkeley Rep., Shakespeare Theatre, McCarter), *Lookingglass Alice* (New Victory/NYC, McCarter). Opera designs include Osvaldo Golijov's *Ainadamar* and Robert Zuidam's *Rage d'Amour* (Tanglewood Music Festival, Los Angeles Philharmonic) and Philip Glass's *Galileo Galilei* (BAM, London's Barbican Centre). He is an ensemble member of Chicago's Lookingglass Theatre Company and an associate professor at Northwestern University.



Mara Blumenfeld

COSTUME DESIGNER (PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA)

THIS SEASON *La Sonnambula* and *Lucia di Lammermoor* at the Met, *The Brothers Karamazov* and *The Arabian Nights* at Lookingglass Theatre Company, *Kafka on the Shore* and *UP* at Steppenwolf Theatre Company.

MET APPEARANCES *Lucia di Lammermoor* (debut, 2007).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS A frequent collaborator with Mary Zimmerman, she has designed costumes for Ms. Zimmerman's productions of *Metamorphoses* (Broadway, Second Stage), *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci* (Second Stage), *Measure for Measure* (NYSF/Public Theater), *The Odyssey* and *The Secret in the Wings* (McCarter Theatre), *Pericles* (Washington's Shakespeare Theatre), the current tour of *The Arabian Nights*, and Philip Glass's operas *Akhnaten* and *Galileo Galilei*. Other New York credits include *The Glorious Ones* at Lincoln Center Theater, *Homebody/Kabul* (BAM) and *Lookingglass Alice* (New Victory). Based in Chicago, her work includes numerous productions for the Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, and Lookingglass Theatre Company, where she is an ensemble member. She is the recipient of two of Chicago's Joseph Jefferson Awards for Costume Design and in 2003 was nominated for a Laurence Olivier Award for her design of *Pacific Overtures* at London's Donmar Warehouse.



T.J. Gerckens

LIGHTING DESIGNER (COLUMBUS, OHIO)

THIS SEASON *La Sonnambula* and *Lucia di Lammermoor* at the Met.

MET APPEARANCES *Lucia di Lammermoor* (debut, 2007).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He is the recipient of awards for *Metamorphoses* in Chicago, Los Angeles,

The Cast and Creative Team *continued*

San Francisco, and New York (2002 Drama Desk Award for the Broadway production, Lucille Lortel Award). His lighting designs have also been seen at the New York Shakespeare Festival, BAM, Lincoln Center's SeriousFun! Festival, Second Stage, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Chicago's Goodman Theatre, Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles, Berkeley Rep., Melbourne Theatre Company, Central Ohio's CATCO (where he also serves as managing director), and Seattle Rep., among others. He received the Jefferson Award for *The Odyssey* (Chicago) and holds degrees from Otterbein College and Boston University.



Daniel Pelzig

CHOREOGRAPHER (NEW YORK, NEW YORK)

THIS SEASON *La Sonnambula* and *Lucia di Lammermoor* at the Met, *33 Variations* (starring Jane Fonda) on Broadway, *The Bartered Bride* at Boston Lyric Opera and *Iphigénie en Tauride* at Valencia's Palau de les Arts (both as stage director), *War Music* at ACT in San Francisco, and *Romeo and Juliet*, *Twelfth Night*, and *The Dog in the Manger* at Washington's Shakespeare Theatre.

MET APPEARANCES *Lucia di Lammermoor* (debut, 2007) and *Iphigénie en Tauride*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Three seasons as resident choreographer for Santa Fe Opera (where he also directed *Countess Mariza*); four years as resident choreographer for the Boston Ballet; Broadway debut with *A Year with Frog and Toad*. Opera credits include *Die Fledermaus*, *Regina*, and *The Cunning Little Vixen* (Lyric Opera of Chicago); *Salome* and *Florença en el Amazonas* (Seattle Opera); *Samson et Dalila* (Houston Grand Opera); *Aida* (Los Angeles Opera); *Death in Venice* and *Akhmaten* (Chicago Opera Theatre); and *Don Giovanni* (New York City Opera). He staged Mary Zimmerman's production of *Akhmaten* for Strasbourg's Opéra National du Rhin and *Turandot* for Ft. Worth Opera.



Natalie Dessay

SOPRANO (LYON, FRANCE)

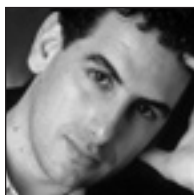
THIS SEASON *Amina* in *La Sonnambula* at the Met.

MET APPEARANCES The title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Marie* in *La Fille du Régiment*, *The Fiakermilli* in *Arabella* (debut, 1994), *Olympia* in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, *Zerbinetta* in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and *Juliette* in *Roméo et Juliette*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include *Lucia* with the San Francisco Opera, the title role of *Manon* with Lyric Opera of Chicago, and a concert at Paris's Théâtre des Champs-Élysées. She has also sung *Marie* with the Vienna State Opera and at Covent

The Cast and Creative Team *continued*

Garden, Manon in Barcelona, Zerbinetta at Paris's Bastille Opera, Morgana in Handel's *Alcina* and Lucia with Lyric Opera of Chicago, and Ophélie in Thomas's *Hamlet* at Covent Garden, Paris's Châtelet, and in Barcelona. Additional performances include Amina at La Scala and the Vienna State Opera, Aminta in *Die Schweigsame Frau* at the Vienna State Opera, and Zerbinetta at the Salzburg Festival.



Juan Diego Flórez
TENOR (LIMA, PERU)

THIS SEASON Elvino in *La Sonnambula* at the Met, Arturo in *I Puritani* in Bologna, Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore* and Lindoro in *L'Italiana in Algeri* with the Vienna State Opera, Tonio in *La Fille du Régiment* in Bilbao, and Count Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* at Covent Garden.

MET APPEARANCES Tonio, Count Almaviva (debut, 2002), Ernesto in *Don Pasquale*, Don Ramiro in *La Cenerentola*, and Lindoro.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Since making his official operatic debut in 1996 in *Matilde di Shabran* at Pesaro's Rossini Opera Festival, he has appeared regularly at all the leading opera houses in the world, including Covent Garden, La Scala, the Vienna State Opera, Florence's Teatro Comunale, Genoa's Teatro Carlo Felice, Rome's Accademia di Santa Cecilia, Naples's Teatro San Carlo, Seville's Teatro de la Maestranza, San Francisco Opera, Paris's Châtelet and Bastille Opera, Zurich Opera, the Deutsche Oper Berlin, and Munich's Bavarian State Opera.



Michele Pertusi
BASS (PARMA, ITALY)

THIS SEASON Rodolfo in *La Sonnambula* at the Met, Pagano in *I Lombardi alla Prima Crociata* at Parma's Teatro Regio, Schumann's Scenes from Goethe's *Faust* in Madrid, Count Walter in *Luisa Miller* at Munich's Bavarian State Opera, and the Mozart Requiem in Busetto.

MET APPEARANCES Count Almaviva (debut, 1997) and Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte*, Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and Alidoro in *La Cenerentola*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS A regular guest at La Scala, where he has sung Don Alfonso, Count Almaviva, Don Giovanni, Selim in *Il Turco in Italia*, and Alidoro. He has also appeared at the Vienna State Opera (Count Rodolfo in *La Sonnambula*), Madrid's Teatro Real (Don Giovanni), Brussels (Falstaff), and since 1998, regularly at Pesaro's Rossini Opera Festival.