

Hector Berlioz

La Damnation de Faust

CONDUCTOR
James Levine

PRODUCTION
Robert Lepage

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
Neilson Vignola

SET DESIGNER
Carl Fillion

COSTUME DESIGNER
Karin Erskine

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Sonoyo Nishikawa

INTERACTIVE VIDEO DESIGNER
Holger Förterer

IMAGE DESIGNER
Boris Firquet

CHOREOGRAPHERS
Johanne Madore
Alain Gauthier

GENERAL MANAGER
Peter Gelb

MUSIC DIRECTOR
James Levine

Dramatic Legend in Four Parts

Libretto by Almere Gandonnière and the composer based on Gérard de Nerval's translation of Goethe's *Faust*

Saturday, November 22, 2008, 1:00–3:45pm

New Production

The production of *La Damnation de Faust* was made possible by a generous gift from Mr. and Mrs. Howard Solomon.

Additional funding was received from the Gramma Fisher Foundation, Marshalltown, Iowa, and Robert L. Turner, in memory of his father, Bert S. Turner.

In collaboration with Ex Machina

La Damnation de Faust was reconceived for the Metropolitan Opera and is based on a co-production of the Saito Kinen Festival and the Opéra National de Paris.

The Metropolitan Opera
2008–09 Season

The 16th Metropolitan Opera performance of

Hector Berlioz's

**La Damnation
de Faust**

Conductor
James Levine

CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Faust
Marcello Giordani

Méphistophélès
John Relyea

Brander
Patrick Carfizzi

Marguerite
Susan Graham

Saturday, November 22, 2008, 1:00–3:45pm

This afternoon's performance is being transmitted live in high definition to movie theaters worldwide. *The Met: Live in HD* series is made possible by a generous grant from the **Neubauer Family Foundation**.



Ken Howard/Metropolitan Opera

Marcello Giordani
as Faust in a scene
from Berlioz's *La
Damnation de Faust*

Chorus Master **Donald Palumbo**
Musical Preparation **Dennis Giauque, Denise Massé,
Derrick Inouye, Bradley Moore, Carrie-Ann Matheson**
Assistant Stage Directors **Gregory Anthony Fortner,
Gina Lapinski, J. Knighten Smit**
Stage Band Conductor **Jeffrey Goldberg**
Children's Chorus Director **Elena Doria**
Prompter **Carrie-Ann Matheson**
Met Titles **J. D. McClatchy**
Scenery, properties, and electrical props constructed and
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Canada)** and **Metropolitan Opera Costume Department**
Wigs executed by **Metropolitan Opera Wig Department**
Ex Machina (Québec City, Canada) production staff
Catherine Guay, Video Project Manager;
François-Hubert Tremblay-Tardif, Lighting Assistant;
Viviane Paradis, Production Assistant; **Bernard Gilbert**,
Production Manager; **Michel Bernatchez**, Producer

This performance is made possible in part by public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts.

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Met Titles

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Part I

Faust contemplates the renewal of nature. Hearing peasants sing and dance, he realizes that their simple happiness is something he will never experience. An army marches past in the distance. Faust doesn't understand why the soldiers are so enthusiastic about glory and fame.

Part II

Depressed, Faust has returned to his study. Even the search for wisdom can no longer inspire him. Tired of life, he is about to commit suicide when the sound of church bells and an Easter hymn remind him of his youth, when he still had faith in religion. Suddenly Méphistophélès appears, ironically commenting on Faust's apparent conversion. He offers to take him on a journey, promising him the restoration of his youth, knowledge, and the fulfillment of all his wishes. Faust accepts.

Méphistophélès and Faust arrive at Auerbach's tavern in Leipzig, where Brander, a student, sings a song about a rat whose high life in a kitchen is ended by a dose of poison. The other guests offer an ironic "Amen," and Méphistophélès continues with another song about a flea that brings his relatives to infest a whole royal court (Song of the Flea). Disgusted by the vulgarity of it all, Faust demands to be taken somewhere else.

On a meadow by the Elbe, Méphistophélès shows Faust a dream vision of a beautiful woman named Marguerite, causing Faust to fall in love with her. He calls out her name, and Méphistophélès promises Faust to lead him to her. Together with a group of students and soldiers, they enter the town where she lives.

Intermission

Part III

Faust and Méphistophélès hide in Marguerite's room. Faust feels that he will find in her his ideal of a pure and innocent woman. Marguerite enters and sings a ballad about the King of Thule, who always remained sadly faithful to his lost love. Méphistophélès summons spirits to enchant and deceive the girl and sings a sarcastic serenade outside her window, predicting her loss of innocence. When the spirits have vanished, Faust steps forward. Marguerite admits that she has dreamed of him, just as he has dreamed of her, and they declare their love for each other. Just then, Méphistophélès bursts in, warning them that the girl's reputation must be saved: the neighbors have learned that there is a man

in Marguerite's room and have called her mother to the scene. After a hasty goodbye, Faust and Méphistophélès escape.

Part IV

Faust has abandoned Marguerite, who still awaits his return ("D'amour l'ardente flamme"). She can hear soldiers and students in the distance, which reminds her of the night Faust first came to her house. But this time he is not among them.

Faust calls upon nature to cure him of his world-weariness ("Nature immense, impénétrable et fière"). Méphistophélès appears and tells him that Marguerite is in prison. She has accidentally given her mother too much of a sleeping potion, killing the old woman, and will be hanged the next day. Faust panics, but Méphistophélès claims he can save her—if Faust relinquishes his soul to him. Unable to think of anything but saving Marguerite, Faust agrees. The two ride off on a pair of black horses.

Thinking they are on their way to Marguerite, Faust becomes terrified when he sees demonic apparitions. The landscape becomes more and more horrible and grotesque, and Faust finally realizes that Méphistophélès has taken him directly into hell. Demons and damned spirits greet Méphistophélès in a mysterious, infernal language and welcome Faust among them.

Epilogue

Hell has fallen silent after Faust's arrival—the torment he suffers is unspeakable. Marguerite is saved and welcomed into heaven.



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Hector Berlioz

La Damnation de Faust

Premiere: Opéra-Comique, Paris, 1846

Berlioz's magnificent exploration of the Faust legend is a unique operatic journey. The visionary French composer was inspired by a bold translation of Goethe's dramatic poem *Faust* and produced a monumental and bewildering musical work that, like the masterpiece it's based on, defies easy categorization. Conceived at various times as a free-form oratorio and as an opera—Berlioz ultimately called it a "légende dramatique"—*La Damnation de Faust* is both intimate and grandiose, exquisitely beautiful and blaringly rugged, hugely ambitious, and presciently cinematic. Its travelogue form and cosmic perspective have made it an extreme challenge to stage as an opera. Berlioz himself was eager to see the work staged, but once he did, he conceded that the production techniques of his time were not up to the task of bringing the work to dramatic life. Most of the work's fame has come through concert performances. In any form, *La Damnation de Faust* is an extraordinary work with the power to astound and impress even the most seasoned listener.

The Creators

Hector Berlioz (1803–1869), a French composer, conductor, music critic, and essayist, was a colossus of 19th century musical life. More celebrated as a conductor and writer in his own day, his uninhibited reviews and articles for journals of his time make for lively reading even today, and his *Treatise on Instrumentation* (1844) has had a profound impact on subsequent composers. His musical works were extravagantly praised and even more intensely vilified in his lifetime, and it is only within the last few generations that his stature as a visionary composer has been recognized and that several of his operas have entered the repertory. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) is regarded as the preeminent figure of German literature. The author of *Faust* (published, revised, and re-edited between 1806 and 1832) and *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774) was also an authority on philosophy, art, and music.

The Setting

The opera generally follows Goethe's settings of the story, with familiar locales in Germany (the city of Leipzig and the banks of the River Elbe, among others) and the abyss of the demons. Berlioz added his own touches, most notably by setting the opening scene on the plains of Hungary. This has been criticized by some as an excuse to include the Hungarian March, but it also stresses the epic's universal nature by reducing its specifically German aspects.

The Music

Berlioz's score is as fragmented, wild, and imaginative as the dramatic poem it depicts. From the very beginning, the music announces its distinctive personality: the tenor's first solo features a melody that seems to take an unexpected turn at every opportunity, like the subsequent peasants' chorus with its odd syncopations and mixed meters. But there is transcendental beauty in the unusual moments: the Dance of the Sylphs in Part II, for example, floats a light melody over muted cellos holding a single note, while the percussion and harps interject whispered sighs. The "Menuet des Follets," a spirits' dance in Part III, is a pretty minuet distorted by weird dissonances, paralleling the heroine's fall into sin. This eccentric *mélange* continues in the vocal solos; the bass's sneering "Song of the Flea" in Part I, the heroine's intensely lush aria "D'amour, l'ardente flamme" in Part IV, and the tenor's ravishing invocation "Nature, immense, impénétrable et fière" are among the most memorable. The chorus plays an important role throughout, portraying humans, angels, and demons at various points. The elaborate choral music includes complex rhythms and, at one point in Part II, two different languages (French and Latin) sung simultaneously. Yet for all the massive effects that have impressed (or offended) critics and audiences from Berlioz's time to our own, the score achieves some of its greatest moments through daring restraint: Faust's final surrender of his soul in Part IV is musically depicted by a single note in the percussion.

La Damnation de Faust *at the Met*

The work premiered at the Met in an unstaged concert performance in 1896. The great Anton Seidl, a protégé of Wagner, conducted an all-French cast led by the legendary bass Pol Plançon as Méphistophélès. A staging of the piece was attempted in 1906 for six performances featuring Plançon opposite Geraldine Farrar as Marguerite. While well received critically, the work then fell out of the repertory until 1996, when James Levine led two concert performances, one at Carnegie Hall, and the next year on tour with the company in Japan. Robert Lepage's new production is the first Met staging of the work since the 1906 production.

Program Note

“This marvelous book fascinated me from the first,” Hector Berlioz wrote about Goethe’s *Faust*. “I could not put it down. I read it incessantly, at meals, at the theater, in the street.” The composer first encountered the epic drama after the publication, in 1827, of Gérard de Nerval’s French translation. “The translation was in prose,” he recalled, “but contained a number of ballads, hymns, and other pieces in verse. I was unable to resist setting them to music.” The result, probably begun in September of 1828, was published in 1829 at Berlioz’s own expense as “Eight Scenes from *Faust*,” his Opus 1. Only one section, the Concert of Sylphs, was performed that year. Deciding later that “the work as a whole was crude and badly written,” Berlioz “rounded up all the copies I could get hold of and destroyed them.” His next work would be his first masterpiece, the *Symphonie Fantastique*.

Each of Berlioz’s major compositions is unique in form and character. His operas are semiseria (*Benvenuto Cellini*), grand (*Les Troyens*), and comique (*Béatrice et Bénédicte*), and the other large secular vocal works bear such rubrics as “dramatic symphony” (*Roméo et Juliette*), “lyric monodrama” (*Lélio*), and “sacred trilogy” (*L’Enfance du Christ*). In late 1845, when Berlioz returned to the *Faust* scenes to make a larger work, he initially described it as a “concert opera,” but later settled on “dramatic legend” as a more apt description. Although the basic conception resembled *Roméo* in important respects, *La Damnation de Faust* eventually emerged much closer to opera than the earlier work: in *Roméo*, the lovers are heard only through the medium of the orchestra, while here the protagonists (Faust, Marguerite, and Méphistophélès) are given voice in solos and ensembles. At the same time, chorus and orchestra play prominent roles in the drama and in setting the scenes. Freed of the constraints of the stage, Berlioz can chase his characters from the plains of Hungary to North Germany, Leipzig, and the banks of the Elbe—and eventually into the Satanic abyss and up to heaven.

The passages from Nerval’s Goethe translation used in the Eight Scenes were the starting point of the libretto, along with “two or three other scenes written to my instructions by M. [Almire] Gandonnière.” With this much text (he described it as “less than one-sixth of the work”) in hand, Berlioz set off on his second major concert tour, a six-month venture into Germany and central Europe that began on October 22, 1845. In the end, he wrote most of the text for *Damnation* himself, beginning with Faust’s climatic soliloquy, “Nature immense.” “Once launched, I wrote the verse that I lacked as and when the musical ideas came to me ... in coaches, in trains, on steamboats, even in the towns that I visited.” In the process, Berlioz incorporated elements from other treatments of the Faust subject, later drawing complaints from German critics that he had falsified Goethe.

A significant incident during this tour was an invitation to conduct in Pest (half of the not-yet-unified city of Budapest), coupled with a suggestion that Berlioz should orchestrate a national march for the occasion. The resulting version of the Rákóczy March was played at a concert on February 15, 1846: “The extraordinary impression it produced ... induced me to incorporate it into

my score: I took the liberty of locating my hero in Hungary when the action begins, and of making him witness the passage of the Hungarian army across the plain where he wanders, wrapped in his thoughts."

After Berlioz returned to Paris, he completed and revised the score, finishing on October 19, 1846. Plans were immediately laid for the premiere, which took place at the Opéra-Comique on December 6, 1846, to an auditorium less than half full; a repetition two weeks later fared no better, and a planned third performance was canceled. The hostility of the Parisian musical world, the apathy of the public, the unpopularity of the theater, and the absence of star soloists, along with the enormous expenses he had incurred in presenting such a huge work, spelled a financial disaster for Berlioz himself. But the artistic insult was even greater: "Nothing in my career as an artist wounded me more deeply than this unexpected indifference."

La Damnation de Faust was published in 1854, and Berlioz often performed portions of it during his tours, but the entire work was not heard again during his lifetime. Its great popularity began in 1877, when it played complete in Paris more than three decades after the premiere; since then it has been a frequent feature of the programs of orchestras and choral societies.

Even though the score calls for considerable orchestral forces, they are used somewhat sparingly, and many of the work's sections are set for distinctive, often chamber-like ensembles. In the scene by the Elbe, for example, Méphistophélès's song "Voici des roses" is accompanied by cornets in a low register, trombones, and bassoons, creating a suavely solemn sonority. The subsequent "Dance of the Sylphs" conjures feathery delicacy from no more than four woodwinds, timpani, two harps, and muted strings.

Among the transplants from the earlier work is the serenade sung by Méphistophélès, "Devant la maison." While the early version was accompanied by guitar (Berlioz's own instrument), now the entire orchestral string section, playing pizzicato, impersonates a massive, diabolical guitar. Few uses of the English horn are as memorable as the obbligato part in Marguerite's romance, "D'amour l'ardente flamme," another one of the original Eight Scenes, significantly refined in details. For maximum contrast after the chorus of the demons (singing in an invented language), the choral apotheosis of Marguerite is scored for only winds, two harps, and strings, with four solo violins weaving arabesques in a high register.

Despite the disparate origins of its parts, *La Damnation de Faust* is less susceptible to the charge of fragmentariness than other Berlioz works, and thematic links are conspicuous. The Rákóczy March and the Dance of Peasants are anticipated during Faust's opening soliloquy, as is Méphistophélès's serenade at the end of the preceding Minuet of the Will-o'-the-Wisps. The pseudo-pedantic "Amen" fugue of the students in Auerbach's cellar draws its subject from Brander's song, while the principal melodies of the Elbe scene all share a strong family resemblance. The transitions between the scenes weave yet another fabric of continuity. —David Hamilton

A Note from the Director

Dr. Johann Faust was a historical figure who lived in Germany in the 16th century and gained fame for his work in astrology and magic. The first tale based on his life was published in German in 1587 and was quickly translated into other European languages. Faust's experiences with Mephistopheles, the incarnation of evil who turns him into a handsome young man blooming for love, his encounter with Marguerite, and his ensuing descent to hell are imaginative additions to the story made over time by many renowned writers, including Marlowe, Lessing, Pushkin, and Goethe, who wrote no fewer than three books based on the legend. The German poet's work inspired numerous operas and musical scores, the most celebrated by the French composer Charles Gounod, whose opera premiered in 1859. Hector Berlioz too, like other 19th-century French artists, was fascinated by figures from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. The celebrated composer of *Symphonie Fantastique* was very interested in German culture, particularly Romantic figures like Goethe.

However, his full score for *La Damnation de Faust* never became a grand opera. It was first performed as a concert piece in 1846, in Paris, and had its first staged version many years later. Berlioz describes his score as "a dramatic legend in four parts." The action does not unfold like conventional 19th-century lyric dramas, and the 20 scenes are not all clearly linked, implying curious jump cuts in time and space. The libretto is pieced together like a series of paintings by Delacroix, the renowned Romantic painter who also had a great influence on Berlioz's work. It is as if the composer had foreseen cinematic storytelling and other narrative devices of our time. This is probably the biggest challenge for 21st-century directors.

My first attempt at staging *La Damnation de Faust* was in Matsumoto, Japan, in the late 1990s. I then had a chance to revise the production at the Bastille Opera in Paris a few years later. Although both productions were well received, the projections and video technologies available at the time imposed limitations on the visual concept. When Peter Gelb invited me to revive the production this season at the Met, he agreed to provide the creative team with the means and support to push the concept further. Thanks to him, nearly a decade after the first staging, technology has finally caught up with the production's original ambitions.

What makes *La Damnation* so exciting for me is that—despite its dark subject matter—it remains a very playful piece of lyric theater. It is full of snakes and ladders, elevated plateaus and dark pitfalls, and like its main protagonists, it asks the stage director to be both devil and alchemist. —Robert Lepage

The Cast and Creative Team



James Levine

MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR (CINCINNATI, OHIO)

MET HISTORY Since his 1971 company debut leading *Tosca*, he has conducted nearly 2,500 operatic performances at the Met—more than any other conductor in the company's history. Of the 83 operas he has led here, 13 were company premieres (including *Stiffelio*, *I Lombardi*, *I Vespri Siciliani*, *Erwartung*, *Benvenuto Cellini*, *Idomeneo*, and *La Clemenza di Tito*). He also led the world premieres of Corigliano's *The Ghosts of Versailles* and Harbison's *The Great Gatsby*.

THIS SEASON 29 performances at the Met, including the Opening Night and 125th Anniversary Galas, the new production of *La Damnation de Faust*, and revivals of *Orfeo ed Euridice* and Wagner's *Ring* cycle. He appears at Carnegie Hall with the MET Orchestra and Boston Symphony Orchestra, and at Carnegie's Weill and Zankel Halls with the MET Chamber Ensemble. Maestro Levine also returns to the Boston Symphony Orchestra for his fifth season as music director, including concert performances this winter of *Simon Boccanegra*; he also leads two performances in November of Charles Wuorinen's *Ashberyana* at the Guggenheim Museum for the composer's 70th birthday and gives a vocal master class in January for the Marilyn Horne Foundation at Zankel Hall.



Robert Lepage

DIRECTOR (QUEBEC CITY, CANADA)

THIS SEASON *La Damnation de Faust* for his Met debut.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He is versatile in every form of theater craft, working extensively as a director, scenic artist, playwright, actor, and film director. In 1984 his play *Circulations* toured Canada, which was quickly followed by *The Dragon's Trilogy*, *Vinci*, *Polygraph*, and *Tectonic Plates*. From 1989 to 1993 he was the artistic director of the Théâtre Français at Ottawa's National Arts Centre and in 1992 he became the first North American to direct a Shakespeare play at London's National Theatre. He founded his multidisciplinary production company Ex Machina in 1994; under his artistic direction this new team produced a steady output of plays, including *The Seven Streams of the River Ota*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and a solo production of *Elsinore*. He wrote and directed his first feature film, *Le Confessionnal*, in 1994 and went on to direct the films *The Polygraph*, *Nô*, *Possible Worlds*, and an adaptation of his play *The Far Side of the Moon*. In 1997 he opened The Caserne, a multidisciplinary production center in Quebec City where he and his team have created and produced numerous projects, including opera productions, film projects, and theatrical and visual works. He is the creator and director of Cirque du Soleil's *KÀ* (a permanent show currently in residence in Las Vegas), and his operatic directorial projects include *The Rake's Progress* for Brussels's La Monnaie (2007), Lorin Maazel's *1984* for Covent Garden (2005), *Bluebeard's Castle* and *Erwartung* for the Canadian Opera Company (1992), and *La Damnation de Faust*, which was seen in Japan in 1999 and in Paris in 2001, 2004, and 2006.

The Cast and Creative Team *continued*



Neilson Vignola

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR (MONTREAL, CANADA)

THIS SEASON *La Damnation de Faust* for his Met debut.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has been director of productions for numerous festivals in Quebec, including the International Festival of New Dance and the Festival de Théâtre des Amériques. Since 1981 he has worked on many productions with the Quebec Opera, and he was the director of productions for the Montreal Opera from 1990 to 1993. He has collaborated with Robert Lepage and Ex Machina on *La Damnation de Faust* (Japan's Saito Kinen Festival and Paris's Bastille Opera), Maazel's *1984* (Covent Garden), and *The Rake's Progress* (La Monnaie in Brussels). He was the technical director and tour manager for Cirque du Soleil's *Saltimbaco*, worked with Lepage on Cirque du Soleil's permanent show *KÀ*, now in residence in Las Vegas, and is the creative director of the company's latest permanent show, *Zaia*, which opened last August in Macao.



Carl Fillion

SET DESIGNER (MADRID, SPAIN)

THIS SEASON *La Damnation de Faust* for his Met debut.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Since creating the set designs for Robert Lepage's play *The Seven Streams of the River Ota* in 1993, he has worked with the director and Ex Machina on more than a dozen productions, including *Elsinore*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Geometry of Miracles*, *La Celestina*, *Jean-Sans-Nom*, and the operas *La Damnation de Faust*, *1984*, and *The Rake's Progress*. In addition to working with Lepage, he has also worked with various directors in Quebec and Europe, on productions that include *Simon Boccanegra* for Barcelona's Liceu and *The Burial at Thebes* for Dublin's Abbey Theatre, and with Montreal's Cirque du Soleil.



Karin Erskine

COSTUME DESIGNER (STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN)

THIS SEASON *La Damnation de Faust* for her Met debut.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS She has worked with many major theaters in Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and France, and was nominated for an Oscar in 1975 for her costumes for Ingmar Bergman's film version of *The Magic Flute*. She received a gold medal for her costumes for *Elektra* at the 2003 Prague Quadrennial. Her costumes for the Swedish opera production of *Don Carlos* were seen at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in 1994. She collaborated with Robert Lepage on Strindberg's *A Dream Play* for Stockholm's Royal Dramatic Theatre in 1994, *Celestina* in 1998, and *La Damnation de Faust* at Japan's Saito Kinen Festival in 1999, later revived at the Paris Opera in 2001.

The Cast and Creative Team *continued*



Sonoyo Nishikawa
LIGHTING DESIGNER (TOKYO, JAPAN)

THIS SEASON *La Damnation de Faust* for her Met debut.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS A frequent collaborator with Robert Lepage and Ex Machina, she has designed lighting for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Michael Nyman's *Noises Sounds and Sweet Airs*, *The Dragons Trilogy*, and *The Casa Azul*. For the operatic stage she has designed lighting for *The Merry Widow* for the Montreal Opera and *Hansel and Gretel* for the Quebec Opera. She has also designed lighting for more than 50 plays in Montreal and Quebec City over the last ten years. Major awards: Dora Mavor Moore—Outstanding Lighting Design for the *The Seven Streams of the River Ota* in 1996 (Toronto), Prix du Trident for *Antigone* in 2003 (Quebec City), and Masque for L'Eden Cinema in 2004 (Montreal). In Japan, her designs have been seen in the national tours of *Peter Pan*, *Blue Heaven*, and *Guys and Dolls*.



Holger Förterer
INTERACTIVE VIDEO DESIGNER (BOCHUM, GERMANY)

THIS SEASON *La Damnation de Faust* for his Met debut.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has been developing interactive installations and scenery since 1998 and received the New York Dance and Performance Award in 2003 for his interactive scenery for *Helikopter*, performed by Ballet Preljocaj. In 2004 he created the interactive projections seen in Cirque du Soleil's *KÀ* in Las Vegas, which was directed by Robert Lepage. Other interactive works include *Fluidum 1*, *sub_trakt*, *Testflug*, *Zentralin*, and *Inflammable*. His work has been exhibited in Germany, France, Belgium, Austria, the Netherlands, Chile, and China.



Boris Firquet
IMAGE DESIGNER (QUEBEC CITY, CANADA)

THIS SEASON *La Damnation de Faust* for his Met debut.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has been making experimental videos since 1988 and since 1996 has been interested in live stage video. He creates almost all of his own custom software, and his video works have been presented at Quebec City's Mois Multi Festival, the Victoriaville Festival of Contemporary Music, Toronto's Images Festival, Montreal's FCMM, the Tokyo Video Festival, Berlin's Transmediale, Marseille's Videochroniques, and the Liège International Video Festival. In opera, he collaborated with Robert Lepage on *The Rake's Progress* for La Monnaie in Brussels, with subsequent performances in Lyon, San Francisco, London, and Madrid.



Johanne Madore

CHOREOGRAPHER (MONTREAL, CANADA)

THIS SEASON *La Damnation de Faust* for her Met debut.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Over the past 25 years she has worked as a choreographer, director, and teacher, and has collaborated with such leading Quebec companies as Carbone 14, Ex Machina, O Vertigo Danse, Cirque Eloize, 4Darts, Chants Libres, and Léveillé Danse, among others. She is an artistic advisor for Montreal's National Circus School, coaching students and directing them in shows, including her recent creation *The Mandalas of Desire* (June 2008). She is currently remounting her innovative work *Le Baiser*, uniting dancers with reduced mobility and dancers of classical and contemporary technique. She worked with Robert Lepage as choreographer on the production of *La Damnation de Faust* at the Bastille Opera and as a dancer in its production premiere in Japan.



Alain Gauthier

CHOREOGRAPHER (MONTREAL, CANADA)

THIS SEASON *La Damnation de Faust* for his Met debut.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS As a stage artist he joined Cirque du Soleil in 1986 and appeared in more than 1,600 performances with the company. He is a teacher at Montreal's National Circus School and over the last eight years has been working as a choreographer, director, and designer. He was the choreographer for the touring equestrian show *Cavalia*. Among his creative achievements are *The Millennium Dome Show* (London, 2000, with Peter Gabriel), *Zulu Time* (with director Robert Lepage), *Zumanity* (Cirque du Soleil), *Crescendo* (Cirque d'Hiver, Paris), *La Damnation de Faust* (Paris Opera), *Ice from Russia* (Las Vegas), and NBC television's *Celebrity Circus*.



Susan Graham

MEZZO-SOPRANO (ROSWELL, NEW MEXICO)

THIS SEASON Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* and Marguerite in *La Damnation de Faust* at the Met, Charlotte in *Werther* with Munich's Bavarian State Opera, and concert engagements in St. Louis, Lyon, Paris, and Toulouse. She is also heard at Carnegie Hall and in recital in Salzburg, Lisbon, Prague, Berlin, Copenhagen, Vienna, and Brussels.

MET APPEARANCES More than 100 performances of 15 roles, including two world premieres (Jordan Baker in Harbison's *The Great Gatsby* and Sondra Finchley in Picker's *An American Tragedy*) since her company debut as the Second Lady in *Die Zauberflöte* (1991).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Iphigénie in *Iphigénie en Tauride* at the Salzburg Festival and in London,

The Cast and Creative Team *continued*

Chicago, San Francisco, and Paris; Sister Helen Prejean in the world premiere of Heggie's *Dead Man Walking* with the San Francisco Opera; Cecilio in *Lucio Silla* with the Santa Fe Opera; and Poppea in Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* and Hanna Glawari in *The Merry Widow* with the Los Angeles Opera.



Marcello Giordani

TENOR (AUGUSTA, ITALY)

THIS SEASON The Verdi Requiem, Faust in *La Damnation de Faust*, and Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* at the Met; Roméo in *Roméo et Juliette* at the Vienna State Opera; Gabriele Adorno in *Simon Boccanegra* in Barcelona; Andrea Chénier in Genoa; and Caláf in *Turandot* in Budapest.

MET APPEARANCES Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Roméo, des Grieux in *Manon Lescaut*, Ernani, Benvenuto Cellini, Rodolfo in *La Bohème* (debut, 1995), Alfredo in *La Traviata*, des Grieux in *Manon*, Lenski in *Eugene Onegin*, Gualtiero in *Il Pirata*, Gustavo in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Cavaradossi in *Tosca*, Gabriele Adorno, and Enzo in *La Gioconda*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS The Sicilian tenor has sung in all the world's leading theaters. Among his recent performances are Andrea Chénier in Zurich, Caláf at La Scala, Cavaradossi and Roméo at the Arena di Verona, Paolo in Zandoni's *Francesca da Rimini* in Zurich, Arnold in *Guillaume Tell* at the Vienna State Opera, and Henri in *Les Vêpres Siciliennes* with Paris's Bastille Opera.



John Relyea

BASS-BARITONE (TORONTO, CANADA)

THIS SEASON Méphistophélès in *La Damnation de Faust* and Alidoro in *La Cenerentola* at the Met, *Bluebeard's Castle* with the Seattle Opera, and *Norma* in concert with Rome's Santa Cecilia Orchestra.

MET APPEARANCES Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Banquo in *Macbeth*, Alidoro (debut, 2000), Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Garibaldo in *Rodelinda*, Colline in *La Bohème*, Giorgio Walton in *I Puritani*, the Night Watchman in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Don Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, and Masetto in *Don Giovanni*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS The Four Villains in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* and Escamillo in *Carmen* at the Vienna State Opera, Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro* in Munich, Nick Shadow in *The Rake's Progress* and Banquo at Covent Garden, Escamillo in *Carmen* at Paris's Bastille Opera, and Cadmus/Somnus in *Semele*, Colline, and Raimondo at Covent Garden and with the San Francisco Opera.