GIUSEPPE VERDI

OTELLO

Opera in four acts

Libretto by Arrigo Boito, based on the play by William Shakespeare

Saturday, October 17, 2015
1:00–3:50PM

New Production

The production of Otello was made possible by a generous gift from Jacqueline Desmarais, in memory of Paul G. Desmarais Sr.
The Metropolitan Opera
2015–16 Season

The 333rd Metropolitan Opera performance of
GIUSEPPE VERDI’S
OTELLO

CONDUCTOR
Yannick Nézet-Séguin

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

MONTANO
Jeff Mattsey

CASSIO
Dimitri Pittas*

IAGO
Željko Lučić

RODERIGO
Chad Shelton

OTELLO
Aleksandrs Antonenko

DESDEMONA
Sonya Yoncheva

EMILIA
Jennifer Johnson Cano*

A HERALD
Tyler Duncan

LODOVICO
Günther Groissböck

Saturday, October 17, 2015, 1:00–3:50PM
This afternoon’s performance is being transmitted live in high definition to movie theaters worldwide.

*Graduate of the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program*

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Fight Director  B.H. Barry
Musical Preparation  Steven Eldredge, Dan Saunders,
Joshua Greene, Joel Revzen, and Nimrod David Pfeffer
Assistant Stage Directors  Katrina Bachus, Gina Lapinski,
and Sarah Ina Meyers
Stage Band Conductors  Gregory Buchalter and
Nimrod David Pfeffer
Prompter  Joshua Greene
Italian Coach  Loretta Di Franco
Met Titles  Sonya Friedman
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Assistant Costume Designers  Ryan Park and
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Synopsis

Act I
Cyprus, late 19th century. During a violent storm, the people of Cyprus await the return of their governor and general of the Venetian fleet, the Moor Otello. He has been fighting the Muslim Turks and guides his victorious navy to safe harbor. In his absence, the young Venetian Roderigo has arrived in Cyprus and fallen in love with Otello’s new wife, Desdemona. Otello’s ensign Iago, who secretly hates the governor for promoting the officer Cassio over him, promises Roderigo to help win her. While the citizens celebrate their governor’s return, Iago launches his plan to ruin Otello. Knowing that Cassio gets drunk easily, Iago proposes a toast. Cassio declines to drink, but abandons his scruples when Iago salutes Desdemona, who is a favorite of the people. Iago then goads Roderigo into provoking a fight with Cassio, who is now fully drunk. Montano, the former governor, tries to separate the two, and Cassio attacks him as well. Otello appears and restores order, furious about his soldiers’ behavior. When he realizes that Desdemona has also been disturbed by the commotion, he takes away Cassio’s recent promotion and dismisses everyone. Otello and Desdemona reaffirm their love.

Act II
Iago advises Cassio to present his case to Desdemona, arguing that her influence on Otello will secure his rehabilitation. Alone, Iago reveals his bleak, nihilistic view of humankind. He makes dismissive remarks about Desdemona’s fidelity to Otello, whose jealousy is easily aroused. Otello’s suspicions are raised when Desdemona appears and appeals to him on Cassio’s behalf. Evading her question, Otello complains of the loss of his peace of mind. Desdemona offers him a handkerchief to cool his brow and he tosses it to the ground. Emilia, Iago’s wife and Desdemona’s maidservant, retrieves it, and Iago seizes the handkerchief from her. Left alone with Otello, Iago fans the flames of the governor’s suspicions by inventing a story of how Cassio had spoken of Desdemona in his sleep, and how he saw her handkerchief in Cassio’s hand. Seething with jealousy, Otello is now convinced that his wife is unfaithful. The two men join in an oath to punish Cassio and Desdemona.

Intermission  (AT APPROXIMATELY 2:05 PM)

Act III
Iago’s plot continues to unfold as he tells Otello that he will have further proof of his wife and Cassio’s betrayal. When, moments later, Desdemona approaches Otello and once again pleads for Cassio, Otello insists on seeing the missing handkerchief, which he had once given her as a gift. When she cannot produce it, he insults her as a whore. Alone, he gives in to his desperation and self-pity. Iago
returns with Cassio, and Otello hides to eavesdrop on their conversation, which Iago cleverly leads in such a way that Otello is convinced they are discussing Cassio’s affair with Desdemona. Cassio mentions an unknown admirer’s gift and produces the telltale handkerchief—in fact planted by Iago in his room. Otello is shattered and vows that he will kill his wife. Iago promises to have Roderigo deal with Cassio.

A delegation from Venice arrives to recall Otello home and to appoint Cassio as the new governor of Cyprus. At this news, Otello loses control and explodes in a rage, hurling insults at Desdemona in front of the assembled crowd. He orders everyone away and finally collapses in a seizure. As the Cypriots are heard from outside praising Otello as the “Lion of Venice,” Iago gloats over him, “Behold the Lion!”

Act IV
Emilia helps the distraught Desdemona prepare for bed. She has just finished saying her evening prayers when Otello enters and wakes her with a kiss to tell her he is about to kill her. Desdemona again protests her innocence. Otello coldly smothers her. Emilia runs in with news that Cassio has killed Roderigo. Iago’s plot is finally revealed and Otello realizes what he has done. Reflecting on his past glory he pulls out a dagger and stabs himself, dying with a final kiss for his wife.
In Focus

Giuseppe Verdi

Otello

Premiere: Teatro alla Scala, Milan, 1887
Often cited as Italian opera’s greatest tragedy, Otello is a miraculous union of music and drama, a masterpiece as profound philosophically as it is thrilling theatrically. Shakespeare’s tale of an outsider, a great hero who can’t control his jealousy, was carefully molded by the librettist Arrigo Boito into a taut and powerful libretto. Verdi’s supreme achievement in this work may be the title role, a pinnacle of the tenor repertory. All three lead roles are demanding—making the opera a challenge to produce—but the role of Otello in particular requires an astounding natural instrument capable of both powerful and delicate sounds, superb musical intelligence, and impressive acting abilities. Otello almost wasn’t written: Following the success of Aida in 1871 and his setting of the Requiem mass in 1874, Verdi considered himself retired, and it took Boito and publisher Giulio Ricordi several years to persuade him to take on a major new work.

The Creators
In an extraordinary career spanning six decades in the theater, Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901) composed 28 operas, at least half of which are at the core of today’s repertoire. His role in Italy’s cultural and political development has made him an icon in his native country. Arrigo Boito (1842–1918) was also a composer (his opera Mefistofele, based on Goethe’s Faust, premiered in 1868), as well as a journalist and critic. The plays of William Shakespeare (1564–1616) have inspired countless operatic interpretations. Verdi and Boito would turn to Shakespeare again after Otello for their final masterpiece, Falstaff.

The Setting
The opera is set on the island of Cyprus, originally in the late 15th century. (Boito jettisoned Shakespeare’s Act I, set in Venice, for a tighter and more fluid drama.) The island itself represents an outpost of a European power (Venice) under constant attack from an encroaching, hostile adversary (the Turkish Empire). In a sense, the island of Cyprus could be said to echo Otello’s outsider status: he is a foreigner (a “Moor,” an uncertain term applied indiscriminately at that time to North African Arabs, black Africans, and others) surrounded by suspicious Europeans. This season’s new production moves the action to the time of the opera’s creation.
The Music
The score of Otello is remarkable for its overall intensity and dramatic insight rather than the memorable solo numbers that made Verdi’s earlier works so popular. There are arias in this opera, most notably Desdemona’s Willow Song and haunting “Ave Maria” in the last act and the baritone’s “Credo” at the beginning of Act II. But equally important are the shorter vocal solos that cover considerable dramatic territory: the tenor’s opening “Esultate!” in Act I is just a few measures long but reveals many facets of his character. Two notable duets, the tenor–soprano love duet that ends Act I and the tenor–baritone oath duet that concludes Act II, are remarkable examples of their respective forms. Throughout the score, the orchestra plays a diverse role unprecedented in Italian opera. In the opening storm scene, the power of nature is depicted with full forces, including an organ, playing at the maximum possible volume. In the Act I love duet, subtle psychological detail is revealed when the oboe and clarinet are seamlessly replaced by the darker English horn and bass clarinet as Otello’s mind turns to painful memories. The very end of the opera belongs to the orchestra as well, with every instrument playing as softly as possible, pulsing like the last breaths of a dying being.

Met History
The great tenor Jean de Reszke sang the title role in the first two Met performances of Otello in 1891—the first of them on tour in Chicago. A new production in 1894 featured tenor Francesco Tamagno and baritone Victor Maurel (Verdi’s choices for Otello and Iago at the world premiere in Milan). Conductor Arturo Toscanini, who had played in the orchestra in the world premiere, led 29 performances at the Met between 1909 and 1913, all of which starred Leo Slezak in the title role. Subsequent productions have been led by Ettore Panizza, with Elisabeth Rethberg, Giovanni Martinelli, and Lawrence Tibbett (1937); Georg Solti, with Gabriella Tucci, James McCracken, and Robert Merrill (1963); Karl Böhm, with Teresa Zylis-Gara, McCracken, and Sherrill Milnes (1972); and Valery Gergiev, in his Met debut, with Carol Vaness, Plácido Domingo, and Sergei Leiferkus (1994). Among the other great artists to have made a mark in the title role are Ramón Vinay, Mario Del Monaco, and Jon Vickers. Renata Tebaldi made her Met debut as Desdemona in 1955, and Kiri Te Kanawa was first heard here when she made her company debut in the same role on short notice in 1974. In recent years, other notable interpreters have included Renée Fleming, Johan Botha, José Cura, Falk Struckmann, and Thomas Hampson. Music Director James Levine conducted Otello 82 times at the Met between 1972 and 2005. Bartlett Sher’s new production opens the company’s 2015–16 season on September 21, 2015, with Aleksandrs Antonenko, Sonya Yoncheva, Željko Lučić, and Yannick Nézet-Séguin on the podium.
Were it not for the intervention of publisher Giulio Ricordi, Verdi may never have written *Otello*. Following the premiere of *Aida* in 1871, the celebrated Italian composer decided to go into retirement. Barring the composition of his String Quartet and the Requiem—initially part of a tribute to Rossini and then completed in honor of Italian author Giuseppe Manzoni—Verdi steered clear of composition altogether. He was a happy and wealthy man in his sixties, no longer feeling the compunction to accept operatic commissions. And yet, as his publisher insisted, this was a waste of Verdi’s incomparable talents.

Ricordi tried to lure his most successful composer out of retirement. It was not an easy task. Verdi was content to remain at home and survey the expanse of agricultural land he owned around his villa at Sant’Agata, just northeast of Parma. He was, moreover, disappointed by the new strand of cosmopolitanism emerging within the conservatories and theaters of Italy, though this did not stop him from traveling to Bologna to hear the 1871 Italian premiere of Wagner’s *Lohengrin*. As to his own work, the completed Requiem, premiered in May 1874 and soon heard all over Europe, was perpetuating Verdi’s fame and fortune, though he remained unmoved by the idea of writing more operas. And then Ricordi had an ingenious idea: another stage work based on a play by Verdi’s beloved Shakespeare (whose portrait still hangs in the composer’s bedroom and study, just as he left it).

Having written *Macbeth* in 1846–7, Verdi had tried to adapt *King Lear*, but that tantalizing project sadly never came to fruition. Ricordi now suggested an opera based on another of Shakespeare’s great tragedies, *Othello*. And rather than working with one of Verdi’s established collaborators, Ricordi daringly suggested Arrigo Boito as a librettist. A controversial affiliate of the scapigliatura movement, the members of which were intent on reviving Italian art, literature, and music by means of foreign influences, not least Wagner, Boito had once offended Verdi by saying that his beloved Italian culture had been “defiled like the wall of a brothel.” The opinionated though highly talented Boito, himself a composer, then had his own fingers burned when his opera *Mefistofele* failed at its La Scala premiere in 1868. Revived seven years later, it was toned down considerably. Nonetheless, in suggesting Boito, Ricordi was clearly trying to reinvigorate the sexagenarian Verdi.

The composer slowly capitulated. After nearly a decade without a theatrical project, Verdi began work on his new musical drama, though not before trying Boito out on a thorough overhaul of the 1857 “fiasco” *Simon Boccanegra*. Suitably impressed by his revisions, the composer turned to Boito’s proposed libretto for *Otello*, submitted in 1879. Gone was Shakespeare’s first act, set in Venice, with its numerous tense discussions, particularly those featuring Desdemona’s father, Brabantio, and his misgivings about her marriage to Othello. Boito distributed salient information from those scenes throughout his libretto,
though he cut Brabantio’s part entirely. Gone too are the repeated references to Othello’s race, though Boito was clearly aware of their importance, judging by his copious annotations and his preservation of the palpable tension between what he saw as African savagery and Mediterranean civility in Othello’s character. Boldly adapting Shakespeare’s tragedy, Boito created a well characterized, driven libretto, in which three figures dominate: the saintly Desdemona; Iago, the villain; and Otello, the hero brought low. Verdi took until November 1886 to declare his score finished. What he created over those seven years was both a bold continuation of the Italian operatic tradition and a daring retort to the cultural influences pouring over the Alps. And he certainly matched Boito’s flair for characterization, providing enticing roles for his singers, as Verdi himself explained.

Desdemona is a part in which the thread, the melodic line, never ceases from the first note to the last. Just as Iago has only to declaim and laugh mockingly and just as Otello, now the warrior, now the passionate lover, now crushed to the point of baseness, now ferocious like a savage, must sing and shout, so Desdemona must always, always sing.

With Otello’s wife, Verdi created a truly beatific heroine, the victim of a venal, masculine world, whose “Ave Maria”—one of the few ideas Verdi borrowed from Rossini’s earlier opera Otello—is emblematic of her untainted character. It is this purity that attracts Otello, who has an almost Freudian connection to this idealized (mother) figure, one promptly destroyed by the plotting Iago. Tellingly, the opera closes with a motif associated with that venerable love, the “bacio” (kiss) motif from the Act I love duet, reminding us of the destruction of Desdemona’s innocence.

Iago is the polar opposite of this serene image. His music is declamatory and modern. Yet what makes Iago so brilliant is his chameleon-like ability to ape various musical styles and thereby influence those around him. It was not for nothing that Verdi and Boito originally considered naming the opera after him. According to Boito, Iago had to appear “easy and jovial with Cassio; ironic with Roderigo; apparently devoted towards Otello, brutal and threatening with Emilia; obsequious to Desdemona and Lodovico.” He is all things to all people, though, as we find out at the opening to Act II, he believes “in a cruel God.” Heralded by a fortissimo, chromatic fanfare—arguably the inspiration for the opening of Puccini’s Turandot—this Credo features all the elements of Iago’s style: disjointed intervals, uneven phrases and hard triplet rhythms, all delivered with staccato snarls and accompanied by chilling trills. This is the devil in musical form and his insidiousness, like the motif that accompanies “È un’idra fosca” (“’Tis a spiteful monster”), snakes through the opera.
Caught between the saintly and the demonic, Otello is rendered helpless. Preying on his weakness for the radiant Desdemona, Iago puts in train Otello’s destruction. First, however, we see the celebrated warrior as the epitome of operatic heroism, as if he had ridden the storm alone—conjured in vivid, dissonant terms by Verdi—declaring “Esultate!” (“Rejoice!”) at the very top of his range. His ardent heroism soon changes, however, to Iago-like declamation, as Otello repeats his ensign’s phrases in their Act II duet and then, more chillingly, reproduces Iago’s musical idiom in the parlando textures of the death scene. Exposed as a monster, the consequence of a cruel plot, Otello resumes a quasi-heroic tone in “Niun mi tema” but, like the last reprise of the “bacio” motif, it only serves to remind us just how far he has fallen.

The plausibility of this tragedy is further enhanced by the fluidity of its musical drama. Boito imbued the story with great pace and punch, moving away from the juxtaposition of “action” and “reflection,” centered on recitative and aria forms that had previously dominated Italian opera. Verdi responded with a continuous musical structure in which such “numbers” are effortlessly subsumed. Sometimes, however, he deliberately breaks the flow. Rather than the through-composed sequence of storm, survival, carousing, and love duet in Act I, Iago’s Act II Credo, the great “Quell’innocente un fremito” ensemble at the end of Act III, and Desdemona’s scene at the beginning of Act IV are purposely separated and thereby highlighted. These comparatively static moments further underline the polarity between good and evil. At the end of Act III, as the entire ensemble is assembled on stage, Otello is caught betwixt and between, symbolized by the contrast between his dutiful declaration of the ducal document announcing Cassio as his successor and his barbed comments to Desdemona. An off-stage chorus trumpets what Otello once was, while Iago’s sinister chromaticism pronounces what the great warrior has become.

When Otello was first seen at La Scala on February 5, 1887, it was a triumph. Verdi himself was not thrilled with the first performance, but that didn’t stop the tide of enthusiasm for the new work, with premieres following quickly throughout Europe, in New York (1888) and in London (1889). Written by the master who had brought Rigoletto and La Traviata to the world, Otello turned out to be the trigger for another exciting era in Italian opera. With its emotional verisimilitude, vivid characterization, and structural fluidity, Otello looks forward to verismo and Puccini. Coming out of retirement, Verdi was again the master of Italian opera. “Have the love, the passion, the anguish, and the hatred of human beings ever been presented to an audience with deeper insight or poignancy than in his music?” the English critic Francis Toye later asked. “I think not.”

—Gavin Plumley
The Cast and Creative Team

Yannick Nézet-Séguin
CONDUCTOR (MONTREAL, CANADA)

THIS SEASON  Otello at the Met, Elektra with Opéra de Montréal, and concert tours with the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.

MET APPEARANCES  Don Carlo, Rusalka, La Traviata, Faust, and Carmen (debut, 2009).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS  He has conducted Der Fliegende Holländer at the Vienna State Opera, Le Nozze di Figaro in concert at the Baden-Baden Festival, Roméo et Juliette and Don Giovanni at the Salzburg Festival, Roméo et Juliette at La Scala, Rusalka at Covent Garden, and The Makropulos Case, Turandot, and Don Carlo at the Netherlands Opera. He is currently Music Director of the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Rotterdam Philharmonic, and Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of Montreal’s Orchestre Métropolitain.

Bartlett Sher
DIRECTOR (SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA)

THIS SEASON  The new production of Otello and revivals of L'Elisir d'Amore and The Barber of Seville at the Met, the Tony Award-winning production of The King and I at Lincoln Center Theater, and a new Broadway production of Fiddler on the Roof.

MET PRODUCTIONS  Le Comte Ory, Les Contes d'Hoffmann, L'Elisir d'Amore, Il Barbiere di Siviglia (debut, 2006), and Nico Muhly’s Two Boys.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS  He received the 2008 Tony Award for South Pacific, and has also directed Broadway productions of Joe Turner’s Come and Gone, Awake and Sing!, The Light in the Piazza, and Golden Boy, all for Lincoln Center Theater, where he is resident director. He was artistic director of Seattle’s Intiman Theatre from 2000 to 2010 and directed the world premiere of Two Boys for English National Opera in 2011. His staging of Shakespeare’s Cymbeline for New York’s Lucille Lortel Theatre was also seen at Stratford, England. He made his operatic debut in 2003 with Levy’s Mourning Becomes Electra in a joint production of the Seattle Opera and New York City Opera and has also directed Roméo et Juliette at the Salzburg Festival. Future plans include Millions, a new musical by Adam Guettel.

Es Devlin
SET DESIGNER (LONDON, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON  Otello for her debut at the Met and Der Freischütz for Royal Danish Opera.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS  Recent theater includes Jennifer Haley’s The Nether at London’s Royal Court and Duke of York’s theaters, American Psycho and Harold Pinter’s Chimerica at the Almeida Theatre, and The Master and Margarita with Complicite at the Roundabout Theatre. Her work for dance includes Connectome for London’s Royal Ballet and God’s Plenty and Four Scenes for the Rambert

Catherine Zuber
COSTUME DESIGNER (LONDON, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON New production of Otello and revivals of L’Elisir d’Amore and The Barber of Seville at the Met and Fiddler on the Roof on Broadway.


Donald Holder
LIGHTING DESIGNER (CROTON-ON-HUDSON, NEW YORK)

THIS SEASON Otello at the Met.

MET PRODUCTIONS Die Zauberflöte (debut, 2004) and Nico Muhly’s Two Boys.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Work in opera includes Carmen and the world premiere of Jake Heggie’s The End of the Affair for the Houston Grand Opera, Faust at the Baden-Baden Festival, Heggie’s Moby-Dick and Todd Machover’s Death and the Powers for Dallas Opera, Elliot Goldenthal’s Grendel for Los Angeles Opera and Lincoln Center Festival, Muhly’s Dark Sisters for the Philadelphia Opera, the world premiere of Two Boys for English National Opera, and Salome for the Mariinsky Theatre. Broadway credits include The King and I, The Bridges of Madison County, On the Twentieth Century, Big Fish, Bullets Over Broadway, South Pacific (Tony Award), The Lion King (Tony, Drama Desk, and Outer Critics Circle Awards), Golden Boy, A Streetcar Named Desire, Spider-Man: Turn off the Dark, Annie, Promises, Promises, Come Fly Away, and The Boy from Oz.
Luke Halls
VIDEO DESIGNER (LONDON, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON Otello for his debut at the Met.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has collaborated regularly with designer Es Devlin on projects including Don Giovanni for Covent Garden, Alastair Marriott’s Connectome for London’s Royal Ballet, Hamlet at London’s Barbican Centre, and Jennifer Haley’s The Nether at London’s Duke of York’s Theatre. He has also produced video designs and animations for a wide variety of music, theater, and dance performances. Opera work includes Szymanowski’s King Roger for Covent Garden and Janáček’s The Cunning Little Vixen for Royal Danish Opera. Theater work includes Man and Superman for the National Theatre, 2071 for the Royal Court Theatre, as well as the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Closing Ceremonies. He has also created video designs for touring groups including Pet Shop Boys, U2, Nitin Sawhney, and Rihanna. He received a BAFTA Award for his work on the ITV show The Cube.

Sonya Yoncheva
SOPRANO (POLODIV, BULGARIA)

THIS SEASON Desdemona in Otello and Mimi in La Bohème at the Met, Adina in L’Elisir d’Amore at the Vienna State Opera, Micaëla in Carmen at Covent Garden, Violetta in La Traviata and Mimi at the Staatsoper Berlin, the title role of Tchaikovsky’s Iolanta at the Paris Opera, Violetta at Paris’s Bastille Opera, Mimi and Violetta at Munich’s Bavarian State Opera, and the title role of Handel’s Alcina in concert in Monte Carlo, Versailles, and Toulouse.

MET APPEARANCES Gilda in Rigoletto (debut, 2013) and Violetta.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Fiordiligi in Così fan tutte at the Bavarian State Opera, Violetta at Covent Garden and the Staatsoper Berlin, Leïla in Les Pêcheurs de Perles at Paris’s Opéra Comique, the title role of Lucia di Lammermoor at the Paris Opera, and Marguerite in Faust at the Vienna State Opera, Covent Garden, and in Baden-Baden. She has also been heard at La Scala, Madrid’s Teatro Real, and St. Petersburg’s Mariinsky Theatre, and was a 2010 winner of Plácido Domingo’s Operalia International Competition.

Aleksandrs Antonenko
TENOR (RIGA, LATVIA)

THIS SEASON The title role of Otello at the Met and Barcelona’s Liceu, Turiddu in Cavalleria Rusticana and Canio in Pagliacci at Covent Garden, Pollione in Norma at Munich’s Bavarian State Opera, and Radamès in Aida at the Paris Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Don José in Carmen, Pollione, Grigory in Boris Godunov, Luigi in Il Tabarro, and the Prince in Rusalka (debut, 2009).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent engagements include Hermann in The Queen of Spades with the Vienna State Opera, Samson in Samson et Dalila and Dick Johnson in La Fanciulla del West with the Deutsche Oper Berlin, and Calàf in Turandot at La Scala and the Latvian...
National Opera. He has also sung Cavaradossi in Tosca at La Scala and the Arena di Verona, Otello and Luigi at Covent Garden, Samson in Geneva, des Grieux in Manon Lescaut for his 2006 Vienna State Opera debut, Sergei in Shostakovich’s Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk with the Latvian National Opera, Gabriele Adorno in Simon Boccanegra in Frankfurt, and Otello at the Paris Opera, Rome Opera, Vienna State Opera, Salzburg Festival, and in concert with Riccardo Muti conducting the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

**Günther Groissböck**

**BASS (WAIDHOFEN, AUSTRIA)**

**THIS SEASON** Lodovico in Otello and Landgraf Hermann in Tannhäuser at the Met, Zaccaria in Nabucco at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, Ochs in Der Rosenkavalier at La Scala, Pogner in Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg at the Paris Opera, and King Henry in Lohengrin and Ochs at Munich’s Bavarian State Opera.

**MET APPEARANCES** Banquo in Macbeth and Colline in La Bohème (debut, 2010).

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** In recent seasons he has sung Baron Ochs at the Salzburg Festival, Fasolt in Das Rheingold and Landgraf Hermann at the Bayreuth Festival, Fafner in Das Rheingold and Hunding in Die Walküre at Paris’s Bastille Opera, the title role of Boris Godunov and Landgraf Hermann at Madrid’s Teatro Real, Sarastro in Die Zauberflöte at Lyric Opera of Chicago, King Henry and Fafner at the Vienna State Opera, and numerous roles at the Bavarian State Opera, including Gremin in Eugene Onegin, Vodnik in Rusalka, Orest in Elektra, and Hunding. He has also sung Sarastro at La Scala, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Salzburg Festival, Aix-en-Provence Festival, and in Los Angeles, Sparafucile in Rigoletto in Zurich, Landgraf Hermann in Barcelona, Fafner in San Francisco, Colline with Washington National Opera, and King Henry in Houston.

**Željko Lučić**

**BARITONE (ZRENJANIN, SERBIA)**

**THIS SEASON** Iago in Otello, Scarpia in Tosca, and the title role of Rigoletto at the Met, the title role of Nabucco with Lyric Opera of Chicago, Michele in Il Tabarro and the title role of Gianni Schicchi in Frankfurt, Germont in La Traviata at the Paris Opera, and Count di Luna in Il Trovatore at Covent Garden.

**MET APPEARANCES** The title roles of Nabucco and Macbeth, Amonasro in Aïda, Count di Luna, Michele, Barnaba in La Gioconda (debut, 2006), Germont, and Gérard in Andrea Chénier.

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** He has sung Gérard at Covent Garden; Renato in Un Ballo in Maschera, Amonasro, and Germont at La Scala; Scarpia and Nabucco at the Vienna State Opera; Iago in Zurich; the title role of Falstaff in Frankfurt; Rigoletto at the San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and La Scala; and Simon Boccanegra and Macbeth at the Bavarian State Opera. He has also sung Macbeth at the Salzburg Festival, Germont at the Vienna State Opera and Covent Garden, and Don Carlo in Ernani with the San Francisco Opera.
Dimitri Pittas

TENOR (NEW YORK, NEW YORK)

This season Cassio in Otello and Alfred in Die Fledermaus at the Met, Alfred at Japan’s Saito Kinen Festival, and concerts with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and Scottish Symphony Orchestra.


Career Highlights Recent performances include Rodolfo with the Paris Opera and Dallas Opera, the title role of Don Carlo with Opera Philadelphia, Nemorino with the Deutsche Oper Berlin, and Michele in the world premiere of Marco Tutino’s Two Women at the San Francisco Opera. He has also sung Don Carlo for his debut with the Bolshoi Opera, Oronte in I Lombardi for his debut in Hamburg, and Gustavo in Un Ballo in Maschera and Rodolfo with the Canadian Opera Company. He is a graduate of the Met’s Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.
Facilities and Services

THE ARNOLD AND MARIE SCHWARTZ GALLERY MET
Art gallery located in the South Lobby featuring leading artists. Open Monday through Friday, 6pm through last intermission; Saturday, noon through last intermission of evening performances.

ASSISTIVE LISTENING SYSTEM AND BINOCULARS
Wireless headsets, which work with the FM assistive listening system to amplify sound, are available at the coat check station on the South Concourse Level before performances. Binoculars are also available for rental at the coat check station on the South Concourse level. The rental cost is $5. A major credit card or driver’s license is required as a deposit.

BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED
Large print programs are available free of charge from the ushers. Braille synopses of many operas are available free of charge. Please contact an usher. Tickets for no-view score desk seats may be purchased by calling the Met Opera Guild at 212-769-7028.

BOX OFFICE
Monday–Saturday, 10am–8pm; Sunday, noon–6pm. The Box Office closes at 8pm on non-performance evenings or on evenings with no intermission. Box Office Information: 212-362-6000.

CHECK ROOM
On Concourse level (Founders Hall).

FIRST AID
Doctor in attendance during performances; contact an usher for assistance.

LECTURE SERIES
Opera-related courses, pre-performance lectures, master classes, and more are held throughout the performance season at the Opera Learning Center. For tickets and information, call 212-769-7028.

LOST AND FOUND
Security office at Stage Door. Monday–Friday, 2pm–4pm; 212-799-3100, ext. 2499.

MET OPERA SHOP
The Met Opera Shop is adjacent to the North Box Office, 212-580-4090. Open Monday–Saturday, 10am–final intermission; Sunday, noon–6pm.

PUBLIC TELEPHONES
Telephones with volume controls and TTY Public Telephone located in Founders Hall on the Concourse level.

RESTAURANT AND REFRESHMENT FACILITIES
The Grand Tier Restaurant features creative contemporary American cuisine, and the Revlon Bar offers panini, crostini, and a full service bar. Both are open two hours prior to the Met Opera curtain time to any Lincoln Center ticket holder for pre-curtain dining. Pre-ordered intermission dining is also available for Met ticket holders. For reservations call 212-799-3400.

RESTROOMS
Wheelchair-accessible restrooms are on the Dress Circle, Grand Tier, Parterre, and Founders Hall levels.

SEAT CUSHIONS
Available in the South Check Room. Major credit card or driver’s license required for deposit.

SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS
For information contact the Met Opera Guild Education Department, 212-769-7022.

SCORE-DESK TICKET PROGRAM
Tickets for score desk seats in the Family Circle boxes may be purchased by calling the Met Opera Guild at 212-769-7028. These no-view seats provide an affordable way for students to study an opera’s score during a performance.

TOUR GUIDE SERVICE
Backstage tours of the Opera House are held during the Met season on most weekdays at 3:15pm, and on select Sundays at 10:30am and/or 1:30pm. For tickets and information, call 212-769-7028. Tours of Lincoln Center daily; call 212-875-5351 for availability.

WEBSITE
www.metopera.org

WHEELCHAIR ACCOMMODATIONS
Telephone 212-799-3100, ext. 2204. Wheelchair entrance at Concourse level.

The exits indicated by a red light and the sign nearest the seat you occupy are the shortest routes to the street. In the event of fire or other emergency, please do not run—walk to that exit.

In compliance with New York City Department of Health regulations, smoking is prohibited in all areas of this theater.

Patrons are reminded that in deference to the performing artists and the seated audience, those who leave the auditorium during the performance will not be readmitted while the performance is in progress.

The photographing or sound recording of any performance, or the possession of any device for such photographing or sound recording inside this theater, without the written permission of the management, is prohibited by law. Offenders may be ejected and liable for damages and other lawful remedies.

Use of cellular telephones and electronic devices for any purpose, including email and texting, is prohibited in the auditorium at all times. Be sure to turn off all devices before entering the auditorium.