

Giacomo Puccini

La Bohème

CONDUCTOR

Nicola Luisotti

PRODUCTION

Franco Zeffirelli

SET DESIGNER

Franco Zeffirelli

COSTUME DESIGNER

Peter J. Hall

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Gil Wechsler

GENERAL MANAGER

Peter Gelb

MUSIC DIRECTOR

James Levine

Opera in four acts

Libretto by Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica

Saturday, April 5, 2008, 1:30–4:25pm

The production of *La Bohème* was made possible by a generous gift from **The Sybil B. Harrington Endowment Fund**.

The revival of this production is made possible by a generous gift from The Philip and Janice Levin Foundation.

The Metropolitan Opera

2007-08 Season

The 1,196th Metropolitan Opera performance of

Giacomo Puccini's

La Bohème

Conductor
Nicola Luisotti

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

Marcello
Ludovic Tézier

Rodolfo
Ramón Vargas

Colline
Oren Gradus

Schaunard
Quinn Kelsey

Benoit
Paul Plishka

Mimi
Angela Gheorghiu

Parpignol
Meredith Derr

Alcindoro
Paul Plishka

Musetta
Ainhoa Arteta

Customhouse sergeant
Robert Maher

Customhouse officer
Richard Pearson

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Saturday, April 5, 2008, 1:30–4:25pm

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A scene from Act II of Puccini's *La Bohème*

Chorus Master **Donald Palumbo**
Musical Preparation **Jane Klaviter, Robert Morrison, Derrick Inouye, Carrie-Ann Matheson, Lydia Brown, and Leonardo Vordoni**
Assistant Stage Directors **J. Knighten Smit and Kathleen Smith Belcher**
Stage Band Conductor **Gregory Buchalter**
Prompter **Jane Klaviter**
Met Titles **Sonya Friedman**
Children's Chorus Director **Elena Doria**
Associate Designer **David Reppa**
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Wigs executed by **Metropolitan Opera Wig Department**
Ladies millinery by **Reggie G. Augustine**
Men's hats by **Richard Tautkus**
Animals supervised by **All-Tame Animals, Inc.**

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Synopsis

Paris in the 1830s

Act I

A garret

Act II

The Café Momus, in the Latin Quarter

Intermission

Act III

The Barrière d'Enfer, a toll-gate on the edge of Paris

Intermission

Act IV

A garret

Act I

In their Latin Quarter garret, the near-destitute artist Marcello and poet Rodolfo try to keep warm on Christmas Eve by feeding the stove with pages from Rodolfo's latest drama. They are soon joined by their roommates—Colline, a young philosopher, and Schaunard, a musician, who brings food, fuel, and funds he has collected from an eccentric student. While they celebrate their unexpected fortune, the landlord, Benoit, comes to collect the rent. Plying the older man with wine, they urge him to tell of his flirtations, then throw him out in mock indignation at his infidelity to his wife. As his friends depart to celebrate at the Café Momus, Rodolfo promises to join them later, remaining behind to try to write. There is another knock at the door; the visitor is a pretty neighbor, Mimì, whose candle has gone out on the drafty stairway. No sooner does she enter than the girl feels faint; after reviving her with a sip of wine, Rodolfo helps her to the door and relights her candle. Mimì realizes she lost her key when she fainted, and as the two search for it, both candles are blown out. In the darkness, Rodolfo finds the key and slips it into his pocket. In the moonlight the poet takes the girl's shivering hand, telling her his dreams ("Che gelida manina"). She then recounts her life alone in a lofty garret, embroidering flowers and waiting for the spring ("Mi chiamano Mimì"). Rodolfo's friends are heard outside, urging him to join them; he calls back that he is not alone and will be along shortly. Expressing their joy in finding each other ("O soave fanciulla"), Mimì and Rodolfo embrace and slowly leave, arm in arm, for the café.

Act II

Amid the shouts of street hawkers, Rodolfo buys Mimì a bonnet near the Café Momus and then introduces her to his friends; they all sit down and order supper. The toy vendor Pargnol passes by, besieged by eager

children. Marcello's former sweetheart, Musetta, makes a noisy entrance on the arm of the elderly but wealthy Alcindoro. The ensuing tumult reaches its peak when, trying to regain Marcello's attention, she sings a waltz about her popularity ("Quando me'n vo"). She complains that her shoe pinches, sending Alcindoro off to fetch a new pair. The moment he is gone, she falls into Marcello's arms and tells the waiter to charge everything to Alcindoro. Soldiers march by the café, and as the bohemians fall in behind, Alcindoro rushes back with Musetta's shoes.

Act III

At dawn on the snowy outskirts of Paris, a customs official admits farm women to the city. Merrymakers are heard within a tavern. Soon Mimì wanders in, searching for the place where Marcello and Musetta now live. When the painter emerges, she tells him of her distress over Rodolfo's incessant jealousy ("O buon Marcello, aiuto!"). She says she believes it is best that they part. Rodolfo, who has been asleep in the tavern, wakes and comes outside. Mimì hides nearby, though Marcello thinks she has gone. The poet first tells Marcello that he wants to separate from his sweetheart, citing her fickleness; pressed for the real reason, he breaks down, saying that her coughing can only grow worse in the poverty they share. Overcome with tears, Mimì stumbles forward to bid her lover farewell ("Donde lieta uscì") as Marcello runs back into the tavern upon hearing Musetta's laughter. While Mimì and Rodolfo recall past happiness, Musetta dashes out of the inn, quarreling with Marcello, who has caught her flirting ("Addio dolce svegliare"). The painter and his mistress part, hurling insults at each other, but Mimì and Rodolfo decide to remain together until spring.

Act IV

Now separated from their girlfriends, Rodolfo and Marcello lament their loneliness in the garret ("O Mimì, tu più non torni"). Colline and Schaunard bring a meager meal; to lighten their spirits the four stage a dance, which turns into a mock duel. At the height of the hilarity Musetta bursts in to tell them that Mimì is outside, too weak to come upstairs. As Rodolfo runs to her aid, Musetta relates how Mimì begged to be taken to her lover to die. The poor girl is made as comfortable as possible, while Musetta asks Marcello to sell her earrings for medicine and Colline goes off to pawn his overcoat, which for so long has kept him warm ("Vecchia zimarra"). Left alone ("Sono andati?"), Mimì and Rodolfo wistfully recall their meeting and their first happy days, but she is seized with violent coughing. When the others return, Musetta gives Mimì a muff to warm her hands and prays for her life. As she peacefully drifts into unconsciousness, Rodolfo closes the curtain to soften the light. Schaunard discovers that Mimì is dead, and when Rodolfo at last realizes it, he throws himself despairingly on her body, repeatedly calling her name.

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Giacomo Puccini

La Bohème

Premiere: Teatro Regio, Turin, 1896

La Bohème, the passionate, timeless, and indelible story of love among young artists in Paris, can stake its claim as the world's most popular opera. It has a marvelous ability to make a powerful first impression (even to those new to opera) and to reveal unsuspected treasures after dozens of hearings. At first glance, *La Bohème* is the definitive depiction of the joys and sorrows of love and loss; on closer inspection, it reveals the deep emotional significance hidden in the trivial things (a bonnet, an old overcoat, a chance meeting with a neighbor) that make up our everyday lives.

The Creators

Giacomo Puccini (1858–1924) was immensely popular in his own lifetime, and his mature works remain staples in the repertory of most of the world's opera companies. His operas are celebrated for their mastery of detail, sensitivity to everyday subjects, copious melody, and economy of expression. Puccini's librettists for *La Bohème*, Giuseppe Giacosa (1847–1906) and Luigi Illica (1857–1919), also collaborated with Puccini on his two other most enduringly successful operas, *Tosca* and *Madama Butterfly*. The French author Henri Murger (1822–1861) drew on his own early experiences as a poor writer in Paris to pen an episodic prose novel and later a successful play, *Scènes de la Vie de Bohème*, which became the basis for the opera.

The Setting

The libretto sets the action in Paris, circa 1830. This is not a random setting, but rather reflects the issues and concerns of a particular time and place. After the upheavals of revolution and war, French artists had lost their traditional support base of aristocracy and church and were desperate for new sources of income. The rising bourgeoisie took up the burden of patronizing artists and earned their contempt in return. The story, then, centers on self-conscious youth at odds with mainstream society, feeling themselves morally superior to the rules of the bourgeois (specifically regarding sexual mores) and expressing their independence with affectations of speech and dress. The Bohemian ambience of this opera is clearly recognizable in any modern urban center. *La Bohème* captures this ethos in its earliest days.

The Music

Lyrical and touchingly beautiful, the score of *La Bohème* exerts a uniquely immediate emotional pull. Many of the most memorable melodies in the score are built incrementally, with small intervals between the notes that carry the listener with them on their lyrical path. This is a distinct contrast to the grand leaps and dives that earlier operas often depended on for emotional effect. *Bohème's* melodic structure perfectly captures the "small people" (as Puccini called them) of the drama and the details of everyday life. The two great love arias in Act I seduce the listener, beginning conversationally, with great rushes of emotion seamlessly woven into more trivial expressions. Furthermore, the slightest alterations to a melody can morph the meaning of a thought or an emotion in this score. A change of tempo or orchestration can turn Musetta's famous, exuberant Act II waltz into the nostalgic, bittersweet tenor/baritone duet in Act IV, as the Bohemians remember happier times. Similarly, the "streets of Paris" theme is first heard as a foreshadowing in Act I, when one of the Bohemians suggests going out on the town, hits full flower in Act II, when they (and we) are actually there, and becomes a bitter, actually chilling memory at the beginning of Act III when it is slowed down and re-orchestrated. It's a bit like Marcel Proust's prose experiments in time and memory, with a great deal more economy.

La Bohème at the Met

La Bohème had its Met premiere while the company was on tour in Los Angeles (the same city where it received its American premiere) in 1900. Nellie Melba sang Mimì and improbably added the mad scene from Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* as an encore after the final curtain (a practice she maintained for several other performances). This production lasted until 1952, when it was replaced by one designed by Rolf Gerard and directed by Joseph L. Mankiewicz, who insisted his name be removed after a disagreement with some of the singers. The current spectacular production by Franco Zeffirelli was unveiled in 1981 with an impressive cast that included Teresa Stratas, José Carreras, Renata Scotto, Richard Stilwell, and James Morris, with James Levine conducting. *La Bohème* was presented at the Met in 58 consecutive seasons after its first appearance and has been performed in all but six seasons since 1900.

“Just as *La Bohème* does not leave much impression in the mind of the listeners, it will not leave much impression on the history of our lyric theater.” This was the confident judgment of Carlo Bersezio, writing in *La Stampa* about the opera’s premiere at the Teatro Regio in Turin on February 1, 1896.

Bersezio accused Puccini of writing *La Bohème* with “great haste and with little attempt at selection or polishing.” This was not true. Although Rossini and Donizetti could dash off an opera in two or three weeks, Puccini spent years on each new work. In fact, three turbulent years separated the premieres of his *Manon Lescaut* and *La Bohème*. Shortly after the great success of *Manon Lescaut* in 1893, Puccini happened to meet his friend Ruggero Leoncavallo in a Milan café, and in conversation it was revealed that each of them was at work on an opera based on Henry Murger’s autobiographical sketches, *Scènes de la vie de Bohème*. A bitter quarrel developed, with the result that the two composers became lifelong enemies. It is well documented that Puccini was, indeed, already at work on such an opera, collaborating with the librettists Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica, who had done some work on the libretto for *Manon Lescaut* (as had Leoncavallo). Sensitive to the criticism of the librettos of his earlier operas, Puccini was extremely demanding of Giacosa and Illica, so demanding that there were many arguments and angry letters. At one time or another both librettists wished to resign from the project and had to be placated by Puccini’s publisher, Giulio Ricordi. Puccini was equally demanding of himself and spent almost the entire year of 1895 orchestrating *La Bohème*. The result is a work so polished and tightly constructed that it is impossible to cut one line from it.

Great care went into the preparations for the first production, staged in Turin, where *Manon Lescaut* had had its acclaimed premiere. But, despite the expert conducting of the Teatro Regio’s newly appointed musical director, the 28-year-old Arturo Toscanini, the opening night of *La Bohème* was less than the “great and sensational success” the rehearsals had led Puccini to expect. The public was not unenthusiastic, but there were only five curtain calls for the composer, and the critics in Turin were brutal. Bersezio found the music too light. He wrote, “This is music which can amuse us, but hardly move us, and even the intensely dramatic finale of the opera does not seem to me adequately colored and dressed with musical forms.” He advised Puccini to consider *Bohème* “a momentary error, a brief digression, and to return to the path of true art.” The work’s lack of “art” bothered other critics as well. In the review in the *Gazzetta del Popolo*, E. A. Berta addressed Puccini directly: “You have indulged your whim of obliging the public to applaud you where and when you wanted. You can be forgiven for doing this once. But in the future, return to the great and difficult battles of art.”

Yet there were some critics who could see a future for *La Bohème*. One from Genoa wrote that he foresaw a “triumphal career for this opera,” and Alfredo Colombani said in *Corriere della Sera* in Milan that he admired the flow of the music, at times exuberant and at times heart-rending, and praised Puccini for never seeking “musical effects greater than those which the situations allow.” Though Puccini did not receive the great and sensational success he wanted when *La Bohème* was mounted in Rome and Naples a few weeks after the premiere, the breakthrough came on Friday, April 13, 1896, when the opera was staged in Palermo. The audience was delirious and refused to leave the theater until the final scene had been repeated, a response reported in newspapers throughout Italy and elsewhere.

George Bernard Shaw had recognized Puccini as the heir of Verdi when he saw *Manon Lescaut*, but even after the worldwide success of *La Bohème* there were Italian critics who could not forgive him for his apparent lack of lofty artistic ambitions. By 1915 Italian music commentators were deploring the fact that foreign countries knew Italian music through the work of this old-fashioned melodist when Italy could boast such intellectual composers as Ildebrando Pizzetti.

In English-speaking countries *La Bohème* came in for a different sort of criticism. It was first performed in England in Manchester in 1897, and was sung at Covent Garden later that year in English, and in 1899 in Italian. A company from Italy gave the American premiere of *Bohème* in Los Angeles in 1897, and it was first sung in New York at Wallack’s Theater the following year. The Metropolitan premiere took place on December 26, 1900. But *La Bohème* offended Victorian morals. A British critic wrote that Murger’s work was “hardly suitable for the book of an opera.” After the Met premiere Henry Krehbiel in *The New York Tribune* wrote: “*La Bohème* is foul in subject, and fulminant but futile in its music. Its heroine is a twin sister of the woman of the camellias but Mimì is fouler than Camille, alias Violetta, and Puccini has not been able to administer the palliative which lies in Verdi’s music.” Even the legendary Hollywood gossip columnist Louella Parsons once managed to take a swipe at it. Reviewing a 1916 nonmusical film based on Murger’s book, she commented that *La Bohème* was “woefully bereft of sunshine and smiles.”

Audiences have generally been kinder to Puccini. The Italian public quickly grew so fond of *La Bohème* that Leoncavallo’s opera on the same subject, premiered a year after Puccini’s, never really had a chance. Anglo-Saxon audiences may not have responded quite so readily to Puccini’s engaging crew of Bohemians, but the opera was established in English-speaking countries by some notable champions—Nellie Melba (who sang Mimì in the first Italian performance in London and in the Metropolitan premiere), Enrico Caruso, and Toscanini, among others. Some still resist Puccini’s frank emotionalism, but audiences moved by his musical and dramatic genius have

kept *Bohème* among the handful of indispensable operas. In reviewing the reissue of Beecham's recording with Victoria de los Angeles and Jussi Björling, the English critic Frank Granville Barker cast aside inhibition and wrote: "The man or woman who is insensitive to the spell of this performance really isn't fit to live in civilized society, for it is one of the wonders of the world."

—*William Livingstone*

On Stage at the Met

Verdi

ERNANI

Marcello Giordani stars as the outlaw determined to rescue the woman he loves. *The New York Times* calls Sondra Radvanovsky “intense and convincing” as Elvira. With Ferruccio Furlanetto, a “villain among villains,” as the scheming Silva, and Thomas Hampson as the dashing Don Carlo.

Apr 2, 5, 10

Prokofiev

THE GAMBLER

Maestro Valery Gergiev conducts Prokofiev’s gripping interpretation of Dostoyevsky’s tale of compulsion, addiction, and madness.

Apr 4, 8, 12 mat

Glass

SATYAGRAHA

Direct from its hit run in London, Philip Glass’s artistic triumph chronicles Gandhi’s rise and the power of truth. “A masterpiece,” raves *The Wall Street Journal*.

Apr 11, 14, 19 mat, 22, 25, 28, May 1

COMING SOON

Mozart

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The electrifying Diana Damrau sings her third Mozart role at the Met this season: as Konstanze, the feisty heroine of this charming comedy, she performs opposite the superb Matthew Polenzani.

Apr 26, 30, May 3 mat, 7

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The Cast



Nicola Luisotti

CONDUCTOR

BIRTHPLACE Viareggio, Italy

THIS SEASON *La Bohème* at the Met, *Tosca* at the Paris Opera, *Il Trittico* with the Frankfurt Opera, *Le Nozze di Figaro* at Tokyo's Suntory Hall, *Don Carlos* in Geneva, and his debut conducting the Berlin Philharmonic.

MET APPEARANCES *Tosca* (debut, 2006).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS *Il Trovatore* at the Arena di Verona, *Oberto* at La Scala, *Un Ballo in Maschera* for his 2003 North American debut with the Canadian Opera Company, *La Traviata* at the Paris Opera, *Simon Boccanegra* and *Tosca* at Munich's Bavarian State Opera, *Carmen* and *Pagliacci* at the Los Angeles Opera, *La Forza del Destino* and *Tosca* at the San Francisco Opera, *La Fanciulla del West* in Genoa, and *Macbeth* at the Seattle Opera. He is principal guest conductor of the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra and becomes music director of the San Francisco Opera in September 2009.



Ainhoa Arteta

SOPRANO

BIRTHPLACE Tolosa, Spain

THIS SEASON Musetta in *La Bohème* at the Met and La Scala, Mimì in *La Bohème* in Las Palmas, Marguerite in *Faust* in Valencia, Blanche in *Dialogues des Carmélites* in Bilbao, the world premiere of Lorenzo Palomo's cantata *Dulcinea* in Berlin, and concerts in Vienna and solo recitals throughout Spain.

MET APPEARANCES Mimì (debut, 1994), Violetta in *La Traviata*, Micaëla in *Carmen*, Olga in *Fedora*, and Thérèse in *Les Mamelles de Tirésias*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent highlights include Marguerite at Munich's Bavarian State Opera, Tatiana in *Eugene Onegin* in Valencia, Musetta in Trieste and for her debut at the Arena di Verona, Juliette in *Roméo et Juliette* in Mexico City, and the title role of *Manon* in Bilbao. She has also sung Magda in *La Rondine* with Washington National Opera, Gilda in *Rigoletto* in Madrid, Marguerite in Mexico City, Leïla in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* in Barcelona, and Musetta at Covent Garden and in Houston and Dallas.



Angela Gheorghiu

SOPRANO

BIRTHPLACE Adjud, Romania

THIS SEASON Mimi in *La Bohème* at the Met, Juliette in *Roméo et Juliette* at the Arena di Verona, Magda in *La Rondine* with the San Francisco Opera, and Fanny in the world premiere of Vladimir Cosma's *Marius et Fanny* in Marseille.

MET APPEARANCES Amelia Grimaldi in *Simon Boccanegra*, Violetta in *La Traviata*, Mimi (debut, 1993), Liù in *Turandot*, Micaëla in *Carmen*, Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Juliette, and Marguerite in *Faust*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Made her international debut in 1992 at Covent Garden, and it was in this opera house that she first sang Violetta in 1994. Major performances include Tosca, Mimi, Amelia, Magda in *La Rondine*, and Nedda in *Pagliacci* at Covent Garden; Juliette at the Salzburg Festival and in Orange; and Marguerite at Covent Garden and in Monte Carlo. She recently performed recitals at La Scala, the Salzburg Festival, and Vienna's Musikverein, and has been heard in concert with the New York Philharmonic and in Amsterdam, Paris, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles. She has appeared in film versions of both *Tosca* and *Roméo et Juliette*.



Oren Gradus

BASS

BIRTHPLACE Brooklyn, New York

THIS SEASON Colline in *La Bohème* and Publio in *La Clemenza di Tito* at the Met, Colline in Los Angeles, the Old Hebrew in *Samson et Dalila* in San Francisco, and Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* in San Francisco and at Bologna's Teatro Comunale.

MET APPEARANCES Giorgio in *I Puritani*, Timur in *Turandot*, Garibaldi in *Rodelinda*, the Old Hebrew, the King in *Aida*, Massetto in *Don Giovanni*, and the Guardian in *Elektra* (debut, 2002).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Leporello in *Don Giovanni* with the Houston Grand Opera and San Francisco Opera, Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and Leporello in Marseille, Ramfis in *Aida* with the Rome Opera at Caracalla, Raimondo in Santiago, Don Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and Masetto with the Dallas Opera, Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* in St. Louis, and Méphistophélès in *Faust* with the Pittsburgh Opera.



Quinn Kelsey
BARITONE

BIRTHPLACE Honolulu, Hawaii

THIS SEASON Schaunard in *La Bohème* for his Met debut, Ping in *Turandot* at Lyric Opera of Chicago, Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* and Count di Luna in *Il Trovatore* with Hawaii Opera Theatre, and a recital at Washington's Kennedy Center.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Wagner in *Faust*, Yamadori in *Madama Butterfly*, and the Forester in *The Cunning Little Vixen* with Lyric Opera of Chicago; recitals in New York and Los Angeles; and concert engagements with the Honolulu Symphony, Chicago Youth Symphony, and Chicago Children's Choir. He is a recent graduate of the Lyric Opera of Chicago's Center for American Artists and a recipient of a Richard Tucker Foundation Career Grant.



Paul Plishka
BASS

BIRTHPLACE Old Forge, Pennsylvania

THIS SEASON Benoit and Alcindoro in *La Bohème* and the Director in *The Gambler* at the Met.

MET APPEARANCES Has sung over 1,500 performances of 83 roles with the Met since his debut in 1967, including Colline in *La Bohème* in the first "Live from the Met" telecast in 1977 and the title role of *Falstaff* (which marked his 25th anniversary with the company).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Has appeared regularly with major opera companies in such North American cities as San Francisco, Chicago, Philadelphia, Seattle, Baltimore, Houston, Pittsburgh, Dallas, San Diego, Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver. In Europe he has performed at Covent Garden and La Scala and in Geneva, Munich, Hamburg, Barcelona, Vienna, Berlin, Zurich, Paris, Lyon, and Marseille. Concert appearances include engagements with leading orchestras in New York, Houston, Toronto, Minnesota, and Boston.



Ludovic Tézier

BARITONE

BIRTHPLACE Marseille, France

THIS SEASON Marcello in *La Bohème* at the Met, Belcore in *L'Elisir d'Amore* at Covent Garden, Ford in *Falstaff* in Paris, and the title role in the baritone version of *Werther* at La Monnaie in Brussels.

MET APPEARANCES Escamillo in *Carmen* (debut, 2002).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Renato in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Yeletsy in *The Queen of Spades*, and Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor* at the Paris Opera; Coroebus in *Les Troyens*, Wolfram in *Tannhäuser*, and Henri in *Lucie de Lammermoor* at Paris's Châtelet; Eugene Onegin at La Scala; Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the Vienna State Opera; Eugene Onegin, Don Giovanni, Count Almaviva, Wolfram, and Zurga in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* in Toulouse; Lescaut in *Manon* in Geneva; Albert in *Werther* at Covent Garden; Germont in *La Traviata* in Bordeaux; Lescaut in *Manon Lescaut* in Barcelona; and Posa in *Don Carlos* in Strasbourg. He has also appeared as Marcello at the Bregenz Festival, Raimbaud in *Le Comte Ory* at the Glyndebourne Festival, and Escamillo in Orange.



Ramón Vargas

TENOR

BIRTHPLACE Mexico City, Mexico

THIS SEASON Rodolfo in *La Bohème* and Tito in *La Clemenza di Tito* at the Met, Rodolfo in *Luisa Miller* at Paris's Bastille Opera, the title role of *Don Carlos* and Roméo in *Roméo et Juliette* in Vienna, Lenski in *Eugene Onegin* in Mexico City, Alfredo in *La Traviata* and Rodolfo in Munich, and Riccardo in *Un Ballo in Maschera* in Florence, Houston, and Munich.

MET APPEARANCES Faust, Hoffmann in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, Lenski, Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* (debut, 1992), Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Count Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, the Duke in *Rigoletto*, Alfredo, Roméo, and Prince Ramiro in *La Cenerentola*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Idomeneo in Salzburg and the Bastille Opera, Oronte in *I Lombardi* in Florence, and Roméo in Houston. He has also sung Roberto Devereux in Vienna, Werther in Los Angeles and Mexico City, Tito in Florence, Riccardo and Don Carlos in Munich, Alfredo and Edgardo at La Scala, Alfredo and the Duke at Covent Garden, Riccardo in San Francisco, and Nemorino at the Berlin State Opera.