

*Giuseppe Verdi*

# La Traviata

CONDUCTOR  
**Fabio Luisi**

PRODUCTION  
**Willy Decker**

SET & COSTUME DESIGNER  
**Wolfgang Gussmann**

ASSOCIATE COSTUME  
DESIGNER  
**Susana Mendoza**

LIGHTING DESIGNER  
**Hans Toelstede**

CHOREOGRAPHER  
**Athol Farmer**

GENERAL MANAGER  
**Peter Gelb**

MUSIC DIRECTOR  
**James Levine**

PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR  
**Fabio Luisi**

## Opera in three acts

Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave, after the play  
*La Dame aux Camélias* by Alexandre Dumas

Saturday, April 14, 2012, 1:00–3:35 pm

The production of *La Traviata* was made possible  
by a generous gift from Karen and Kevin Kennedy,  
and Mr. and Mrs. Paul M. Montrone.

The revival of this production was made possible  
by a gift from The Dr. M. Lee Pearce Foundation.

Original production of the Salzburger Festspiele;  
with thanks to De Nederlandse Opera

# The Metropolitan Opera

2011–12 Season

The 972nd Metropolitan Opera performance of

*Giuseppe Verdi's*

## La Traviata

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This performance is also being broadcast live on Metropolitan Opera Radio on SiriusXM channel 74.

Conductor  
**Fabio Luisi**

IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Doctor Grenvil  
**Luigi Roni**

Annina, Violetta's  
companion  
**Maria Zifchak**

Violetta Valéry  
**Natalie Dessay**

Giorgio Germont,  
Alfredo's father  
**Dmitri Hvorostovsky**

Marquis d'Obigny  
**Kyle Pfortmiller**

Giuseppe, Violetta's  
servant  
**Juhwan Lee**

Flora Bervoix  
**Patricia Risley**

A messenger  
**Joseph Turi**

Baron Douphol  
**Jason Stearns**

Gastone, Vicomte  
de Letorières  
**Scott Scully**

A guest  
**Athol Farmer**

A gentleman  
**Peter Volpe**

Alfredo Germont  
**Matthew Polenzani**

Saturday, April 14, 2012, 1:00–3:35 pm

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A scene from Verdi's  
*La Traviata*

Chorus Master **Donald Palumbo**  
Musical Preparation **Jane Klaviter, Dan Saunders, Bradley Moore, J. David Jackson, and Steven White**  
Assistant Stage Directors **Gina Lapinski and Jonathon Loy**  
Stage Band Conductor **Gregory Buchalter**  
Italian Coach **Gildo Di Nunzio**  
Prompter **Jane Klaviter**  
Met Titles **Sonya Friedman**  
Assistant to the set designer **Thomas Bruner**  
Scenery, properties, and electrical props constructed and painted in **Metropolitan Opera Shops**  
Costumes executed by **Das Gewand, Düsseldorf** and **Metropolitan Opera Costume Department**  
Wigs executed by **Metropolitan Opera Wig Department**

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# Synopsis

There will be one intermission following Act I at approximately 1:30 pm.

## Act I

Violetta Valéry knows that she will die soon, exhausted by her restless life as a courtesan. At a party she is introduced to Alfredo Germont, who has been fascinated by her for a long time. Rumor has it that he has been enquiring after her health every day. The guests are amused by this seemingly naïve and emotional attitude, and they ask Alfredo to propose a toast. He celebrates true love, and Violetta responds in praise of free love. She is touched by his candid manner and honesty. Suddenly she feels faint, and the guests withdraw. Only Alfredo remains behind and declares his love. There is no place for such feelings in her life, Violetta replies. But she gives him a camellia, asking him to return when the flower has faded. He realizes this means he will see her again the following day. Alone, Violetta is torn by conflicting emotions—she doesn't want to give up her way of life, but at the same time she feels that Alfredo has awakened her desire to be truly loved.

## Act II

Violetta has chosen a life with Alfredo, and they enjoy their love in the country, far from society. When Alfredo discovers that this is only possible because Violetta has been selling her property, he immediately leaves for Paris to procure money. Violetta has received an invitation to a masked ball, but she no longer cares for such distractions. In Alfredo's absence, his father, Giorgio Germont, pays her a visit. He demands that she separate from his son, as their relationship threatens his daughter's impending marriage. But over the course of their conversation, Germont comes to realize that Violetta is not after his son's money—she is a woman who loves unselfishly. He appeals to Violetta's generosity of spirit and explains that, from a bourgeois point of view, her liaison with Alfredo has no future. Violetta's resistance dwindles and she finally agrees to leave Alfredo forever. Only after her death shall he learn the truth about why she returned to her old life. She accepts the invitation to the ball and writes a goodbye letter to her lover. Alfredo returns, and while he is reading the letter, his father appears to console him. But all the memories of home and a happy family can't prevent the furious and jealous Alfredo from seeking revenge for Violetta's apparent betrayal.

At the masked ball, news has spread of Violetta and Alfredo's separation. There are grotesque dance entertainments, ridiculing the duped lover. Meanwhile, Violetta and her new lover, Baron Douphol, have arrived. Alfredo and the baron battle at the gaming table and Alfredo wins a fortune: lucky at cards, unlucky in love. When everybody has withdrawn, Alfredo confronts Violetta, who claims to

be truly in love with the baron. In his rage Alfredo calls the guests as witnesses and declares that he doesn't owe Violetta anything. He throws his winnings at her. Giorgio Germont, who has witnessed the scene, rebukes his son for his behavior. The baron challenges his rival to a duel.

### **Act III**

Violetta is dying. Her last remaining friend, Doctor Grenvil, knows that she has only a few more hours to live. Alfredo's father has written to Violetta, informing her that his son was not injured in the duel. Full of remorse, Germont has told his son about Violetta's sacrifice. Alfredo wants to rejoin her as soon as possible. Violetta is afraid that he might be too late. The sound of rampant celebrations are heard outside while Violetta is in mortal agony. But Alfredo does arrive and the reunion fills her with a final euphoria. Her energy and exuberant joy of life return. All sorrow and suffering seem to have left her—a final illusion, before death claims her.

*Giuseppe Verdi*

# La Traviata

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*Premiere: Venice, Teatro la Fenice, 1853*

Verdi's *La Traviata* survived a notoriously unsuccessful opening night to become one of the best-loved operas in the repertoire. Following the larger-scale dramas of *Rigoletto* and *Il Trovatore*, its intimate scope and subject matter inspired the composer to create some of his most profound and heartfelt music. The title role of the "fallen woman" has captured the imaginations of audiences and performers alike with its inexhaustible vocal and dramatic possibilities—and challenges. Violetta is considered a pinnacle of the soprano repertoire.

### *The Creators*

Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901) composed 28 operas during his 60 active years in the theater, at least half of which are at the core of today's repertory. His role in Italy's cultural and political development has made him an icon in his native country, and he is cherished the world over for the universality of his art. Francesco Maria Piave (1810–1876), his librettist for *La Traviata*, collaborated with him on ten works, including *Rigoletto*, *La Forza del Destino*, and *Macbeth*. Alexandre Dumas fils (1824–1895) was the son of the author of *The Three Musketeers*. The play *La Dame aux Camélias* is based on his own novel of the same name.

### *The Setting*

With *La Traviata*, Verdi and Piave fashioned an opera from a play set in contemporary times—an anomaly in the composer's long career. Dumas's *La Dame aux Camélias* was a meditation on (and reinterpretation of) the author's youthful affair with the celebrated prostitute Marie Duplessis, known as a sophisticated and well-read woman whose charms and tact far surpassed her station. The play is still staged today in its original form and exists in several film incarnations, most notably Greta Garbo's *Camille* (1936).

### *The Music*

Verdi's musical-dramatic ability to portray the individual in a marginalized relationship to society keeps this work on the world's stages. The vocal and emotional scope of the title character is enormous: compare the defiant fireworks in the Act I show-stopper aria "Sempre libera" to the haunting regret

of Act III's "Addio, del passato." The dramatic demands continue in Violetta's interactions with others, most notably in the extended Act II confrontation with her lover's father, Germont. Often cited as the emotional core of *La Traviata*, it is one of the most resoundingly truthful scenes in opera. Germont embodies the double-faced morality of the bourgeoisie, and Violetta's interactions with him parallel her precarious dealings with society in general. She begins with defiance ("Donna son io"), becomes desperate ("Non sapete"), and finishes defeated ("Dite alla giovine"). It is a vast journey within a single scene.

### **La Traviata at the Met**

*La Traviata* was performed within a month of the Met's opening in 1883, but then was retired during a subsequent all-German period. After returning to the schedule in 1894, the opera has appeared in all but 15 seasons since. Notable productions were introduced in 1921, designed by architectural legend Joseph Urban; 1935, choreographed by George Balanchine; 1957, directed by Tyrone Guthrie; and 1966, directed by Alfred Lunt. The two most recent stagings (1989 and 1998) were both directed by Franco Zeffirelli. The roster of Violettas at the Met reads like a who's who of the art of the soprano: the great Licia Albanese holds the record for most performances of the role at the Met (87), followed by American beauty Anna Moffo (80) and Spanish femme fatale Lucrezia Bori (58). Renée Fleming and Angela Gheorghiu have been among the notable recent interpreters of this timeless role. The current production had its premiere on New Year's Eve 2010 with Marina Poplavskaya as Violetta.

A black and white portrait of opera singer Jonas Kaufmann. He has curly hair and a light beard, looking slightly to the right with a serious expression. He is wearing a dark, textured jacket over a dark sweater.

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Jonas Kaufmann as Parsifal,  
photographed by Micaela Rossato

## Program Note

“For Venice I’m doing *La Dame aux Camélias*, which will probably be called *La Traviata* (‘The Fallen Woman’),” wrote Giuseppe Verdi to his friend Cesare de Sanctis on January 1, 1853. “A subject for our own age. Another composer wouldn’t have done it because of the costumes, the period, and a thousand other silly scruples. But I’m writing it with the greatest of pleasure.”

Despite the palpable conviction in these words, the subject matter of his 18th opera was—typically for Verdi—decided with difficulty. In April of 1852 he had accepted his fourth commission from Venice’s La Fenice for an opera to be presented during carnival season the following year. The librettist would be Francesco Maria Piave, whose collaboration with Verdi had begun with *Ernani* (1844), blossomed in *Macbeth* (1847) and *Rigoletto* (1851), and would later yield such fruits as *Simon Boccanegra* (1857) and *La Forza del Destino* (1862). As the search for a scenario dragged on well into autumn of 1852 and as Verdi rejected suggestion after suggestion from friends and associates, the nervous theater management dispatched Piave to visit Verdi at his new home in Sant’Agata to speed up the process. “It was the same story as *Ernani* all over again,” Piave reported to La Fenice’s secretary in November about an unknown subject he had been working on. “I had got the libretto almost finished when Verdi suddenly got carried away by another idea and I had to throw away what I’d done and start all over again. I think that Verdi will write a fine opera now that I’ve seen him so worked up.”

The “other idea,” of course, was *The Lady of the Camellias* by Alexandre Dumas fils. Verdi had been in Paris in February of 1852, the time of the play’s long-delayed premiere. Only the intervention of Dumas père (of *Three Musketeers* fame) had finally convinced the authorities to unveil this drama, based on the son’s scandalous affair with a notorious Parisian courtesan who had recently succumbed to tuberculosis at the age of 23. After her death, the younger Dumas had gone abroad to forget her—obviously without success, since within a year he had immortalized Marie Duplessis in a novel that became such a sensation that he soon adapted it into a play.

Ten years before embarking on *La Traviata*, Verdi had hoped to create an operatic version of *Marion de Lorme*, Victor Hugo’s play about a cultured 17th-century Parisian courtesan. Loath to tangle with the censors over the controversial subject matter, he eventually dropped the idea. But much had changed in the subsequent decade—including Verdi’s personal situation. In 1847 he had begun what was to become a lifelong liaison (and later, marriage) with the noted soprano Giuseppina Strepponi. A gifted artist and gracious person, she was saddled with the sort of checkered past then common among women of the theater, and her relationship with Verdi caused raised eyebrows in certain circles.

Indeed, *La Traviata* marks the culmination of what musicologists like to call Verdi's "domestic" period. In his fledgling years, the composer had put the goals of the Risorgimento—the movement to unite Italy's divided regions under one flag—front and center, producing a series of operas which were thinly disguised, and often inflammatory, political manifestos. But by 1849, established as both musician and patriot and ensconced in a nurturing relationship, Verdi was ready to inflame in a new way. His operas of this period—*Luisa Miller* (1849), *Stiffelio* (1850), and *Rigoletto* (1851)—focus on increasingly vivid and complex outsider characters who challenge the limits of society.

Given *Traviata's* controversial plot, Verdi braced himself for a go-around with the Venetian censors similar to the one he had weathered over *Rigoletto*. But this time, they made only two demands: that Verdi change the opera's original title, *Amore e Morte* ("Love and Death"), and its contemporary setting.

To Verdi, the latter request was the more troubling. The Venetian authorities evidently felt that moving the action back to the 18th century would cushion the opera's shock value—which was exactly what Verdi did not wish to do. "The Signor Maestro Verdi desires, demands, and begs that the costumes for his opera *La Traviata* should remain those of the present day," asserted a memorandum from the Fenice's impresario. In the end, however, Verdi was forced to comply (although he insisted that no wigs be worn). Until 1914, all printed scores of *La Traviata* bore the rubric "Paris and its environs, circa 1700." It was not until 1866 that soprano Gemma Bellincioni donned crinoline for the first 1850s-set *Traviata*—ironically, by that time no longer "contemporary." But the opera endured, even as itinerant divas began toting their own personal wardrobes from theater to theater. George Bernard Shaw, in his capacity as music critic, described as a common sight a London production "with Violetta in the latest Parisian confections and Alfredo in full Louis XIV fig."

All of this begs the question: What was Verdi talking about when he called *La Traviata* "a subject for our times"? Did he mean, as the orthodox would read it, that it is particular to its era, the mid-19th century? Or was he implying (and hoping) that it would be a subject for every age? It is interesting that for the rest of his long and copiously documented life Verdi never attempted to restore the opera to its original milieu. Perhaps he came to feel that the story was, as the late Verdi scholar Julian Budden put it, "essentially a myth, none the less universal for being modern...and having had its roots in personal experience.... It is one of those simple classical tales which permit as many variations as the legends on which the Greek tragedians built their plays." Countless revisionist productions have by now clearly demonstrated that *La Traviata* can thrive in any setting that can support Pave's Ottocento Italian and Verdi's noble apotheosis of bel canto music.

Much has been made of *La Traviata*'s less-than-triumphant premiere at the Fenice on March 6, 1853. The performance was supposedly scuttled by a lukewarm press and public, a laryngitic tenor, over-the-hill baritone, and, worst of all, a pasta-padded soprano who failed to convince as the consumptive heroine. "*La Traviata* has been an utter fiasco, and what is worse, they laughed," lamented Verdi to his conductor friend Angelo Mariani the day after the premiere. But he added, "I'm not worried. I personally don't think that last night's verdict will have been the last word."

How right he was. Since its first revival, in slightly revised form, at Venice's Teatro San Benedetto on May 6, 1854, there has been no stopping *La Traviata*, in whatever language, garb, or deconstruction. Whether in crinoline or designer fashion, Violetta never fails to move us, for she is clad first and foremost in humanity. —*Cori Ellison*

## A Note from the Director

**L**a *Traviata* is a piece about death—and paradoxically, or maybe inevitably, it is equally a piece about the almost overwhelming force of life, which drives every living thing toward death, like a motor that can't be stopped. The faster it spins, the sooner it will break down. The motion of spinning, revolving, and turning is at the core of *La Traviata*; it's the basic pattern woven into every layer of the opera, particularly in terms of rhythm. The gesture underlying that rhythm—the notorious oom-pah-pah, the "street organ" music for which the young Verdi was often criticized—takes on special significance in *La Traviata*. It pulls the listener, and the viewer, into a vertigo-inducing circular motion that reaches its apotheosis in a powerful image of life and death. The opera begins with the music of the finale, the death scene, forming a circle that ultimately returns to its starting point.

This starting point is the inevitability of Violetta's death. Over the course of *La Traviata*, we watch a young woman die—in detail, greedily, almost voyeuristically. The circle that brings the piece back to its starting point is the basic shape of the entire work, and within that shape we find *La Traviata's* other major theme: time.

Time, at least as we measure it, runs in circles. One hour ends, and at precisely the same moment the next hour begins. The dance rhythm of the waltz runs through the score as a central theme. Its passionate, mindless, perpetually revolving motion of man and woman spinning weightlessly has always made it the quintessential dance of life. Encouraged and urged on by a greedy society of men, Violetta spins faster and faster in this waltz. Unable to escape its momentum, she ultimately loses control of this dance of life, which progressively becomes a dance with death. At every moment, she is aware that she will soon die. She tries to escape the unbearable finality of this realization by throwing herself into the frenzy of endless nights of dancing; she spins herself into oblivion to drown out the dwindling of her lifetime. But the ticking of the clock, in the merciless rhythm of the music, always finds its way into the secret chambers of her soul. There is no place for her to hide from the inexorability of time passing. Her escape into oblivion, into the furious intensity of life, has been in vain. In the eye of the storm, in utter silence, her soul is trapped, alone. It is a conscious solitude and explicitly sought. Only by protecting the innermost world of her soul does she become able to sell herself to the world of men.

Violetta's relationship with men and with a male-dominated society is clearly defined. Just as the opera examines death and the dynamic circular motion of life and death, it also deals with the relationship of men and women, and the boundaries between them, in a representative way that reaches far beyond the individual fate of one courtesan. In Violetta Valéry's time and age, a woman would always, in a sense, find herself in the role of a prostitute. Within the rigid gender rules of bourgeois society, a man buys a woman—he pays her, supports her, and in return receives her body, her love, her devotion, and her self-sacrifice.

Violetta's life and death is a radically focused image of a woman's destiny within this historical context. In the opera, this boundary between man and woman is destroyed and crossed suddenly by one character: Alfredo.

Alfredo is completely different from all the men in Violetta's sphere. He is the only one who sees her suffering, her weakness. He waits outside her door for a year, inquiring after her health. When he is alone with her for the first time, his words are not empty compliments or superficial flattery but serious, concerned questions about her physical condition. From the very beginning he seems interested in something other than the swift and fleeting use of her physical beauty. It's a deeper level of feeling that Alfredo is after, one that demands something completely unheard of in Violetta's restless, breathless life: he wants permanence! But permanence is exactly what Violetta cannot give him. Her time is running out. There is no room left in her life for anything permanent, for a true, human encounter that will last beyond the moment. There is only the transient pleasure of the all-night parties, every one of which might be the last, and the oblivious frenzy of inebriation, to chase away the gathering darkness with false, artificial light. What is she to do with Alfredo, who confronts her with big emotions and demands the same in return?

While Violetta is resolved not to lose herself in emotions that have no future, Alfredo is determined to tear down her cold façade. During their first meeting, Violetta makes every attempt to rebuff and ignore him. She laughs at him, provokes him with exaggerated vulgarity and frivolous sarcasm, and yet in the end she is unable to resist the onslaught of his honest emotion. Alfredo succeeds in getting her off the diabolical carousel of her existence as a prostitute. The dance of death suddenly grinds to a halt, and Violetta wants to believe that time itself can come to a halt too, that it can move in reverse and carry her back to a state of innocence, before she became a courtesan. Everything shall be erased: her depravity, her immorality, her illness. Together with Alfredo, she builds a castle in the air, where she believes she can hide. But her escape fails, thwarted by society's relentless refusal to reverse her ostracism as a moral outcast. She is and will always remain a "traviata," a fallen woman. A return to bourgeois society will forever be barred.

Alfredo's father, Giorgio Germont, finds her in the blissful exile she has built upon the sand of naive illusions, of a fairy-tale world. Without mercy, he demands her separation from Alfredo. The father is disdain personified—the disdain every "decent" person has for a woman who can be bought, who turns herself into merchandise, available to everybody for a fee. In doing so, she has, to him, damaged and soiled the holy of holies of the bourgeoisie—pure, unsullied, and selfless love.

This rigid position toward Violetta is slowly but surely eroded throughout the opera, only to end in a complete reversal of the evaluation of "respectability"

## A Note from the Director CONTINUED

and “depravity.” The “decent” people, those knights of pure and selfless love, are increasingly exposed as double-faced moralists who hide their true motives behind the mask of honor and moral superiority: greed for power and respect, for wealth and influence, keeping up a bourgeois façade for its own sake. On the other end of the scale, the false image of a frivolous, calculating prostitute gradually gives way to reveal the true Violetta Valéry as the only person in the piece who is able to love truly selflessly, to the point of self-annihilation. By mercilessly tearing her away from his son, Germont pushes her back into a life she has, in truth, always hated, and only thereby does he turn her into what she has really never been: a prostitute. The destruction of her inner dignity is what kills her. Her illness is just a symptom of hopeless self-abandonment.

—*Willy Decker*

Translated from German by Philipp Brieler

## The Cast



### Fabio Luisi

CONDUCTOR (GENOA, ITALY)

**THIS SEASON** New productions of *Don Giovanni*, *Siegfried*, *Götterdämmerung*, and *Manon*, complete *Ring* cycles, and a revival of *La Traviata* at the Met; two concerts with the MET Orchestra at Carnegie Hall; *Manon* for his debut at La Scala; and concert engagements with the Cleveland Orchestra, Filarmonica della Scala, Vienna Symphony, and Oslo Philharmonic.

**MET PRODUCTION** *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Elektra*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *Tosca*, *Lulu*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Die Ägyptische Helena*, *Turandot*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Rigoletto*, *Das Rheingold*, and *Don Carlo* (debut, 2005).

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** He is principal conductor of the Met and a frequent guest of the Vienna State Opera, Munich's Bavarian State Opera, and Berlin's Deutsche Oper and Staatsoper. He made his Salzburg Festival debut in 2003 leading Strauss's *Die Liebe der Danae* (returning the following season for *Die Ägyptische Helena*) and his American debut with the Lyric Opera of Chicago leading *Rigoletto*. He also appears regularly with the Orchestre de Paris, Bavarian Radio Symphony, Munich Philharmonic, and Rome's Santa Cecilia Orchestra. He was music director of the Dresden Staatskapelle and Semperoper from 2007 to 2010 and is chief conductor of the Vienna Symphony and music director of Japan's Pacific Music Festival.



### Natalie Dessay

SOPRANO (LYON, FRANCE)

**THIS SEASON** Violetta in *La Traviata* at the Met and the Vienna State Opera and the title role of *Manon* at the Paris Opera and La Scala.

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

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** Recent performances include Cleopatra in *Giulio Cesare* with the Paris Opera, Mélisande in *Pelléas et Mélisande* with the Orchestre de Paris, and Violetta at the Aix-en-Provence Festival. She has also sung Amina with the Vienna State Opera, Lucia with the San Francisco Opera, Manon in Chicago and Barcelona, Marie with the Vienna State Opera and at Covent Garden, Zerbinetta at Paris's Bastille Opera, Morgana in Handel's *Alcina* and Lucia with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Zerbinetta at the Salzburg Festival, and Ophélie in Thomas's *Hamlet* at Covent Garden, Paris's Châtelet, and in Barcelona.



## Dmitri Hvorostovsky

BARITONE (KRASNOYARSK, RUSSIA)

**THIS SEASON** Don Carlo in *Ernani* and Germont in *La Traviata* at the Met, Valentin in *Faust* at Covent Garden, and the title role of *Simon Boccanegra* at the Vienna State Opera.

**MET APPEARANCES** Simon Boccanegra, Count di Luna in *Il Trovatore*, Ankarström in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Yeletsky in *The Queen of Spades* (debut, 1995), Valentin, Belcore in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Prince Andrei in *War and Peace*, Don Giovanni, and Eugene Onegin.

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** He appears regularly at major opera houses throughout the world, including Covent Garden, Munich's Bavarian State Opera, La Scala, the Vienna State Opera, Buenos Aires's Teatro Colón, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and the Mariinsky Theatre. Among his most notable roles are Eugene Onegin, Don Giovanni, Rodrigo in *Don Carlo*, Germont, Rigoletto, Ankarström, and Francesco in *I Masnadieri*. He has also been heard in concert with the New York Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, and Rotterdam Philharmonic, among many others.



## Matthew Polenzani

TENOR (EVANSTON, ILLINOIS)

**THIS SEASON** Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* and Alfredo in *La Traviata* at the Met, Don Ottavio at Covent Garden, des Grieux in *Manon* at La Scala, and Hoffmann in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* with Lyric Opera of Chicago.

**MET APPEARANCES** More than 250 performances of 29 roles including Ernesto in *Don Pasquale*, Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*, Roméo, Belmonte in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Count Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Iopas in *Les Troyens*, Chevalier de la Force in *Dialogues des Carmélites*, Lindoro in *L'Italiana in Algeri*, and Boyar Khrushchov in *Boris Godunov* (debut, 1997).

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** Ferrando in *Così fan tutte* at Covent Garden and with the Paris Opera, Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore* in Munich, Idomeneo in Turin, Tamino with the Vienna State Opera and Los Angeles Opera, Belmonte and Roméo in Chicago, the Duke in *Rigoletto* in Philadelphia, Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* in Vienna and at Paris's Bastille Opera, Nemorino and Don Ottavio in Vienna and Salzburg, and Achille in *Iphigénie en Aulide* in Florence. Recipient of the Met's 2008 Beverly Sills Award, established by Agnes Varis and Karl Lichtman.