

Richard Wagner

Parsifal

CONDUCTOR
Daniele Gatti

PRODUCTION
François Girard

SET DESIGNER
Michael Levine

COSTUME DESIGNER
**Thibault
Vancraenenbroeck**

LIGHTING DESIGNER
David Finn

VIDEO DESIGNER
Peter Flaherty

CHOREOGRAPHER
Carolyn Choa

DRAMATURG
Serge Lamothe

GENERAL MANAGER
Peter Gelb

MUSIC DIRECTOR
James Levine

PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR
Fabio Luisi

**Stage consecrating festival play
in three acts**

Libretto by the composer

Saturday, March 2, 2013, 12:00–5:35 pm

New Production

The production of *Parsifal* was made possible
by a generous gift from the **Gramma Fisher
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The Metropolitan Opera

2012–13 Season

The 293rd Metropolitan Opera performance of

Richard Wagner's

Parsifal

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

Conductor
Daniele Gatti

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

Gurnemanz René Pape	Fourth Sentry Mario Chang*
Second Knight of the Grail Ryan Speedo Green*	Parsifal Jonas Kaufmann
Second Sentry Lauren McNeese	Titirel Rúni Brattaberg
First Sentry Jennifer Forni	A Voice Maria Zifchak
First Knight of the Grail Mark Schowalter	Klingsor Evgeny Nikitin
Kundry Katarina Dalayman	Flower Maidens Kiera Duffy Lei Xu*
Amfortas Peter Mattei	Irene Roberts Haeran Hong
Third Sentry Andrew Stenson*	Katherine Whyte Heather Johnson

Saturday, March 2, 2013, 12:00–5:35 pm

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Assistant Choreographer **Anita Griffin**
Consultant for Wigs and Makeup **Karine Guillem**
Assistants to the Costume Designer **Marie La Rocca** and
Nathalie Pallandre

Video

Video Post Production Supervisor **Pablo Colapinto**
Director of Photography **Patrick Jones**
Video Line Producer **Sarah Platt**

Musical Preparation **Linda Hall, John Keenan,**
Carrie-Ann Matheson, Jonathan Kelly, and Patrick Furrer
Assistant Stage Directors **Laurie Feldman, Sandrine Lanno,**
Gina Lapinski, and Paula Williams

Stage Band Conductor **Gregory Buchalter**

Prompter **Carrie-Ann Matheson**

German Coach **Irene Spiegelman**

Children's Chorus Director **Anthony Piccolo**

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*A new production and
three returning favorites!*

WAGNER

Parsifal

FEB 27 MAR 2 mat, 5, 8

Jonas Kaufmann stars as the young knight on a heroic quest for compassion and reconciliation in François Girard's new vision for Wagner's final masterpiece.

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Not seen since 1986, the Met's ravishingly beautiful production returns with Eva-Maria Westbroek and Marcello Giordani as the legendary lovers out of Dante's *Inferno*.

VERDI

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FEB 25, 28 MAR 6, 9 mat, 13, 16

Verdi's epic vision of the Spanish Inquisition features Ramón Vargas in the title role, with Barbara Frittoli, Dmitri Hvorostovsky, Anna Smirnova, and Ferruccio Furlanetto.

BIZET

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FEB 26 MAR 1

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Synopsis

Act I Monsalvat, sanctuary of the Holy Grail

Act II Klingsor's magic castle and garden

Act III Monsalvat, sanctuary of the Holy Grail

PERFORMED WITH TWO INTERMISSIONS OF APPROXIMATELY 40 MINUTES EACH

Act I

Near the sanctuary of the Holy Grail, the old knight Gurnemanz and two sentries awake and perform their morning prayers, while other knights prepare a bath for their ailing ruler Amfortas, who suffers from an incurable wound. Suddenly Kundry appears, a mysterious, ageless woman, who serves as the Grail's messenger. She has brought medicine for Amfortas. The king is carried in. He reflects on a prophecy that speaks of his salvation by the hands of a "pure fool, enlightened by compassion," then is borne off. When the esquires ask about Klingsor, a sorcerer who is trying to destroy the knights of the Grail, Gurnemanz tells the story of Amfortas's wound: the Holy Grail, the cup Christ drank from at the Last Supper, and the Spear that pierced his body on the cross were given into the care of Titurel, Amfortas's father, who assembled a company of knights to guard the relics. Klingsor, wishing to join the brotherhood, tried to overcome his sinful thoughts by castrating himself but was rejected. Seeking vengeance, he built a castle across the mountains with a magic garden full of alluring women to entrap the knights. Amfortas set out to defeat Klingsor, but was himself seduced by a "terribly beautiful woman" and stabbed by Klingsor with the Holy Spear, which he then took from Amfortas. The wound can only be healed by the innocent youth the prophecy has spoken of. Suddenly a swan plunges to the ground, struck dead by an arrow. The knights drag in a young man, who boasts of his archery skills. He is ashamed when Gurnemanz rebukes him, but he cannot explain his violent act or even state his name. All he remembers is his mother, Herzeleide, or "Heart's Sorrow." Kundry tells the youth's history: his father died in battle and his mother reared the boy in a forest, but now she too is dead. Gurnemanz leads the nameless youth to the banquet of the Grail, wondering if he may be the prophecy's fulfillment.

The knights assemble in the hall of the sanctuary. Titurel bids Amfortas uncover the Grail to give strength to the brotherhood, but Amfortas refuses: the sight of the chalice increases his anguish. Titurel orders the esquires to proceed, and the chalice casts its glow about the hall. The nameless youth watches in astonishment but understands nothing. The ceremony ended, Gurnemanz, disappointed and angry, drives him away as an unseen voice reiterates the prophecy.

Act II

Klingsor, the necromancer, summons Kundry, who, under his spell, is forced to lead a double existence, to seduce the young fool. Having secured the Spear, Klingsor now seeks to destroy the youth, whom he knows can save the knights of the Grail. Hoping for redemption from her torment, Kundry protests in vain.

The nameless youth enters Klingsor's magic garden. Flower maidens beg for his love but he resists them. The girls withdraw as Kundry, transformed into a beautiful young woman, appears and addresses him by his name—Parsifal. He realizes that his mother once called him so in a dream. Kundry begins her seduction by revealing memories of Parsifal's childhood and finally kisses him. Parsifal suddenly feels Amfortas's pain and understands compassion: he realizes that it was Kundry who brought about Amfortas's downfall and that it is his mission to save the brotherhood of the Grail. Astonished at his transformation, Kundry tries to arouse Parsifal's pity: she tells him of the curse that condemns her to lead an unending life of constantly alternating rebirths ever since she laughed at Christ on the cross. But Parsifal resists her. She curses him to wander hopelessly in search of Amfortas and the Grail and calls on Klingsor for help. The magician appears and hurls the Holy Spear at Parsifal, who miraculously catches it, causing Klingsor's realm to perish.

Act III

Gurnemanz, now very old and living as a hermit near the Grail's sanctuary, finds the penitent Kundry in the forest and awakes her from a deathlike sleep. An unknown knight approaches and Gurnemanz soon recognizes Parsifal bearing the Holy Spear. Parsifal describes his years of wandering, trying to find his way back to Amfortas and the Grail. Gurnemanz tells him that he has come at the right time: Amfortas, longing for death, has refused to uncover the Grail, the brotherhood is suffering, and Titurel has died, "a mortal like all of us." Kundry washes Parsifal's feet, and Gurnemanz blesses him and proclaims him king. As his first task Parsifal baptizes Kundry. He is struck by the beauty of nature around them and Gurnemanz explains that this is the spell of Good Friday. The distant tolling of bells announces the funeral of Titurel, and the three make their way to the sanctuary.

Knights carry the Grail, Amfortas on his litter, and Titurel's coffin into the Hall of the Grail. Amfortas is unable to perform the rite. He begs the knights to kill him and thus end his anguish—when suddenly Parsifal appears. He touches Amfortas's side with the Spear and heals the wound. Uncovering the Grail, he accepts the homage of the knights as their redeemer and king and blesses them. The reunion of the Grail and Spear has enlightened and rejuvenated the community.

Richard Wagner

Parsifal

Premiere: Bayreuth Festival House, 1882

Wagner's final opera is a musical journey unlike any other. The composer preferred to call his mature works "music dramas" to distinguish them from "conventional" opera, but he set *Parsifal* even further apart by naming it a Bühnenweihfestspiel, a "festival play for the consecration of a stage." The stage in question was that of the Bayreuth Festival House, which Wagner had built to produce the *Ring* cycle, and the remarkable acoustic qualities of that theater informed much of the unique tone of *Parsifal*. The opera tells the tale of a young man who, despite—or perhaps because of—his extreme naiveté about the ways of the world is destined to renew a brotherhood of knights charged with guarding the relics of Christ's last days—the Holy Grail, the chalice used at the Last Supper, and the Spear that wounded Christ. The loss of the Spear has sapped the brotherhood of its strength and made their country a wasteland. In his quest, Parsifal is both aided and opposed by Kundry, an enigmatic woman struggling under an ancient curse. The psychological, mythical, and mystical possibilities of such a story are obvious, and Wagner's accomplishment results in an air of reverence that surrounds this piece. The solemnity of large parts of the score and its great length and musical demands also contribute to the notion of this as a unique work in the repertoire.

The Creator

Richard Wagner (1813–83) was the complex, controversial creator of music-drama masterpieces that stand at the center of today's operatic repertory. Born in Leipzig, Germany, he was an artistic revolutionary who reimagined every supposition about music and theater. Wagner insisted that words and music were equals in his works. This approach led to the idea of the Gesamtkunstwerk, or "total work of art," combining music, poetry, architecture, painting, and other disciplines, a notion that has had an impact on creative fields far beyond opera.

The Setting

Parsifal takes place in and around the sanctuary of the knights of the Holy Grail, at the mythical location of Monsalvat in Spain, during the Middle Ages. This new Met production places the action in an unspecified, timeless setting.

The Music

The score of *Parsifal* is an extraordinary blend of musical transcendence and dramatic cohesion. The use of bells and offstage choruses are among the unusual effects that create an almost liturgical atmosphere. The magnificent and expansive prelude conveys the important role the orchestra will play in creating a world in which time



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itself is experienced in an unusual way. The vocal parts call for superior breath control to sustain the long melodic lines. Many passages demand a high degree of sheer lyrical beauty, most notably Gurnemanz's narration in Act III, which accompanies the rapturous orchestral music known as the Good Friday Spell, and Parsifal's final solo at the end of the opera. There are also jarringly dramatic moments, such as Kundry's shrieks and groans of agony and her chilling vocal drop of almost two octaves in Act II when she confesses how she laughed at the crucifixion. The use of the chorus is equally remarkable: in the first Grail scene in Act I, a muscular, hymn-like melody seamlessly evolves into a succession of arching phrases beginning in the lowest voices (basses on stage) and rising to the highest (boy sopranos, invisible above the stage)—a musical bridge from earth to heaven. The scene of the Flower Maidens in the second act includes passages that depict the allure of attractive women with the traditional exoticisms of 19th-century Romantic opera. Conversely, passages in the second Grail scene (Act III) are striking early explorations of atonality. While the score of *Parsifal* contains endless opportunities for musicological study, perhaps its most notable feature is its approachability—there is nothing in it that requires the talents of a musicologist for full appreciation. As Wagner's wife Cosima commented on this impression, "It's all so direct!"

Parsifal at the Met

The first staged performance of *Parsifal* outside the Bayreuth Festival took place at the Met on Christmas Eve, 1903. The Wagner family had tried to keep the work exclusive to Bayreuth, but its German copyright had no force in the U.S. Alfred Hertz conducted a cast led by fellow Bayreuth veterans Alois Burgstaller, Milka Ternina, and Anton van Rooy. The designs were inspired by the Bayreuth original, and *Scientific American* published an article outlining the technical upgrades done on the Met stage to prepare for this then cutting-edge presentation. The Met toured *Parsifal* extensively during the 1904–05 season, giving much of the country its first full experience of the work. German operas were not performed at the Met during the First World War, but *Parsifal* returned when Artur Bodanzky conducted a new production in 1920, designed by Joseph Urban and sung in English (German was restored in 1922). Between 1926 and 1948, Lauritz Melchior was the dominating presence in the title role, with other artists of the era including Frida Leider, Kirsten Flagstad, and Astrid Varnay (Kundry), Friedrich Schorr and Herbert Janssen (Amfortas), and Michael Bohnen, Emanuel List, and Alexander Kipnis (Gurnemanz). Fritz Stiedry conducted a new production by Leo Kerz in 1956, and 1970 saw another new staging by Nathaniel Merrill, with Leopold Ludwig on the podium. The most recent production, directed by Otto Schenk and designed by Günther Schneider-Siemssen, premiered in 1991 with James Levine conducting Plácido Domingo, Jessye Norman, Robert Lloyd, and Franz Mazura. François Girard's new production opened on February 15, 2013, with Jonas Kaufmann, Katarina Dalayman, Peter Mattei, Evgeny Nikitin, and René Pape in the leading roles and Daniele Gatti conducting.

Program Note

When he finished orchestrating *Götterdämmerung* on November 21, 1874, Richard Wagner added a brief but emphatic postscript to the score's last page: "I will say no more!" He had a good deal more to say with his art, though—never mind how much the fading ebb of D-flat major that ends the *Ring* may sound like closure. Inevitably Wagner was drawn back to a project he had begun to brood over even before embarking on the *Ring*. He first encountered the early-13th-century chivalric romance by Wolfram von Eschenbach that provided his chief source for *Parsifal* in the remarkably productive summer of 1845, in the spa town of Marienbad, while on vacation from his duties as a conductor for Dresden's opera house. With his confidence boosted by the recent completion of *Tannhäuser*—Wagner had feared he would die before finishing it—he sketched out plans for *Lohengrin* and *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* and also made his earliest contact with the characters who would appear in his swan song for the stage.

Wagner was an ambitious and determined man of 32 that summer; by the time he began writing the music for *Parsifal*, he had reached his mid-60s, a weathered and withdrawn composer suffering from angina. He completed the full score in January 1882, just a little more than a year before his death in Venice. *Parsifal's* gestation thus exceeded that of the *Ring*. Such patience over the long game allowed Wagner to return to the subject periodically as new associations emerged. In a letter in which he notes that "Parzival is again coming very much to life in me," Wagner compares the increasing clarity with which the still-to-be-written opera takes shape to the process of ripening and acknowledges that many years "may yet have to pass" before that state is achieved. (The composer later settled on the spelling "Parsifal," his idiosyncratic variant on the medieval sources.)

In 1865, responding to a request from King Ludwig II, his patron, Wagner produced a detailed sketch—including elaboration of the backstory pertaining to the Grail itself and the origin of the order of knights assigned to protect it—which closely anticipates the synopsis of *Parsifal* as we know it. But with his attention taken up by projects already underway, most notably the remainder of the *Ring*, Wagner continued to let this ripen. He needed barely more than a month to write the libretto itself when *Parsifal* at last became his central preoccupation in January 1877, following the first-ever staging of the *Ring* cycle the previous summer. During the three intervening decades, Wagner's thinking about the *Parsifal* story had absorbed the dramatic changes in his worldview, from the materialist revolutionary convinced the world could be improved to the adherent of Arthur Schopenhauer's philosophy of the life force as blind illusion that must be overcome by renunciation, which in turn encouraged the composer's interest in Buddhism.

For several reasons, though, despite the coexistence of so many layers, *Parsifal* has a reputation for being a single-mindedly Christian work. The composer's champion-turned-foe Friedrich Nietzsche set the tone for this

reading by portraying Wagner as “fallen sobbing at the foot of the Cross.” The solemnity with which *Parsifal* was originally introduced only enhanced the impression of performances as a quasi-liturgy accompanied by sacred music. Yet Jesus is never actually referred to directly, and Wagner uses Christian imagery and symbols much as he had incorporated those of pagan myth and legend in the *Ring*. As Wagner wrote in his late essay *Art and Religion*, art is able to reveal the “deep and hidden truth” of the “mythic symbols” which religion “would have us believe in their literal sense.” François Girard, director of the new Met production, observes that “Wagner was trying to reconcile all the aspects of his spirituality” in this final period of his life. “He wanted to turn them into one gesture that would sum up his idea of the ‘total work of art.’”

There are many parallels between Wagner’s treatment of myth and legend in the *Ring* librettos and in *Parsifal*. In both cases he concocted a unified narrative of his own invention by isolating what he wanted from the episodic sprawl he found in his primary sources and from recent scholarly glosses on them. In fact, Wagner disdainfully complained that Wolfram’s poem “blunders about” from one adventure to another and that the author “understands nothing whatever of the real content.” It was the composer’s decision to align Parsifal’s quest for the Grail with the medieval Christian legends defining the Holy Grail as the chalice that collected the blood shed by Jesus during the Crucifixion. The pre-Christian Celtic sources of the Parzival epic are reflected in Wolfram’s depiction of the Grail as a supernatural gemstone. Wagner actually interpreted the “Nibelung hoard,” which in material terms symbolizes the power conferred by Alberich’s ring, as another pagan version of the Christianized Holy Grail; in *Parsifal*, meanwhile, the Grail’s life-sustaining efficacy is reminiscent of Freia’s golden apples.

At the same time, Wagner applied what he had learned dramaturgically from *Tristan und Isolde* to his representation of Parsifal’s epic quest. (His interest in the Grail knight had been reawakened while composing the former by the parallel he sensed between Tristan and Amfortas—both trapped by desire—and Wagner even contemplated introducing a cameo appearance by the wandering Parsifal in the earlier work’s last act as Tristan lies dying.) *Parsifal*, like *Tristan*, abstracts the onstage action into a few potently concentrated and highly resonant encounters. These reveal the “real content” of the quest to be an interior journey toward enlightenment. The entire opera is structured by an overarching symmetry of lucid simplicity: Parsifal’s incomprehension when he first observes the Grail ceremony presided over by the suffering Amfortas and his act of healing in the final scene form the two great pillars that are connected by the hero’s intervening trial.

Wagner not only selected what he considered the essential threads within Wolfram’s epic but also fused traits taken from a variety of its characters—and from other sources—to create the enigmatic figure of Kundry. Her contradictions make her the most complex personality in *Parsifal* and arguably in all of Wagner.

A black and white portrait of a man with curly hair, wearing a dark jacket over a sweater, looking slightly to the right. The background is dark and out of focus.

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Jonas Kaufmann as Parsifal,
photographed by Micaela Rossato

Program Note CONTINUED

Kundry, who provides the link between the crumbling realm of Monsalvat and the external world, serves as the agent of Parsifal's enlightenment at the very moment she attempts to destroy him. The English scholar Lucy Beckett observes that aspects of Kundry also derive from other works Wagner had planned but abandoned along the way: his sketches for the play *Jesus of Nazareth* (1848), with its premise that art could "recover" the lost essence of Christianity, and for *Die Sieger* ("The Victors," 1856), a music drama Wagner envisioned that would draw on a Buddhist story of the renunciation of desire.

On account of its prolonged genesis—and of course its status as the composer's farewell to the stage—*Parsifal* is often approached as a work of summation, of backward glances. On one level it does after all reprise the central characters and themes of Wagner's life work. Along with the parallel between Amfortas and Tristan already mentioned, Parsifal bursts on the scene like the guileless, naive Siegfried, a child of nature, while Klingsor burns with a desire for revenge as intense as Alberich's. Kundry time-travels across generations, a female Flying Dutchman cursed for her blasphemy. These echo effects are even more apparent in the relationships between the characters: Parsifal resisting Kundry has a precursor in Venus's attempt to ensnare Tannhäuser, and Gurnemanz, despite his impatience, recalls something of the wise Hans Sachs in the hope he invests in the young newcomer.

Wagner, moreover, wove personal experiences from across the span of his life into the fabric of *Parsifal's* music, imagery, and scenic conception, such as the "Dresden Amen" from the city where he once harbored revolutionary hopes or the tolling bells he heard in his exile in Zurich. In particular, when Wagner witnessed a hen's helpless suffering as it was slaughtered in a shop one day, it triggered an epiphany that would prove to be the key to the opera he was still years away from writing. Perceiving the suffering that lies at the heart of existence—symbolized by Amfortas's wound—is what awakens compassion (Mitleid) within Parsifal and opens the way toward redemption.

But if *Parsifal* at times suggests another variation on familiar Wagnerian themes and characters, it also stands apart. As director Girard remarks, here Wagner "reaches even beyond" his earlier grand syntheses to create "an elusive piece that speaks to the heart and the soul through channels that we're not used to dealing with."

Wagner even invented a special generic term, *Bühnenweihfestspiel*, for the opera, a pretentious-sounding compound that really just refers to its status as a work to inaugurate the stage of the Bayreuth Festival. Technically the *Ring* had already done that in 1876. But seeing the cycle performed had been depressingly anti-climactic, the palest shadow of what his imagination had carried all those years. In contrast, he created *Parsifal* with a clear sense of the distinctive sonority and immersive experience of the Bayreuth space: a space designed to maximize the audience's identification with the dreamlike realm represented onstage.

Program Note CONTINUED

Parsifal's sound world reverberates with colors, nuances, and textures unlike anything else found in Wagner. In the notes to his 1970 recording, Pierre Boulez remarked that this music “places the emphasis for the first time on uncertainty, on indetermination” and shows “an aversion to definitiveness in musical phrases as long as they have not exhausted their potential for evolution and renewal.”

Wagner's widow Cosima tried to intensify *Parsifal's* mystique—more cynical observers would call it a marketing ploy—by restricting staged performances to Bayreuth for the 30-year duration of its copyright. At the time, however, the United States was not party to international copyright law. Incurring Cosima's wrath and causing a scandal, the Met stirred up enormous excitement by staging the first American performance on Christmas Eve in 1903, to front-page coverage.

The desire to control *Parsifal* of course also applies to the ultimate meanings of this lucid yet most elusive of Wagner's creations. Some argue that it encodes the toxic brew of Wagner's late-period racist ravings, with Amfortas's wound as a proto-Nazi symbol of contamination by “inferior” races. Others are profoundly disturbed by what they perceive as deep misogyny or even a blasphemous mimicry of Christianity. *Parsifal's* rich production history only underscores the extraordinary ambivalence that makes the work so endlessly fascinating. Nietzsche himself, who remains among the harshest of the work's critics, reminds us that *Parsifal* can generate contradictory responses even within the same person. Having damned the opera as “a curse on the senses and the spirit,” after hearing the Prelude performed he wrote of its “penetration of vision that cuts through the soul as with a knife.”

—Thomas May

The Cast and Creative Team



Daniele Gatti

CONDUCTOR (MILAN, ITALY)

THIS SEASON *Parsifal* at the Met and concert engagements with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonia Orchestra, Orchestre National de France, Vienna Philharmonic, and the Gustav Mahler Jugendorchester.

MET APPEARANCES *Aida* and *Madama Butterfly* (debut, 1994).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Currently Music Director of the Orchestre National de France and Chief Conductor of the Zurich Opera, he has led new productions at opera houses around the world including the Vienna State Opera (*Simon Boccanegra*, *Moses und Aron*, *Otello*, *Boris Godunov*), La Scala (*Lohengrin*, *Wozzeck*, *Don Carlo*, *Lulu*), Munich's Bavarian State Opera (*Aida*, *Fidelio*), Covent Garden (*Falstaff*), and Zurich Opera (*Otello*, *Parsifal*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*).



François Girard

DIRECTOR (QUEBEC, CANADA)

THIS SEASON *Parsifal* for his debut at the Met.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS His work in opera includes a double-bill of Weill and Brecht's *The Lindbergh Flight* and *The Seven Deadly Sins* at the Lyon Opera and later at the Edinburgh Festival and in Wellington; *Parsifal* and Saariaho's *Émilie* for the Lyon Opera; *Siegfried* and a double-bill of Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* and *Symphony of Psalms* for the Canadian Opera Company; and the oratorio *Lost Objects* for Brooklyn Academy of Music's Bang on a Can Festival. Films include the feature-length biopic *Thirty-Two Short Films about Glenn Gould* (1993), *The Red Violin* (1998, Academy Award for Best Original Score), and *Silk* (2007). He was writer and director of Cirque du Soleil's *Zarkana* (New York, Madrid, and Moscow) and director of *Zed*, Cirque du Soleil's permanent show in Tokyo.



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Michael Levine

SET DESIGNER (TORONTO, CANADA)

THIS SEASON *Parsifal* at the Met.

MET PRODUCTIONS *Madama Butterfly* (set designer), *Eugene Onegin* (set and costume designer; debut, 1997) and *Mefistofele* (set and costume designer).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Among his opera credits are *Das Rheingold* for the Canadian Opera company (director and designer); *Capriccio*, *Rusalka*, and *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* for the Paris Opera; *Elektra* in Florence; *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* at the Glyndebourne Festival and Vienna's Theater an der Wien; Bernstein's *Candide* at Paris's Châtelet in a co-production with English National Opera and La Scala; *Der Fliegende Holländer* at Covent Garden; Alexander Raskatov's *A Dog's Heart* with English National Opera; *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, *Don Giovanni*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at La Scala; and *Parsifal* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in Lyon. His designs for theatre include *A Disappearing Number*, *The Elephant Vanishes*, and *Mnemonic* for Complicité, *The Beautiful End* in London's West End, *Tectonic Plates* for Ex Machina, and *Revenge's Tragedy* for the Royal Shakespeare Company.



Thibault Vancraenenbroeck

COSTUME DESIGNER (BRUSSELS, BELGIUM)

THIS SEASON *Parsifal* for his debut at the Met.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS His collaborations with director François Girard and the Lyon Opera include *Parsifal*, Saariaho's *Émilie*, and a double-bill of Weill and Brecht's *The Lindbergh Flight* and *The Seven Deadly Sins*. Additional projects include *Werther* (Lyon) and *L'Élixir d'Amore* (Baden-Baden) with Rolando Villazón directing; and *Jenůfa* (Paris's Théâtre du Châtelet), *Die Zauberflöte* (Lyon Opera), *Wozzeck* (Munich's Bavarian State Opera), *Don Carlo* (La Scala), Wagner's *Ring* cycle (Aix-en-Provence Festival and Salzburg Easter Festival), *Pelléas et Mélisande* (Paris's Opéra Comique), and *Idomeneo* (Paris's Théâtre des Champs-Élysées), all directed by Stéphane Braunschweig. In addition to opera, he also creates sets and costumes for dance and theater and has worked with Dominique Baguette, Barbara Manzetti, Olga de Soto, Pierre Droulers, Charlie Degotte, Sébastien Chollet, Nathalie Mauger, Yves Beaunesne, Sybille Cornet, Sofie Kokaj, Marc Liebens, Boris Charmatz, Françoise Berlinger, Cindy Van Acker, Alexis Moati, Anna van Brée, Andréa Novicov, Perrine Valli, and Maya Boesch.

The Cast and Creative Team CONTINUED



David Finn

LIGHTING DESIGNER (ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA)

THIS SEASON *Parsifal* for his debut at the Met, *Romeo and Juliette* for the Paris Opera Ballet and La Scala Ballet, Cirque du Soleil's *MJ 2013* in Las Vegas, and *Arabella* for Santa Fe Opera and Minnesota Opera.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS At the age of 16 he began working for puppeteer Burr Tillstrom and the famed *Kukla, Fran and Ollie* television show. He received the 2012 Knight of Illumination Award for *Sweet Violets* (Royal Ballet) and the 2011 Yomiuri Award for *The Hunting Gun* (Tokyo). He collaborated with François Girard on Cirque du Soleil's permanent show, *Zed*, in Tokyo and has also designed for the Paris Opera, Covent Garden, Salzburg Festival, La Scala, Brussels's La Monnaie, Lyon Opera, Stuttgart Opera, Canadian Opera Company, New York City Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, San Francisco Opera, Florence's Teatro Comunale, and Vienna Festival. He has designed dance works for Twyla Tharp, Paul Taylor, Hanya Holm, Merce Cunningham, Sasha Waltz, José Limón, James Kudelka, Helgi Tomasson, and Dana Reitz, and was resident designer for Mikhail Baryshnikov's White Oak Dance Project. Architectural projects include *The Kramlich Residence* in Napa Valley with the design firm of Herzog & de Meuron and film work includes *The Age of Innocence* directed by Martin Scorsese and *The Green Monster* (which Finn directed for PBS's POV series in 1999).



Peter Flaherty

VIDEO DESIGNER (BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS)

THIS SEASON *Parsifal* for his debut at the Met.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS His recent directing project, *Soul Leaves Her Body*, opened in New York in 2010 and began international touring last year. His award-winning short film, *Signal from Shore*, is currently playing in film festivals and his recent large-scale video installation, *Pass Back a Revolver*, had its premiere at Philadelphia's Institute of Contemporary Art. He created video and projection design for Roundabout Theatre's Broadway production of *Sondheim on Sondheim*, and frequent theatre collaborators include The Builders Association, Complicité, François Girard, James Lapine, Chen Shi-Zheng, Basil Twist, and Bang on a Can. His video art has been shown at MIT Media Lab, Fleisher-Ollman Gallery, and at the home of Agnes Gund (President Emerita of MoMA). He has received grants from the New York State Council on the Arts, Rockefeller MAP Fund, Doris Duke Foundation, and Jerome Foundation, among others. He is currently head of video for performance at CalArts and has also taught at the Yale School of Drama, Carnegie Mellon University, and New York University.



Carolyn Choa

CHOREOGRAPHER (HONG KONG, CHINA)

THIS SEASON *Parsifal* at the Met.

MET PRODUCTIONS *Madama Butterfly* (associate director and choreographer, debut, 2005).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Her choreography credits include “The Storyteller Series” and “The Greek Myths Series” (Jim Henson/Channel 4), *The Bartered Bride* (Belfast Opera), *Eugene Onegin* and *Lakmé* (Royal College of Music), *The Land of Smiles* (Royal Academy of Music), *Moll Flanders* (Granada Television), *The English Patient* (Miramax Films), *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (Paramount/Miramax), *Feast of Snails* (London’s West End), *Danscross* (Beijing Dance Academy), *Kommilitonen!* (Royal Academy of Music and Juilliard School of Music), and *The Pilgrim’s Progress* (English National Opera). She shared an Olivier Award with director Anthony Minghella for *Madama Butterfly*, produced the film *The Wisdom of Crocodiles*, and was co-editor and translator of the *Vintage Book of Chinese Fiction*.



Serge Lamothe

DRAMATURG (QUEBEC, CANADA)

THIS SEASON *Parsifal* for his debut at the Met.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Novelist, poet, and dramatist, he has worked with director François Girard on a number of projects including Cirque du Soleil’s *Zed* (Tokyo, 2008) and *Zarkana* (Radio City Music Hall, 2011); Lyon Opera’s *The Lindbergh Flight* and *The Seven Deadly Sins* (Brecht/Weil, 2006), *Émilie* (Saariaho, 2010), and *Parsifal* (2012). His theatrical adaptations include Kafka’s *The Trial* (Théâtre du Nouveau Monde, Montreal, 2004), Yasushi Inoue’s *The Hunting Gun* (Usine C, Montreal, 2010; Parco Theater, Tokyo, 2011—Kinokuniya and Yomiuri awards), and Yukio Mishima’s *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion* (directed by Amon Miyamoto, Kanagawa Arts Theater and Lincoln Center Festival, 2011). His original play, *The Prince of Miguasha*, was granted the Yves Thériault Award by Radio Canada in 2003, and his independent works include the books *Les Enfants Lumière* (2012), *Les Urbanishads* (2010), *Metarevers* (2009), *Tarquimpol* (2007), *The Baldwins* (2006), *L’Ange au Berceau* (2002).

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Frieda Hempel as Adina in Donizetti's
L'Elisir d'Amore, 1916
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Anna Netrebko as Adina, 2012-13 season
PHOTO: NICK HEACAN/METROPOLITAN OPERA



Katarina Dalayman

SOPRANO (STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN)

THIS SEASON Kundry in *Parsifal* and Brünnhilde in *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried*, and *Götterdämmerung* at the Met and Brünnhilde at Munich's Bavarian State Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Isolde and Brangäne (debut, 1999) in *Tristan und Isolde*, the Duchess of Parma in Busoni's *Doktor Faust*, Sieglinde in *Die Walküre*, Lisa in *The Queen of Spades*, and Marie in *Wozzeck*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS She has sung the title roles of *Elektra* and *Carmen*, Maddalena in *Andrea Chénier*, and Brünnhilde in *Ring* performances in Stockholm; Brünnhilde in *Siegfried* at the Aix-en-Provence Festival; Desdemona in *Otello*, Eva in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Mimi in *La Bohème*, and Elisabeth in *Tannhäuser* in Stuttgart; Brünnhilde in *Ring* performances at the Vienna State Opera; Marie at Covent Garden and in Paris; Ariadne in *Ariadne auf Naxos* in Paris, Brussels, Dresden, and Munich; Tosca in Copenhagen and Berlin; Lisa with Lyric Opera of Chicago and in Munich; the Duchess of Parma at the Salzburg Festival; Judith in *Bluebeard's Castle* at Covent Garden; and Kundry at Paris's Bastille Opera.



Jonas Kaufmann

TENOR (MUNICH, GERMANY)

THIS SEASON The title role of *Parsifal* at the Met and Vienna State Opera, the title role of *Don Carlo* at Covent Garden and the Salzburg Festival, Cavaradossi in *Tosca* and Manrico in *Il Trovatore* at Munich's Bavarian State Opera, and the title role of *Lohengrin* at La Scala.

MET APPEARANCES The title role of *Faust*, Siegmund in *Die Walküre*, Cavaradossi, Don José in *Carmen*, Alfredo in *La Traviata* (debut, 2006), and Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS His first performances as Lohengrin in Munich in 2010 followed by his debut at the Bayreuth Festival in the same role. Recent performances include Bacchus in *Ariadne auf Naxos* as well as Don José and Rodolfo in *La Bohème* at the Salzburg Festival, Don Carlo in Munich and London, Faust in Vienna, and Maurizio in *Adriana Lecouvreur* at Covent Garden and in concert at the Deutsche Oper Berlin and Carnegie Hall. He has also sung Florestan in *Fidelio* in Munich and Paris, Werther in Vienna and Paris, Des Grieux in *Manon* in Chicago and Vienna, the Prince in Humperdinck's *Königskinder* in Zurich, and Alfredo at the Paris Opera and La Scala.



Peter Mattei

BARITONE (PITEÅ, SWEDEN)

THIS SEASON Amfortas in *Parsifal* at the Met and the title role of *Don Giovanni* at the Vienna State Opera and in Zurich.

MET APPEARANCES Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Don Giovanni, Marcello in *La Bohème*, Yeletsky in *The Queen of Spades*, Shishkov in *From the House of the Dead*, and Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (debut, 2002).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include the title role of *Billy Budd* at the Frankfurt Opera, the title role of *Eugene Onegin* for his debut with the Vienna State Opera, and Don Giovanni at La Scala and the Paris Opera. He has also sung Don Giovanni at the Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin, Count Almaviva at Covent Garden and the San Francisco Opera, Eugene Onegin at the Salzburg Festival and Tanglewood Festival, Posa in *Don Carlo* with the Norwegian Opera, Wolfram in *Tannhäuser* at La Scala, and Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* with the Royal Swedish Opera.



Evgeny Nikitin

BASS-BARITONE (MURMANSK, RUSSIA)

THIS SEASON Klingsor in *Parsifal* at the Met, Rangoni in *Boris Godunov* in Madrid, Telramund in *Lohengrin* at Munich's Bavarian State Opera, Amfortas in *Parsifal* in Zurich, and Gunther in *Götterdämmerung* at the Paris Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Rangoni, Orest in *Elektra*, Pogner in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Colline in *La Bohème*, Fasolt in *Das Rheingold*, Creon/The Messenger in *Oedipus Rex*, and Dolokhov in *War and Peace* (debut, 2002).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has recently sung Tomsy in *The Queen of Spades* at the Paris Opera, the Dutchman in *Der Fliegende Holländer* in Tokyo, Mussorgsky's *Songs and Dances of Death* in Berlin, the title role of *Boris Godunov* in Nice, Don Pizarro in *Fidelio* in Valencia, and Ibn-Hakia in *Iolanta* at the Salzburg Festival. He has also sung with Paris's Châtelet (Boris Godunov and the title role of Rubinstein's *The Demon*) and frequently at St. Petersburg's Mariinsky Theatre (Boris Godunov, Prince Igor, Ruslan in Glinka's *Ruslan and Lyudmila*, King Philip in *Don Carlo*, Amfortas, Wotan, Don Giovanni, and Figaro).

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René Pape

BASS (DRESDEN, GERMANY)

THIS SEASON Gurnemanz in *Parsifal* at the Met, Wotan in *Die Walküre* at La Scala, King Marke in *Tristan und Isolde* and King Philip in *Don Carlo* with Munich's Bavarian State Opera, and Wotan in *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre*, Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte*, and King Philip with the Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin.

MET APPEARANCES Nearly 200 performances of 23 roles, including the title role of *Boris Godunov*, Méphistophélès in *Faust*, King Philip, King Marke, Sarastro and the Speaker (debut, 1995) in *Die Zauberflöte*, Pogner in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Escamillo in *Carmen*, Banquo in *Macbeth*, King Henry in *Lohengrin*, Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, Orest in *Elektra*, Ramfis in *Aida*, and Rocco in *Fidelio*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He appears frequently at all the world's leading opera houses, including La Scala, Covent Garden, the Paris Opera, Vienna State Opera, Munich's Bavarian State Opera, and Lyric Opera of Chicago, as well as the festivals of Glyndebourne, Bayreuth, and Salzburg. He also appears regularly with the New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Berlin Philharmonic, and Boston Symphony Orchestra, among others.