

THE GERSHWINS'

PORGY AND BESS

By George Gershwin, DuBose and Dorothy Heyward, and Ira Gershwin

CONDUCTOR
David Robertson

PRODUCTION
James Robinson

SET DESIGNER
Michael Yeargan

COSTUME DESIGNER
Catherine Zuber

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Donald Holder

PROJECTION DESIGNER
Luke Halls

CHOREOGRAPHER
Camille A. Brown

FIGHT DIRECTOR
David Leong

GENERAL MANAGER
Peter Gelb

JEANETTE LERMAN-NEUBAUER
MUSIC DIRECTOR
Yannick Nézet-Séguin

Opera in two acts

Saturday, February 1, 2020
1:00-4:30PM

New Production

The production of The Gershwins' *Porgy and Bess* was made possible by a generous gift from
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Co-production of the Metropolitan Opera;
Dutch National Opera, Amsterdam; and
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The Metropolitan Opera

2019-20 SEASON

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The 68th Metropolitan Opera performance of
THE GERSHWINS’

PORGY AND BESS

CONDUCTOR
David Robertson

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

CLARA
Golda Schultz

MINGO
Errin Duane Brooks

SPORTIN’ LIFE
Frederick Ballentine

JAKE
Donovan Singletary*

SERENA
Latonia Moore

ROBBINS
Chauncey Packer

JIM
Norman Garrett

PETER
Jamez McCorkle

MARIA
Denyce Graves

PORGY
Eric Owens

CROWN
Alfred Walker*

BESS
Angel Blue

A DETECTIVE
Grant Neale

LILY
Tichina Vaughn*

A POLICEMAN
Bobby Mittelstadt

AN UNDERTAKER
Damien Geter

ANNIE
Chanée Curtis

“LAWYER” FRAZIER
Arthur Woodley

NELSON
Jonathan Tuzo

STRAWBERRY WOMAN
Aundi Marie Moore

CRAB MAN
Chauncey Packer

A CORONER
Michael Lewis

SCIPIO
Neo Randall

Saturday, February 1, 2020, 1:00–4:30PM

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Chorus Masters **Donald Palumbo** and **David Moody**

Musical Preparation **Donna Racik, J. David Jackson, Carol Isaac, and Bryan Wagorn***

Assistant Stage Directors **Kimille Howard, Cody Renard Richard, Daniel Rigazzi, and
Kathleen Smith Belcher**

Assistant Costume Designer **Ryan Park**

Associate Choreographer **Mayte Natalio**

Assistant Choreographer **Maleek Washington**

Prompter **Donna Racik**

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Alannah Garnier
Makeda Hampton
Rebecca L. Hargrove
Christine Jobson
Andrea Jones-Sojola
Jennifer Lindsay
Jamet Pittman
Kimberli Render
Brittany Renee Robinson
Alia Waheed
Jasmin White
Tammie Woods

TENORS

Lindell Carter
Antonio Chase
Terrence Chin-Loy
Christian Mark Gibbs
Maurio Hines
Anthony P. McGlaun
Steven Myles
Taiwan Norris
Rishi Rane
David Morgans Sanchez
Tshombe Selby
Chase Taylor
Jonathan Tuzo
Edward Washington
Charles Williamson

ALTOS

La'Shelle Allen
Chantal Braziel
Helena Brown
Jihanna Charlton-Davis
Linda Childs
Taylor-Alexis DuPont
Marguerite Mariah Jones
Tesia Kwarteng
LaToya Lain
Nicole Joy Mitchell
Jasmine Muhammad
Lindsay Patterson Abdou
Karmesha Peake

BASSES

Charles Carter
Brian Fenderson
Kevin Gardner
Damien Geter
Paul Grosvenor
Antoine Hodge
Jarrod Lee
Quentin Oliver Lee
Justin Lee Miller
Whitaker Mills
Wayne Arthur Paul
Markel Reed
Aaron Reeder
Rocky Sellers
Antonio Watts

Synopsis

Act I

Catfish Row, a tenement neighborhood of Charleston, South Carolina, in the 1920s. The inhabitants of Catfish Row are relaxing after a day's work. Clara sings a lullaby to her baby. The drug dealer Sportin' Life; Clara's husband, Jake; and some of the other men are playing craps under the disapproving eye of the religious Serena. Jake sings a lullaby of his own to the baby. The disabled beggar Porgy arrives and is about to join the game when Crown and his lover, Bess, appear. The loudmouthed Crown joins the dice game. Drunk and high on drugs, he loses, starts a fight, and kills Robbins with a cotton hook. Before the police arrive, Crown runs off to hide, telling Bess that he'll be back for her. The community shuns Bess as they await the arrival of the police. Sportin' Life offers to take her to New York with him, but she refuses. Only Porgy is sympathetic to her: He offers her shelter and his protection, which she accepts.

In her room the following evening, Robbins's widow, Serena, leads the mourners at her husband's funeral. A collection is being taken to meet the cost of the burial. Porgy and Bess enter, and Bess offers Serena a contribution, which at first she refuses thinking it must be Crown's money. She finally accepts it when it is explained that it is Porgy's. Police officers arrive and accuse Peter, the honeyman, of the murder. Fearing what might happen, he tells them that Crown was responsible but is himself promptly arrested as a material witness. Serena convinces the undertaker to bury Robbins for less than his usual fee. Bess leads everyone in an exultant spiritual.

A month later, Jake and the other fishermen are mending their nets. Porgy compares his life to theirs. Sportin' Life enters, but before he has an opportunity to peddle any of his "happy dust," Maria, the matriarch of Catfish Row, chases him away. "Lawyer" Frazier sells Bess a divorce, even though she and Crown were never married. Everyone is preparing to leave for a church picnic on Kittiwah Island. Sportin' Life asks Bess again to come to New York with him and tries to give her more dope, which she refuses. Porgy threatens him and chases him off. He and Bess reflect on their newfound happiness. Porgy insists that Bess should go to the picnic even though he can't manage the boat trip. At first, she refuses, not wanting to leave him alone, but eventually, she yields to his persuasion and joins the others as they set off.

On Kittiwah Island later that same day, Sportin' Life describes his own cynical view of religion to some of the revelers, until Serena chastises them for being taken in by his stories. The steamboat whistle announces that it's time to leave, and everyone starts to pack up their belongings. Bess hurries along

until Crown, who has been hiding on the island since the Robbins murder, calls out to her. He wants Bess to come with him, but she explains that she has a new life with Porgy. Crown forces her to stay with him.

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 2:40PM)

Act II

In Catfish Row at dawn a week later, fishermen leave for a day's work at sea despite a storm warning. Bess is heard talking deliriously from Porgy's room. She has been feverish and ill since returning from Kittiwah Island. Peter, released from police custody that morning, advises Porgy to take her to the hospital, but Serena would rather pray for her recovery. Her prayers are answered: Bess emerges into the courtyard, free of the fever. She explains to Porgy that she wants to stay with him but that, when Crown returns, she'll be forced to go back to him. Porgy tells her that she doesn't have to go with Crown, and he and Bess reaffirm their love for each other. The wind begins to rise, and the hurricane bell sounds.

At dawn the following day, everyone cowers together in Serena's room, and they pray for deliverance from the storm. Suddenly, there's a knock at the door: It's Crown seeking shelter and looking for Bess. She won't go with him, insisting that she belongs to Porgy alone. He mocks Porgy and the frightened townspeople and counters their prayers for deliverance with a vulgar song. At the storm's height, Clara sees Jake's boat has overturned and rushes out to save her husband. Bess calls for the men to go after her. Crown is the only one to respond.

In Catfish Row the following night, the storm has passed. The women grieve for those who have been lost, including Jake, Clara, and, it is assumed, Crown. Sportin' Life appears, mocks their weeping, and hints that Crown is still alive. Bess is seen at a window lulling Clara's baby to sleep. Crown enters under the cover of darkness in search of Bess, but Porgy confronts him and delivers a fatal blow.

The next afternoon, the detective returns to Catfish Row, accompanied by the coroner. They are investigating Crown's murder, but their questioning of Serena and two other women draws a blank. They go to Porgy's room and tell him that he must come with them and identify Crown's body. Horrified that he must look at Crown's face, Porgy refuses to go and has to be dragged off. Taking advantage of Porgy's absence, Sportin' Life tries to convince Bess that Porgy will be locked up for certain, and he attempts to lure her away to a new

life. When Bess spurns him, he forces some dope on her and leaves more outside her door as he leaves.

A week later, the inhabitants of Catfish Row greet each other at the beginning of another day. Porgy returns from jail in a jubilant mood and is unaware of his friends' discomfort as he calls out for Bess. Eventually, Serena and Maria tell him that Bess has gone to New York with Sportin' Life. Hearing this, Porgy decides to follow her: He cannot live without Bess.

Synopsis reprinted courtesy of English National Opera.



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The Gershwins'

Porgy and Bess

Premiere: Alvin Theatre, New York, 1935

A supremely American operatic masterpiece and the most ambitious work by one of the nation's greatest musical talents, *Porgy and Bess* focuses on the joys and struggles of a black neighborhood in Charleston, South Carolina, in the early 20th century. The opera's score features a rich cache of individual solos, many of which have become classics of the Great American Songbook, but the true core of this story is in its depiction of a remarkable community. Many of the memorable supporting characters have important musical and dramatic functions within the opera, and the chorus maintains a central role throughout. In spite of (or perhaps partially because of) the marginalization of Catfish Row, the community has a profound understanding of the seasonal cycles of life and death—sometimes expressed in superstition, sometimes in sincere faith, and sometimes in “nonsense” syllables and choral vocal sighs, as if saying that which is too deep for words. The disabled Porgy and the abused, addicted Bess are microcosms of their world: outcasts among outcasts who are granted further insights as a result. As an offset to this isolated community, there is also the idea of a far-off, vaguely comprehended New York, home of vice and sin but also a golden land of opportunity. The overall combination of music, word, and idea among a complex blend of Americana make this a unique and impressive work both within and beyond the operatic repertory.

The Creators

George Gershwin (1898–1937) was one of America's greatest composers, whose immortal and diverse works in song, orchestral suites, and musicals spanned the classical, jazz, and theatrical worlds. His brother, Ira Gershwin (1896–1983), was one of the great lyricists of American song, providing words for most of George's most memorable tunes. Ira continued to provide classic lyrics after George's tragically early death, collaborating with such composers as Kurt Weill and Harold Arlen. DuBose Heyward (1885–1940) was a novelist and poet who wrote about the diverse culture of his native South Carolina. His novel *Porgy* (1925) was the source for the opera, and he also provided many of the lyrics for the libretto. Dorothy Heyward (1890–1961) was a playwright born in Ohio who married DuBose after attending Harvard University. She collaborated with her husband in adapting his novel into a successful Broadway play, which later inspired the opera.

The Setting

The opera is set in slightly fictionalized versions of real places in and around Charleston, South Carolina. Catfish Row is a seaside version of the actual Cabbage Row, a group of old mansions converted into multiple dwellings with storefronts on the ground level, historically inhabited by the descendants of freed slaves. The church picnic in Act I takes place on Kittiwah Island, a version of the real Kiawah Island 25 miles south of Charleston.

The Music

Far beyond being a compendium of classic songs, the score of *Porgy and Bess* maintains a level of musical unity and a rich, descriptive language that compares with the greatest operatic achievements. Much of the work's dynamism comes from Gershwin's explorations of the Gullah music of Tidewater Carolina. The composer spent months on islands there, and DuBose Heyward recalled one night when Gershwin joined in a local meeting of "shouting," a complex combination of dance rhythms beaten out by hand and foot. Oral tradition on the islands claims that Gershwin was the only white person who had ever accomplished it correctly. The rhythms and orchestral tones associated with prayer, whether sacred (Serena's prayer over Bess in Act II) or profane (Porgy's craps game prayer in Act I), are especially evocative of the connection between characters and the unseen world that is an essential aspect of this opera's allure. The solo vocal lines are demanding. Bess's "I loves you, Porgy" requires the legato power of a Puccini heroine. The other members of the large principal cast face similar challenges: The matriarchal figure Maria is a character role with tricky patter—until she must do some difficult classical singing in the trio toward the opera's end. Likewise, Sportin' Life, a role that Gershwin originally imagined for Cab Calloway, must clearly deliver both the witty words of the mock-sermon "It ain't necessarily so" and the jazzy legato stylings of "There's a boat that's leaving soon for New York." Gershwin's own mastery of jazz and his Eastern European Jewish roots meld with the Gullah sources of this story to create a personal, idiomatic, brilliant, and thoroughly convincing musical canvas.

Met History

The long-discussed Met premiere of *Porgy and Bess* finally took place on February 6, 1985, in a production directed by Nathaniel Merrill and designed by Robert O'Hearn. James Levine conducted a specially engaged chorus and a cast headed by Simon Estes and Grace Bumbry in the title roles, with Florence Quivar, Myra Merritt, Isola Jones, and Gregg Baker. Actor Larry Storch appeared in the non-singing role of the detective. The opera received 54 performances in four seasons through 1990. On September 23, 2019, the opera returned to the Met, opening the season in a new production by James Robinson. David Robertson conducted a cast led by Eric Owens and Angel Blue as Porgy and Bess, alongside Golda Schultz, Latonia Moore, Denyce Graves, Frederick Ballentine, Alfred Walker, and Ryan Speedo Green.

Program Note

On the surface, George Gershwin and *Porgy and Bess* librettist DuBose Heyward don't seem to have had much in common beyond the fact that neither of them finished high school.

Gershwin was born in Brooklyn to Russian Jewish parents and grew up on Second Avenue, in the heart of the Yiddish Theater District of New York City. It was a bustling cosmos of shopkeepers, actors, musicians, and every kind of show imaginable, from Shakespeare to vaudeville to operetta. Gershwin studied piano and quit school at the age of 15 to work in Tin Pan Alley—the haven for songwriters and publishers originally situated on 28th Street, between Fifth and Sixth Avenues. He immersed himself in jazz and pop, wrote dozens of songs, and came of age as a serious composer and performer during the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s.

Heyward was born in Charleston, South Carolina, into a family of dispossessed land owners, descendants of Thomas Heyward, who had signed the Declaration of Independence. Heyward's father died when he was three years old, and his mother, Jane, was a writer and amateur historian, who chronicled the stories and dialect of the Gullahs of the Carolina barrier islands. According to Heyward biographer James M. Hutchisson, Jane became "one of the most famous 'dialect recitalists' of the 20th-century South." Heyward quit school at 14 to help the family, eventually taking a job on the waterfront that immersed him in the local black community. After a subsequent stint as an insurance salesman, he became secure enough to pursue his ambitions as a writer and was able to work at the MacDowell Colony where he would meet his wife and collaborator, Dorothy.

In 1926, when Gershwin picked up Heyward's novella *Porgy* (1925), the first thing he would have seen was the author's poetic invocation of his muses:

Porgy, Maria, and Bess,
Robbins, and Peter, and Crown;
Life was a three-stringed harp
Brought from the woods to town.

Marvelous tunes you rang
From passion and death and birth
You who had laughed and wept
On the warm, brown lap of the earth.

Now in your untried hands
An instrument, terrible, new,
Is thrust by a master who frowns,
Demanding strange songs of you.

God of the White and Black,
Grant us great hearts on the way
That we may understand
Until you have learned to play.

As Gershwin would soon discover, Heyward's prose was also full of sound—spirituals, dirges, lullabies, Gullah dialect, prayers, dance rhythms, the swoosh of the tides, and the roaring winds of a hurricane. Heyward communicated time and space through sound: "Far away St. Christopher struck the hour. The mellow bells threw the quarter hours out like a handful of small gold coins to ring down upon the drowsy streets. Then very deliberately, they dropped ten, round, heavy notes, into the silence." And, of course, there was also the sound of suffering, as Robbins's widow, "[sat] at the foot of the bed ... swaying to the rhythm [of a dirge] like a palm in the ebb and flow of a bleak sea wind. ... The music faded away in vague, uncertain minors."

As Dorothy Heyward later recounted in an article in *Harper's*, Gershwin "read himself awake" that night. He wrote to Heyward immediately, but neither poet nor composer was ready to move forward with a musical show. DuBose and Dorothy, however, turned the novella into a play of the same name, which premiered to great success on October 10, 1927, at the Guild Theater in New York. The advent of the play raised the stakes; it was a step closer to a libretto for an opera. But it took yet another five years before the collaboration between the two men became a reality. Finally, on March 29, 1932, Gershwin wrote again to Heyward, "[I]n thinking of ideas for new compositions, I came back to one that I had several years ago—namely *Porgy*—and the thought of setting it to music. It is still the most outstanding play that I know about the colored people."

While the history of musico-theatrical works by and about the black community was long and fraught, it blossomed in the Harlem Renaissance. There were operas by African American composers, including Scott Joplin's *Treemonisha* (1911) and Clarence Cameron White's *Quanga* (1932), starring baritone Lawrence Winters, who also sang on the first "complete" recording of *Porgy* (1951). And, of course, there was jazz, composed and performed by Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Fats Waller, Jelly Roll Morton, and so many others. In 1921, Eubie Blake and Noble Sissle's all-black musical *Shuffle Along* stimulated later productions such as *Strut Miss Lizzie* (1922), *Blackbirds* (1926), and *Hot Chocolate* (1929), which featured Fats Waller's hit song "Ain't Misbehavin'."

There were also "byproducts" of these developments: shows by white authors and composers that were either multi-racial—Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein II's *Showboat* (1927)—or featured all-black casts—Gertrude Stein and Virgil Thomson's *Four Saints in Three Acts* (1927–28). Lewis Gruenberg's *The Emperor Jones* (1933) premiered at the Metropolitan Opera with Lawrence Tibbett in the title role—in blackface.

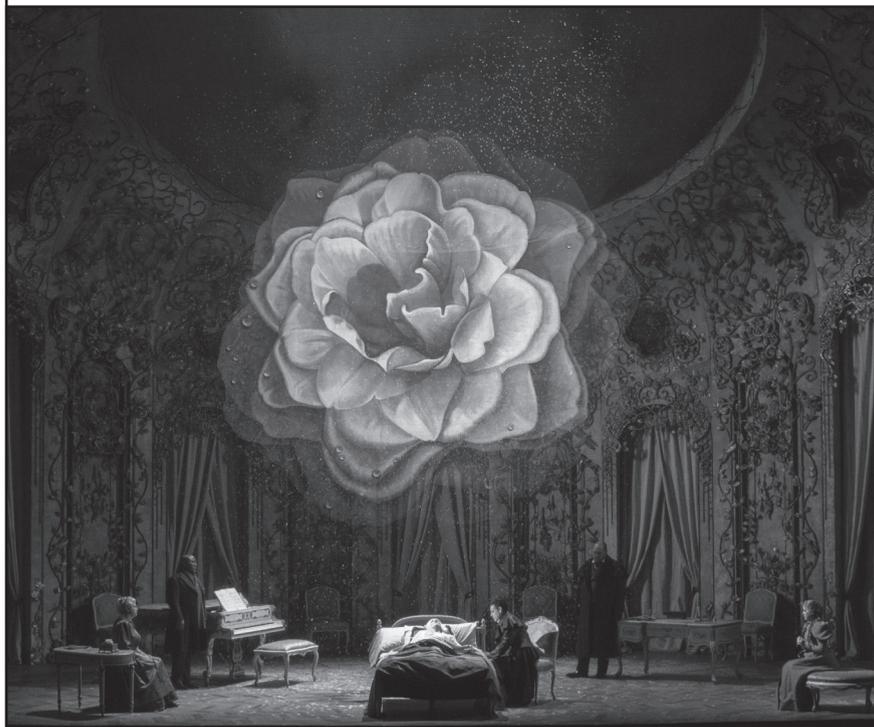
Gershwin had thought about an “American” opera with a jazz element for years and even tried his hand with *Blue Monday* (1922), a one-act tragedy set in Harlem, performed by white actors in blackface. But ten years later, a more mature Gershwin worried about authenticity and rejected blackface for his new opera—first, when Al Jolson was suggested for the role of Porgy. Gershwin responded that “the sort of thing I should have in mind for Porgy is a much more serious thing than Jolson could ever do.” Moreover, he sincerely believed that the only singers who could do justice to this story would be black.

Porgy and Bess was first performed September 30, 1935, in Boston, as a kind of out-of-town tryout. The original version, nearly four hours long, was then pared down before opening on Broadway on October 10 of that year at the Alvin Theatre, with Todd Duncan and Anne Brown in the leading roles. Most early critics considered *Porgy* neither a “black” work nor a political work, though Duke Ellington noted its lack of social criticism, which he believed to be an essential component of any drama about African Americans. In the decades since, the opera has spawned much debate about racial stereotyping and cultural appropriation. Harold Cruse, for example, condemned *Porgy and Bess* in his book *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* (1967): “Culturally, it is the product of American developments that were intended to shunt Negroes off into a tight box of subcultural artistic dependence, stunted growth, caricature, aesthetic mimicry imposed by others, and creative insolvency.”

One of the chief questions early critics did address was whether or not *Porgy and Bess* was an opera. That question gnawed at Gershwin, who defended himself in a *New York Times* article of October 20, 1935, by calling his work a “folk opera,” despite having written all of the music for it himself. He stated further that he put the work on Broadway and not in any of the “usual” operatic venues because he “hoped to have developed something in American music that would appeal to the many rather than the cultured few.” He talked about the range of genres that typified opera, citing Verdi, whose works were full of “song hits.” In response, *Times* critic Olin Downes conceded that *Porgy* “smells somewhat of Charleston and somewhat of Broadway, [combining] learned operatic usages or experiments ... with the twists and rhythms of our popular music.” A good example of such fusion is “Summertime,” a gently rocking lullaby that requires a classically trained singer with a strong upper range and the ability to sustain a Bellini-esque cantabile line. Years later, in 1987, Duncan (the original Porgy) addressed the opera question in an interview: “The passion that comes in the grand operas is in *Porgy and Bess*, and the main ingredients in *Porgy and Bess* are the same as in *Tosca* ... sheer heaven!”

Porgy and Bess is through-sung, propelled forward with breathtaking energy and fluidity with few breaks for applause. The text unfolds naturally and gracefully through recitatives and ariosos, while spoken dialogue, mostly reserved for heartless white policemen—presumably unable to sing—has a strong percussive

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effect. The infrastructure of *Porgy and Bess*, however, is the chorus, whose members act as near constant witnesses, reacting as appropriate with a spiritual or a dirge. The large orchestra also plays an important role, underscoring extended action scenes, such as the fight between Porgy and Crown, which looks forward to Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story* (1957). In fact, Bernstein heard the Boston try-out of *Porgy and Bess* when he was a student at Harvard, recalling that he "freaked out" over it. He later bought a score, committed it to memory, and came to understand very well that the musical melting pot that is *Porgy and Bess* is akin to America itself. He even wrote about those issues in his Harvard senior thesis, "The Absorption of Race Elements into American Music" (1939). But more than that, Bernstein had such a deep emotional connection to *Porgy and Bess* that discussing it in a TV interview in 1972 caused him to weep openly: "I don't know what the hell has happened to me. ... He [Gershwin] just touched something. ... I loved him so much."

—Helen M. Greenwald

Helen M. Greenwald is chair of the department of music history at New England Conservatory and editor of the Oxford Handbook of Opera.

ALSO ON STAGE



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WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

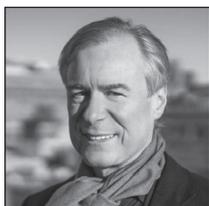
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The Cast and Creative Team



David Robertson

CONDUCTOR (SANTA MONICA, CALIFORNIA)

THIS SEASON *Porgy and Bess* at the Met, *Kát'a Kabanová* in Rome, and concerts with the Staatskapelle Dresden, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, New Japan Philharmonic, Czech Philharmonic, Juilliard Orchestra, Houston Symphony, National Symphony Orchestra, and Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.

MET APPEARANCES *Così fan tutte*, *Jenůfa*, John Adams's *The Death of Klinghoffer*, Nico Muhly's *Two Boys*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Billy Budd*, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, *Carmen*, and *The Makropulos Case* (debut, 1996).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has served as chief conductor and artistic director of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra since 2014 and was music director of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra from 2005 to 2018. He has appeared at many of the world's leading opera houses, including the Bavarian State Opera, La Scala, Santa Fe Opera, and San Francisco Opera. He has also served as music director of the Orchestre National de Lyon and Paris's Ensemble Intercontemporain and regularly conducts the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, and other ensembles internationally. A supporter of young musicians, he has worked with students at the Aspen Music Festival, Tanglewood, Lucerne Festival, Paris Conservatoire, Music Academy of the West, and National Orchestra Institute.



James Robinson

DIRECTOR (CLAREMORE, OKLAHOMA)

THIS SEASON *Porgy and Bess* for his debut at the Met and the world premieres of Huang Ruo's *M. Butterfly* at the Santa Fe Opera and Tobias Picker's *Awakenings* at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Since 2009, he has served as artistic director of Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, where his productions have included Huang Ruo's *An American Soldier*, Blitzstein's *Regina*, the world premiere of Jack Perla's *Shalimar the Clown*, the world premieres of Terence Blanchard's *Fire Shut Up in My Bones* and *Champion*, John Adams's *The Death of Klinghoffer*, and Ricky Ian Gordon's *The Grapes of Wrath*. Between 2000 and 2008, he was artistic director of Opera Colorado. He directed *Porgy and Bess* at English National Opera and Dutch National Opera, and his work has also appeared at the Canadian Opera Company, Opera Australia, Royal Swedish Opera, Wexford Festival Opera, Houston Grand Opera, San Francisco Opera, New York City Opera, LA Opera, Washington National Opera, Seattle Opera, and with the London Symphony Orchestra and Los Angeles Philharmonic, among many others.

The Cast and Creative Team CONTINUED



Michael Yeargan

SET DESIGNER (DALLAS, TEXAS)

THIS SEASON *Porgy and Bess* at the Met, *Rigoletto* at Staatsoper Berlin, and *Luisa Miller* at Lyric Opera of Chicago.

MET PRODUCTIONS Since his 1993 debut designing the sets and costumes for *Ariadne auf Naxos*, he has designed the sets for *Roméo et Juliette*, Nico Muhly's *Two Boys*, *L'Elisir d'Amore*, *Le Comte Ory*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, *Don Giovanni*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Otello*, and the world premiere of John Harbison's *The Great Gatsby*, and the sets and costumes for *Così fan tutte* and Floyd's *Susannah*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He won Tony Awards for his work on *South Pacific* and *The Light in the Piazza* and Drama Desk Awards for *South Pacific*, *Awake and Sing!*, and *The Light in the Piazza*. On Broadway, he has created more than two dozen productions, including *My Fair Lady*, *Oslo*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *The King and I*, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, and *Seascape*. A longtime professor of design at the Yale School of Drama, he has also designed productions at La Scala, Covent Garden, Dutch National Opera, English National Opera, Welsh National Opera, Scottish Opera, Opera Australia, San Francisco Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Seattle Opera, LA Opera, and the Glimmerglass Festival, among others.



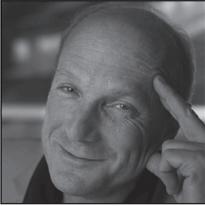
Catherine Zuber

COSTUME DESIGNER (LONDON, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON *Porgy and Bess* at the Met, *Rigoletto* at Staatsoper Berlin, and *Moulin Rouge!* on Broadway.

MET PRODUCTIONS *Roméo et Juliette*, *Otello*, Nico Muhly's *Two Boys*, *L'Elisir d'Amore*, *Le Comte Ory*, John Adams's *Doctor Atomic*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (debut, 2006).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Among her many accolades are Tony Awards, an Olivier Award, and four Drama Desk Awards. Her nearly 50 Broadway credits include *My Fair Lady*, *Oslo*, *The King and I*, *Golden Boy*, *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, *The Royal Family*, *South Pacific*, *The Coast of Utopia*, *Awake and Sing!*, *Seascape*, and *The Light in the Piazza*. A 2016 inductee into the Theater Hall of Fame, her work has also appeared at La Scala, the Salzburg Festival, Dutch National Opera, English National Opera, Opera Australia, San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, Washington National Opera, and on the television productions of *The Sound of Music Live!* and *Peter Pan Live!*



Donald Holder

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

THIS SEASON *Porgy and Bess* at the Met and *Rigoletto* at Staatsoper Berlin.

MET PRODUCTIONS *Samson et Dalila*, *Otello*, Nico Muhly's *Two Boys*, and *Die Zauberflöte* (debut, 2004).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has been nominated for 13 Tony Awards, winning in 2008 for *South Pacific* and 1998 for *The Lion King*. His numerous Broadway credits include *Tootsie*, *Kiss Me, Kate*, *Straight White Men*, *My Fair Lady*, *M. Butterfly*, *Anastasia*, *Oslo*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *The Father*, and *The King and I*, among many others. He has also designed lighting for *Porgy and Bess* at English National Opera and Dutch National Opera, the world premiere of Jake Heggie's *The End of the Affair* at Houston Grand Opera, *Faust* in Baden-Baden, Heggie's *Moby-Dick* and Todd Machover's *Death and the Powers* at the Dallas Opera, Elliot Goldenthal's *Grendel* at LA Opera and the Lincoln Center Festival, *Salome* at St. Petersburg's Mariinsky Theatre, and *Carmen* at LA Opera and Lyric Opera of Chicago. He is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama and currently serves as head of lighting design at the Rutgers University Mason Gross School of the Arts.



Luke Halls

PROJECTION DESIGNER (LONDON, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON *Porgy and Bess* at the Met, Britten's *Noye's Fludde* at English National Opera, *Don Giovanni* at Covent Garden, and *Sea Wall / A Life, My Name Is Lucy Barton, West Side Story*, and *The Lehman Trilogy* on Broadway.

MET PRODUCTIONS *Otello* (debut, 2015).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He made his Broadway debut in 2017 with *Miss Saigon*, received a Drama Desk Award nomination in 2019 for *The Lehman Trilogy*, and won a BAFTA Award for the ITV show *The Cube*. His work in opera includes *Porgy and Bess* at English National Opera and Dutch National Opera; Szymanowski's *Król Roger* at Covent Garden; *Don Giovanni* at Houston Grand Opera, Israeli Opera, and in Barcelona; *Der Fliegende Holländer* at Finnish National Opera; *West Side Story* in Malmö, Sweden; and *Carmen* at the Bregenz Festival; among others. His work has also appeared in London at the Royal Ballet, National Theatre, Barbican Centre, Duke of York's Theatre, and Royal Court Theatre. He has created video designs and animation for Adele, Beyoncé, Pet Shop Boys, U2, and Rihanna, as well as for the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Closing Ceremonies.

The Cast and Creative Team CONTINUED

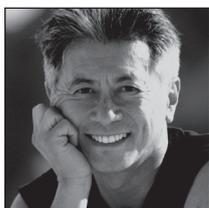


Camille A. Brown

CHOREOGRAPHER (NEW YORK, NEW YORK)

THIS SEASON *Porgy and Bess* for her debut at the Met, *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide / When the Rainbow Is Enuf* at New York's Public Theater, the national tour of *Once on this Island*, *City of Rain* at Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, and performances with her company, Camille A. Brown and Dancers.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS She made her Broadway debut in 2012 choreographing *A Streetcar Named Desire* and returned for productions of *Once on this Island* (for which she received Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle, and Chita Rivera Award nominations) and *Choir Boy* (for which she received Tony and Drama Desk Award nominations). She is artistic director of Camille A. Brown and Dancers, with whom she has also provided outreach activities to students, young adults, and incarcerated women and men across the United States. She choreographed the television special *Jesus Christ Superstar Live in Concert* and has been honored with a Ford Foundation Art of Change Fellowship, five Princess Grace Awards, Jacob's Pillow Dance Award, Guggenheim Fellowship, TED Fellowship, AUDELCO Award, and Lucille Lortel Award nomination, among others accolades.



David Leong

FIGHT DIRECTOR (RICHMOND, VIRGINIA)

THIS SEASON *Porgy and Bess* for his debut at the Met.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Since his 1988 New York City debut choreographing the fights for *Macbeth*, he has worked on 20 other Broadway productions, including *Fool for Love*, *Amazing Grace the Musical*, *A Time to Kill*, *Billy Elliot: The Musical*, *The Civil War*, *Company*, *Picnic*, *Carousel*, and *Hamlet*. His fights and movement have also appeared on London's West End, at the National Theatre of London, and in nearly every regional theater in the United States, including the Guthrie Theatre, Arena Stage, American Repertory Theatre, and Shakespeare Theatre. He also choreographed the fights for the films *Titus* and *Alien Resurrection*. His extensive teaching resume includes faculty appointments at the Juilliard School, Brandeis University, and Virginia Commonwealth University, where he served as chair and producing director.



Angel Blue

SOPRANO (LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA)

THIS SEASON Bess in *Porgy and Bess* at the Met and in concert with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Mimi in *La Bohème* in Hamburg and at Seattle Opera, and concert appearances at the Dallas Opera, Carnegie Hall, and in Muscat and Dayton.

MET APPEARANCES Musetta and Mimi (debut, 2017) in *La Bohème*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include the title role of *Tosca* in Aix-en-Provence; Mimi at the Canadian Opera Company and in Dresden; Violetta in *La Traviata* at Covent Garden, La Scala, and in Winnipeg; Bess at Seattle Opera; and Liù in *Turandot* at San Diego Opera. She has also sung Myrtle Wilson in John Harbison's *The Great Gatsby* in Dresden, the Peri in Schumann's *Das Paradies und die Peri* in concert in Rome, Violetta at Seattle Opera, Clara in *Porgy and Bess* at La Scala, Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* in concert with the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra, and Mimi in Valencia and at English National Opera. She has appeared at the Vienna State Opera, LA Opera, San Francisco Opera, Oper Frankfurt, Edinburgh International Festival, and with the Berlin Philharmonic, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Munich Philharmonic, and Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, among others.



Denyce Graves

MEZZO-SOPRANO (WASHINGTON, D.C.)

THIS SEASON Maria in *Porgy and Bess* at the Met and Washington National Opera and Emelda Griffith in Terence Blanchard's *Champion* at Michigan Opera Theatre.

MET APPEARANCES Marnie's Mother in Nico Muhly's *Marnie*, the title role of *Carmen* (debut, 1995), Dalila in *Samson et Dalila*, Federica in *Luisa Miller*, Maddalena in *Rigoletto*, and Baba the Turk in *The Rake's Progress*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include the Old Lady in *Candide* at Washington National Opera and Palm Beach Opera and Mrs. Patrick De Rocher in Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking* at Minnesota Opera. She has also sung Grace in the world premiere of Daniel Sonenberg's *The Summer King* at Pittsburgh Opera, Emelda Griffith at Washington National Opera, Erda in *Das Rheingold* at Minnesota Opera, Madeline in Jake Heggie's *Three Decembers* in Louisville, and Nettie Fowler in *Carousel* at Lyric Opera of Chicago. She has appeared at the Vienna State Opera, Covent Garden, La Scala, Paris Opera, Bavarian State Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, San Francisco Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Dallas Opera, LA Opera, and Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, among many others.



Latonia Moore
SOPRANO (HOUSTON, TEXAS)

THIS SEASON Serena in *Porgy and Bess* at the Met and Washington National Opera, the title role of *Tosca* in Rouen, and *Patience* in the world premiere of Gregory Spears's *Castor and Patience* at Cincinnati Opera.

MET APPEARANCES The title role of *Aida* (debut, 2012) and Cio-Cio-San in *Madama Butterfly*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include *Tosca* at Washington National Opera and Opera Australia, *Serena* at Dutch National Opera and English National Opera, *Aida* in Buenos Aires and at the Polish National Opera and English National Opera, and *Desdemona* in *Otello* in Bergen, Norway. She has sung *Aida* in Zurich and Tokyo; at Opera Australia, Pittsburgh Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, San Diego Opera, and the Dallas Opera; and in concert in Bergen, Norway, and at Ravinia Festival. Other recent credits include *Tosca* at New York City Opera; *Fidelia* in Puccini's *Edgar* in Dortmund, Germany; *Cio-Cio-San* at San Diego Opera; *Liù* in *Turandot* at Covent Garden; *Liù*, *Mimi* in *La Bohème*, and *Cio-Cio-San* in Dresden; *Amelia* in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, *Cio-Cio-San*, and *Amelia Grimaldi* in *Simon Boccanegra* in Hamburg; and *Elvira* in *Ernani*, *Micaëla* in *Carmen*, *Liù*, and *Lucrezia* in Verdi's *I Due Foscari* in Bilbao.



Golda Schultz
SOPRANO (BLOEMFONTEIN, SOUTH AFRICA)

THIS SEASON Clara in *Porgy and Bess* and Sophie in *Der Rosenkavalier* at the Met, *Micaëla* in *Carmen* at the Bavarian State Opera, *Liù* in *Turandot* at the Vienna State Opera, *Madame Lidoine* in *Dialogues des Carmélites* at the Glyndebourne Festival, and concert appearances with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, London Symphony Orchestra, and Philharmonia Orchestra.

MET APPEARANCES *Nannetta* in *Falstaff* and *Pamina* in *Die Zauberflöte* (debut, 2017).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS She was a member of the ensemble at the Bavarian State Opera, where her roles have included *Liù*, *Pamina*, *Musetta* in *La Bohème*, *Freia* in *Das Rheingold*, *Fiordiligi* in *Così fan tutte*, and *Zerlina* in *Don Giovanni*, among others. Recent performances include the *Countess* in *Le Nozze di Figaro* in Zurich and at the Vienna State Opera, *Clara* in Jake Heggie's *It's a Wonderful Life* at San Francisco Opera, and *Sophie* in Tokyo. She has also sung *Vitellia* in *La Clemenza di Tito* at the Salzburg Festival, *Susanna* in *Le Nozze di Figaro* at La Scala, and the *Countess* at the Glyndebourne Festival. Between 2013 and 2014, she was a member of the State Theater in Klagenfurt, Austria.



Frederick Ballentine

TENOR (NORFOLK, VIRGINIA)

THIS SEASON Sportin' Life in *Porgy and Bess* at the Met for his debut and Washington National Opera, Monostatos in *Die Zauberflöte* at LA Opera, Charlie Parker in Daniel Schnyder's *Charlie Parker's Yardbird* at Seattle Opera, Judah in the world premiere of Gregory Spears's *Castor and Patience* at Cincinnati Opera, and Handel's *Messiah* with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He is a graduate of both Washington National Opera's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program and LA Opera's Domingo-Colburn-Stein Young Artist Program, and in 2015, he was a Filene Young Artist at Wolf Trap Opera. Recent performances include Sportin' Life at Cincinnati Opera, Dutch National Opera, and English National Opera; Don José in *Carmen* at Seattle Opera and Annapolis Opera; Kaherdin in Martin's *Le Vin Herbé* in concert at Wolf Trap Opera; the Steersman in *Der Fliegende Holländer* at Cincinnati Opera; and Cacambo in *Candide*, the Herald in *Don Carlo*, and the Messenger in *Aida* at Washington National Opera. He has also sung Reverend Parris in Ward's *The Crucible* and Sportin' Life at the Glimmerglass Festival, Amon in Philip Glass's *Akhnaten* at LA Opera, and Count Almaviva in John Corigliano's *The Ghosts of Versailles* at Wolf Trap Opera.



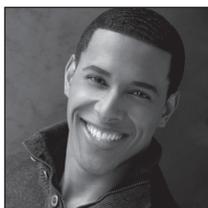
Eric Owens

BASS-BARITONE (PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA)

THIS SEASON Porgy in *Porgy and Bess* at the Met, Wotan in the *Ring* cycle at Lyric Opera of Chicago, and King Marke in *Tristan und Isolde* at the Santa Fe Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Hagen in *Götterdämmerung*, the Voice of Neptune in *Idomeneo*, Vodnik in *Rusalka*, Jaufré Rudel in Kaija Saariaho's *L'Amour de Loin*, Orest in *Elektra*, Sarastro in *The Magic Flute*, Alberich in the *Ring* cycle, and General Leslie Groves in John Adams's *Doctor Atomic* (debut, 2008).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Porgy at Dutch National Opera, Wotan in *Siegfried* and *Die Walküre* at Lyric Opera of Chicago, Philip II in *Don Carlo* and Stephen Kumalo in Weill's *Lost in the Stars* at Washington National Opera, Don Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* at Houston Grand Opera, Méphistophélès in *La Damnation de Faust* in concert with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, and the title role of *Macbeth* at the Glimmerglass Festival. In 2017, he was appointed artistic advisor of the Glimmerglass Festival. He serves on the board of trustees of both the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts and Astral Artistic Services, and in 2019, he became co-chair of the Curtis Institute's opera department.



Donovan Singletary

BASS-BARITONE (CRESTVIEW, FLORIDA)

THIS SEASON Jake in *Porgy and Bess* at the Met, Crown in *Porgy and Bess* at Atlanta Opera, and Colline in *La Bohème* at Fort Worth Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Angelotti in *Tosca*, the Murderer in *Macbeth*, the Shepherd in *Pelléas et Mélisande*, a Flemish Deputy in *Don Carlo*, Pinellino in *Gianni Schicchi*, and the Second Nazarene in *Salome* (debut, 2008).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Jake at Dutch National Opera and English National Opera, Crown at Grange Park Opera, and Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro* at Minnesota Opera. He has also sung Leporello in *Don Giovanni* at Nashville Opera and Kentucky Opera; Jake at La Scala; Zuniga in *Carmen*, Monterone in *Rigoletto*, and Jake at Seattle Opera; the title role of *Mefistofele* at Knoxville Opera; Achilla in *Giulio Cesare* and Figaro at Fort Worth Opera; and the title role of *Don Giovanni* at Aspen Opera Theater. He has appeared with the Deutsche Radio Philharmonie Saarbrücken Kaiserslautern, Orchestre Lamoureux, Marina del Rey Symphony Orchestra, Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra, and Aspen Chamber Symphony. He is a graduate of the Met's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.



Alfred Walker

BASS-BARITONE (NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA)

THIS SEASON Crown in *Porgy and Bess* at the Met, Peter in *Hänsel und Gretel* at San Francisco Opera, Oroveso in *Norma* at Boston Lyric Opera, and Porgy in *Porgy and Bess* at Washington National Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Since his 1998 debut as Grégorio in *Roméo et Juliette*, he has sung more than 150 performances of 20 roles, including the Speaker in *The Magic Flute*, Tituel in *Parsifal*, Parsi Rustomji in Philip Glass's *Satyagraha*, Wagner in *Faust*, Count Ceprano in *Rigoletto*, and Zaretski in *Eugene Onegin*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include the Ruler in Korngold's *Das Wunder der Heliane* at Bard SummerScape, Amonasro in *Aida* and Porgy at Seattle Opera, and Orest in *Elektra* at San Francisco Opera. He has also sung Méphistophélès in *La Damnation de Faust* at the National Opera of Chile, Wotan in *Das Rheingold* in Raleigh, Méphistophélès in *Faust* at Portland Opera, and Josh Gibson in the world premiere of Daniel Sonenberg's *The Summer King* at Pittsburgh Opera. He is a graduate of the Met's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.