

GIACOMO PUCCINI

LA BOHÈME

CONDUCTOR
Paolo Carignani

PRODUCTION
Franco Zeffirelli

SET DESIGNER
Franco Zeffirelli

COSTUME DESIGNER
Peter J. Hall

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Gil Wechsler

STAGE DIRECTOR
J. Knighten Smit

GENERAL MANAGER
Peter Gelb

MUSIC DIRECTOR
James Levine

PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR
Fabio Luisi

Opera in four acts

Libretto by Giuseppe Giacosa and
Luigi Illica, based on the novel *Scènes
de la Vie de Bohème* by Henri Murger

Saturday, December 5, 2015
1:00–4:00PM

The production of *La Bohème* was made
possible by a generous gift from
Mrs. Donald D. Harrington

The revival of this production is
made possible by gifts from Rolex and
the Betsy and Edward Cohen/Areté Foundation

**Today's performance and radio broadcast are
dedicated to the memory of the Met's longtime
radio host Margaret Juntwait.**

The Metropolitan Opera

2015–16 SEASON

This performance is being broadcast live over The Toll Brothers–Metropolitan Opera International Radio Network, sponsored by Toll Brothers, America’s luxury homebuilder®, with generous long-term support from The Annenberg Foundation, The Neubauer Family Foundation, the Vincent A. Stabile Endowment for Broadcast Media, and contributions from listeners worldwide.

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

The 1,278th Metropolitan Opera performance of

GIACOMO PUCCINI’S

LA BOHÈME

CONDUCTOR
Paolo Carignani

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

MARCELLO
Levente Molnár

RODOLFO
Ramón Vargas

COLLINE
Christian Van Horn

SCHAUNARD
Alexey Lavrov*

BENOIT
John Del Carlo

MIMI
Barbara Frittoli

PARPIGNOL
Daniel Clark Smith

ALCINDORO
John Del Carlo

MUSETTA
Ana María Martínez

CUSTOMHOUSE SERGEANT
Jason Hendrix

CUSTOMHOUSE OFFICER
Joseph Turi

Saturday, December 5, 2015, 1:00–3:00PM



KEN HOWARD/METROPOLITAN

A scene from
Puccini's *La Bohème*

Chorus Master **Donald Palumbo**
Musical Preparation **Joan Dornemann, Linda Hall,
John Keenan, Steven Eldredge, and Jonathan C. Kelly**
Assistant Stage Director **Gregory Keller**
Stage Band Conductor **Gregory Buchalter**
Prompter **Joan Dornemann**
Met Titles **Sonya Friedman**
Children's Chorus Director **Anthony Piccolo**
Associate Designer **David Reppa**
Scenery, properties, and electrical props constructed and
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Department**
Wigs and Makeup executed by **Metropolitan Opera
Wig and Makeup Department**
Ladies millinery by **Reggie G. Augustine**
Men's hats by **Richard Tautkus**
Animals supervised by **All-Tame Animals, Inc.**

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Met Titles

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usher at intermission.

Remembering Margaret Juntwait

1957–2015



PHOTO: RICHARD BLINKOFF/METROPOLITAN OPERA

“Just put a smile in your voice” was the advice Margaret Juntwait would give colleagues preparing to join her on air, words she herself followed throughout her extraordinary career as the Met’s longtime radio host. Audiences fell in love with the smile they heard in her unmistakable voice, “an elegantly plummy sound,” as Music Director James Levine described it. But more than that, it expressed her warmth, kindness, and generosity of spirit.

As news spread of Margaret’s death this past June, people responded as though they had lost a beloved friend. To listeners around the world, encountering her in the intimacy of their homes, she was the familiar companion

who took them by the hand each week and welcomed them into the Met—for nearly 900 live Saturday and Sirius XM broadcasts. They felt her deep love of opera and her admiration for the people involved in putting it on. With quiet confidence and unflappable grace, she conveyed her understanding of the art form and, in interviews with artists, creative teams, and many others around the opera house, gracefully drew out the countless stories of what is required to present opera at the highest level.

Listeners sensed her excitement about what might unfold on stage, a curiosity and non-jadedness that, broadly speaking, mirrored her zest for the experience of life. To even the most familiar operas, she brought a fresh perspective: she said she heard different things in *La Bohème* each and every time. Fittingly, today’s performance, which opens the Met’s Saturday matinee broadcast season, is dedicated to her memory.

Margaret felt her job was one of the best in the world. This New Jersey girl, a classically trained lyric soprano, started her broadcast career at WNYC. In 2004, she became only the Met’s third regular Saturday radio broadcast host since 1931. “The most rewarding thing is when you speak to someone who was moved by a performance,” she once said. “I know I wasn’t part of that, but I have served it on a plate. I’ve gotten out of the way. And I’ve let this performance become something that the listener might not ever forget. —Elena Park

Synopsis

Paris in the 1830s

Act I

A garret

Pause

Act II

The Café Momus, in the Latin Quarter

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 2:05 PM)

Act III

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

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 3:05 PM)

Act IV

The garret

Act I

In their Latin Quarter garret, the near-destitute artist Marcello and poet Rodolfo try to keep warm on Christmas Eve by feeding the stove with pages from Rodolfo's latest drama. They are soon joined by their roommates—Colline, a philosopher, and Schaunard, a musician, who brings food, fuel, and funds he has collected from an eccentric student. While they celebrate their unexpected fortune, the landlord, Benoit, comes to collect the rent. After making the older man drunk, they urge him to tell of his flirtations, then throw him out in mock indignation at his infidelity to his wife. As his friends depart to celebrate at the Café Momus, Rodolfo remains behind to finish an article but promises to join them later. There is another knock at the door—the visitor is Mimì, a pretty neighbor, whose candle has gone out on the stairway. As she enters the room she suddenly feels faint. Rodolfo gives her a sip of wine, then helps her to the door and relights her candle. Mimì realizes she lost her key when she fainted, and as the two search for it, both candles are blown out. Rodolfo finds the key and slips it into his pocket. In the moonlight, he takes Mimì's hand and tells her about his dreams. She recounts her life alone in a lofty garret, embroidering flowers and waiting for the spring. Rodolfo's friends are heard outside, calling him to join them. He responds that he is not alone and will be along shortly. Happy to have found each other, Mimì and Rodolfo leave, arm in arm, for the café.

Act II

Amid the shouts of street hawkers near the Café Momus, Rodolfo buys Mimì a bonnet and introduces her to his friends. They all sit down and order supper. The toy vendor Parpignol passes by, besieged by children. Marcello's former sweetheart, Musetta, makes a noisy entrance on the arm of the elderly but wealthy Alcindoro. The ensuing tumult reaches its peak when, trying to gain Marcello's attention, she loudly sings the praises of her own popularity. Sending Alcindoro off on a pretext, she finally falls into Marcello's arms. Soldiers march by the café, and as the bohemians fall in behind, the returning Alcindoro is presented with the check.

Act III

At dawn on the snowy outskirts of Paris, a customs official admits farm women to the city. Guests are heard drinking and singing within a tavern. Mimì arrives, searching for the place where Marcello and Musetta now live. When the painter appears, she tells him of her distress over Rodolfo's incessant jealousy. She says she believes it is best that they part. Rodolfo, who has been asleep in the tavern, comes outside. Mimì hides nearby, though Marcello thinks she has left. Rodolfo tells his friend that he wants to separate from Mimì, blaming her flirtatiousness. Pressed for the real reason, he breaks down, saying that her coughing can only grow worse in the poverty they share. Overcome with emotion, Mimì comes forward to say goodbye to her lover. Marcello runs back into the tavern upon hearing Musetta's laughter. While Mimì and Rodolfo recall past happiness, Marcello returns with Musetta, quarreling about her flirting with a customer. They hurl insults at each other and part, but Mimì and Rodolfo decide to remain together until spring.

Act IV

Months later in the garret, Rodolfo and Marcello, now separated from their girlfriends, reflect on their loneliness. Colline and Schaunard bring a meager meal. To lighten their spirits the four stage a dance, which turns into a mock duel. At the height of the hilarity Musetta bursts in with news that Mimì is outside, too weak to come upstairs. As Rodolfo runs to her aid, Musetta relates how Mimì begged to be taken to Rodolfo to die. She is made as comfortable as possible, while Musetta asks Marcello to sell her earrings for medicine and Colline goes off to pawn his overcoat. Left alone, Mimì and Rodolfo recall their meeting and their first happy days, but she is seized with violent coughing. When the others return, Musetta gives Mimì a muff to warm her hands and prays for her life. Mimì slowly drifts into unconsciousness. Schaunard realizes that she is dead, and Rodolfo is left desperate.

Giacomo Puccini

La Bohème

Premiere: Teatro Regio, Turin, 1896

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

The Creators

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

The Setting

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

of this opera is clearly recognizable in any modern urban center. *La Bohème* captures this ethos in its earliest days.

The Music

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

Met History

La Bohème had its Met premiere while the company was on tour in Los Angeles in 1900. Nellie Melba sang Mimì and improbably added the mad scene from Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* as an encore after the final curtain (a practice she maintained for several other performances). This production lasted until 1952, when it was replaced by one designed by Rolf Gerard and directed by Joseph L. Mankiewicz, who insisted his name be removed after a disagreement with some of the singers. The current spectacular production by Franco Zeffirelli was unveiled in 1981 with an impressive cast led by Teresa Stratas, Renata Scottò, José Carreras, Richard Stilwell, and James Morris, with James Levine conducting. *La Bohème* was presented at the Met in 59 consecutive seasons after its first appearance and has been seen in all but nine seasons since 1900, making it the most performed opera in company history.

Program Note

“Friends” might have been an apt title for Puccini’s opera about the bohemians of the Latin Quarter. A beloved portrayal of the joys and hardships of ordinary people, it was neither the beginning nor the end of the literary and theatrical journey of Mimi, Rodolfo, Marcello, Musetta, Schaunard, and Colline. The bohemians first appeared in a series of short stories that Henri Murger published in the Parisian journal *Le Corsair* between 1845 and 1849. Murger then collaborated with Théodore Barrière on a play, *La Vie de Bohème*, which premiered in November 1849 at the Théâtre des Variétés in Paris, and soon after gathered his stories into a novelized version published in 1851 as *Scènes de la Vie de Bohème*. Not surprisingly, by the 1890s, an era in which the arts found new inspiration in the lives of the working class (Mascagni’s *Cavalleria Rusticana* stands out as an operatic example), Murger’s characters seemed perfectly suited for the operatic stage. Not one, but two composers stepped up to the task—Puccini and Ruggero Leoncavallo (of *Pagliacci* fame), who feuded openly about who had the idea first. Resolution came in the form of two operas, with the same title, premiered a year apart: Puccini’s, with a libretto by Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica, in Turin in 1896, Leoncavallo’s in Venice, 15 months later. To this day, directors, filmmakers, and composers continue to be inspired by Murger’s friends. Constantin Stanislavski staged Puccini’s opera in a famous production at the Bolshoi Theater in 1927. Baz Luhrmann brought it to Broadway in 1992 and then conflated the story with that of *La Traviata* in his 2001 film, *Moulin Rouge!*. The opera itself was filmed three times, in 1965 (by Franco Zeffirelli and Herbert von Karajan), 1988, and 2008 (starring Anna Netrebko and Rolando Villazón). And its story was retold as a rock musical set in 1990s New York, Jonathan Larson’s *Rent*.

In contrast to the remarkable amiability of the characters in *La Bohème*, the working relationship of the opera’s creators was vexed. Early in his career Puccini revealed himself to be a remorseless perfectionist, at his most extreme in *Manon Lescaut*, which took a total of seven librettists (including publisher Giulio Ricordi and the composer himself) to lift it off the ground. The labor of bringing *La Bohème* to the stage, however, was marked less by issues of having too many collaborators than by a passionate struggle among Puccini, his two librettists, and Ricordi. Illica had finished the original scenario for the opera by 1894, but the months preceding that watershed moment had been a painful succession of arguments about the Latin Quarter scene and a now-discarded act set in a courtyard. On October 6, 1893, Giacosa, feeling strangled by Puccini’s demands and ready to throw in the towel, wrote to Ricordi claiming “artistic impotence.”

How remarkable, then, that despite such creative discord behind the scenes, *La Bohème* unfolds so seamlessly and effortlessly from its opening notes. There is no prelude, and the music erupts from the depths of the orchestra on a single spring-loaded motive that defines the instability of the bohemians’ lives. The curtain rises swiftly on a scene in medias res, the first in a series of episodes that tumble forth in quick succession, as characters improvise ways to overcome hardship: Marcello works on his painting, Rodolfo burns the pages of his play to heat the garret, Schaunard brings home the dinner, and the landlord, Benoit, is tricked out of his rent.

The Program CONTINUED

What is the secret to such utter freshness and spontaneity? One answer is that Puccini keeps the story moving, finding musical expression appropriate to the characters and their station in life. For this composer, “real” people simply could not sing in the formal Italian verse and musical structures that had governed so many Italian operas that came before his. Instead, he advances a more energetic and naturalistic repartee in which lyrical moments arise seamlessly out of the drama. That is exactly what happens in the second half of Act I, as the brief, intimate contact of hands groping in the dark for a lost key moves Rodolfo and Mimì to reveal something of themselves to one another in two of the opera’s greatest arias, “Che gelida manina” and “Mi chiamano Mimì.”

The tone shifts again, though, as it is Christmas Eve and the new lovers must join friends in the Latin Quarter, in a square teeming with a “vast and motley crowd of citizens, soldiers, serving girls, children, students, seamstresses, gendarmes, etc.,” as the libretto says. In the hands of a lesser composer, Rodolfo, Mimì, and their companions might have been lost in such tumult. But here Puccini exercises his particular genius for manipulating large numbers of people and devising transparent musical textures that shine a spotlight on the characters he wants us to see and hear. At the center of it all is Musetta, who delivers a “siren song” (the waltz “Quando m’è venuto”) that Marcello cannot resist. As he falls into her arms, the bill arrives, and the bohemians disappear into the crowd.

One of the most familiar—and original—scenes of *La Bohème* is Mimì’s death, which differs significantly from the traditional “curtain deaths” of earlier operas. A good example for comparison is *La Traviata*, whose consumptive heroine, Violetta, is frequently thought of as a model for Mimì. Violetta, surrounded by loved ones, dies with a cry of renewed joy, a tonic chord, and a final curtain in fortissimo dynamics. When Mimì passes away, none of the characters on stage even notices that she is gone until it’s too late. She has no final spasm, nor does she collapse into a pair of loving arms. She sings no high notes; her friends have busied themselves by heating medicine, adjusting lights, and plumping pillows; there is no vigil, no stage directions that communicate the exact moment of her death or how the singer is to enact it. The libretto does not even mark it with the perfunctory phrase that defines dozens of melodramatic deaths in opera: “she dies.” The only material indicator is in Puccini’s autograph score, where, in the margins next to the measures of the death music, he ironically drew a skull and crossbones. A highly choreographed “good death” was not to be for the likes of his poor seamstress. Mimì only nods her head, “as one who is overcome by sleep,” and thereafter the libretto notes only “silence.” In the score a slowing of the tempo leads to a “lunga pausa” just before the key changes from D-flat major to B minor and the tempo to Andante lento sostenuto. Puccini adds a subtle detail in the single cymbal struck in quadruple pianissimo with a mallet; the diffuse sound seems to originate from and fade into the ether. Mimì is gone, and the final curtain belongs to Rodolfo.

—Helen M. Greenwald

The Cast



Paolo Carignani

CONDUCTOR (MILAN, ITALY)

THIS SEASON *Turandot*, *Tosca*, and *La Bohème* at the Met, *Norma* at Munich's Bavarian State Opera, and *Carmen* with the Canadian Opera Company.

MET APPEARANCES *Nabucco*, *Aida*, and *La Traviata* (debut, 2008).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS From 1999 to 2008 he was general music director at Oper Frankfurt, where he conducted *Der Fliegende Holländer*, *Luisa Miller*, *Un Ballo in Maschera*, and *Tristan und Isolde*, among other works. Recent performances include *Il Trovatore*, *Nabucco*, *Macbeth*, *La Traviata*, and *Nabucco* at Munich's Bavarian State Opera, *Turandot* at the Bregenz Festival, *Guillaume Tell* at the Netherlands Opera, *Nabucco* in Tokyo, *La Fanciulla del West* at the Vienna State Opera, and Mascagni's *L'Amico Fritz* in Strasbourg. He has also conducted at the Staatsoper Berlin, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Covent Garden, Paris Opera, Barcelona's Liceu, and at festivals in Glyndebourne, Spoleto, Schleswig-Holstein, and Pesaro.



Barbara Frittoli

SOPRANO (MILAN, ITALY)

THIS SEASON Mimì in *La Bohème* and Nedda in *Pagliacci* at the Met and Amelia in *Simon Boccanegra* at the Vienna State Opera, Opera Australia, and Barcelona's Liceu.

MET APPEARANCES Elisabeth in *Don Carlo*, Vitellia in *La Clemenza di Tito*, the title roles of *Luisa Miller* and *Suor Angelica*, Donna Anna and Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*, Micaëla in *Carmen* (debut, 1995), Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, Desdemona in *Otello*, and Amelia.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Notable performances include the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro* in Ferrara, Desdemona in *Otello* at the Salzburg Festival and Turin's Teatro Regio, and Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* at the Vienna State Opera, Covent Garden and Ravenna Festival. She has recently sung the Countess in Madrid, Munich's Bavarian State Opera, and Paris Opera, the title role of *Thaïs* in Turin, Fiordiligi in Valencia and Vienna, *Luisa Miller* in Zurich, Mimì on tour with the Teatro Regio in Tokyo and Yokohama, Alice in *Falstaff* and Mimì in Zurich, Donna Elvira at Washington National Opera and La Scala, the title role of *Adriana Lecouvreur* in Barcelona, and Alice in Buenos Aires.



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Aleksandrs Antonenko as Othello

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Ana María Martínez

SOPRANO (HOUSTON, TEXAS)

THIS SEASON Musetta in *La Bohème* at the Met, Nedda in *Pagliacci* and Cio-Cio-San in *Madama Butterfly* at the Los Angeles Opera, Cio-Cio-San with Opera Puerto Rico, and the title role of *Rusalka* with Houston Grand Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Micaëla in *Carmen* (debut, 2005).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* with Lyric Opera of Chicago, Mimì in *La Bohème* with the Paris Opera and Dallas Opera, Cio-Cio-San at Covent Garden and with the Houston Grand Opera, and Paolina in Donizetti's *Poliuto* at the Glyndebourne Festival. She has also sung Desdemona in *Otello* with Lyric Opera of Chicago, Cio-Cio-San with the Vienna State Opera, Mimì and Cio-Cio-San with Munich's Bavarian State Opera, Antonia in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* with the Paris Opera, Marguerite in *Faust* with Lyric Opera of Chicago, Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore* for her debut with the Vienna State Opera, the title role of *Luisa Miller* for her debut with the Deutsche Oper Berlin, and Amelia in *Simon Boccanegra*, Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*, and Micaëla with the San Francisco Opera.



John Del Carlo

BASS-BARITONE (SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA)

THIS SEASON The Sacristan in *Tosca* and Benoit and Alcindoro in *La Bohème* at the Met.

MET APPEARANCES Dr. Bartolo in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Gonzalo in Adès's *The Tempest*, the title role of *Don Pasquale*, the Speaker in *The Magic Flute*, the Prince in *Adriana Lecouvreur*, Kothner in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (debut, 1993), Mathieu in *Andrea Chénier*, Swallow in *Peter Grimes*, Alfieri in Bolcom's *A View from the Bridge*, Quince in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Baron Zeta in *The Merry Widow*, Dansker in *Billy Budd*, and Balducci in *Benvenuto Cellini*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Among his many roles with the San Francisco Opera are Dulcamara in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Alidoro in *La Cenerentola*, General Boom in Offenbach's *La Grande-Duchesse de Gérolstein*, and the title role of *Falstaff*. He has also appeared with the Paris Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Seattle Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Covent Garden, Houston Grand Opera, San Diego Opera, and at the Aix-en-Provence Festival.

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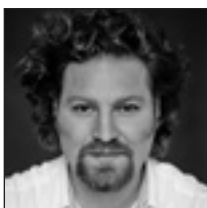
Alexey Lavrov

BARITONE (PECHORA, RUSSIA)

THIS SEASON Schauarnard in *La Bohème*, Silvio in *Pagliacci*, and Dr. Malatesta in *Don Pasquale* at the Met and the title role of Rachmaninoff's *Aleko* with Opera Carolina.

MET APPEARANCES Dominik in *Arabella*, Flemish Deputy in *Don Carlo* (debut, 2013), Herald in *Otello*, Yamadori in *Madama Butterfly*, and Huntsman in *Rusalka*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Mercurio in *Roméo et Juliette* for his debut at the Festival Internacional de Ópera Alejandro Granda in Lima, Peru, Demetrius in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for his debut at Moscow's Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Music Theatre, Robert in *Iolanta* and Silvio at the Mikhailovsky Theatre, the title role of *Eugene Onegin* at Germany's Kammeroper Schloss Rheinsberg Festival and on tour with the Mikhailovsky Theatre in Japan, Donald in *Billy Budd* in Santiago, and a Flemish Deputy at the Théâtre du Capitole Toulouse. He was a member of the Young Artist Program at the Bolshoi Opera and is a graduate of the Met's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.



Levente Molnár

BARITONE (GYERGYÓREMETE, ROMANIA)

THIS SEASON Marcello in *La Bohème* for his debut and Dr. Malatesta in *Don Pasquale* at the Met, Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* and Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* at Munich's Bavarian State Opera, and Ford in *Falstaff* and Marcello at the Hungarian State Opera.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has sung Masetto in *Don Giovanni*, Belcore in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Figaro, and Marcello at Covent Garden, Figaro at Madrid's Teatro Real and the Vienna State Opera, Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro* at Tokyo's New National Theatre, Escamillo in *Carmen* in Copenhagen, and Wolfram in *Tannhäuser* for the Deutsche Oper Berlin. He has appeared in a number of roles at the Hungarian State Opera, including Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, Dandini in *La Cenerentola*, Dr. Malatesta, Count Almaviva, Don Giovanni, and the title role of *Eugene Onegin*; and at the Bavarian State Opera, including Peter in *Hänsel und Gretel*, Paolo Albiani in *Simon Boccanegra*, Donner in *Das Rheingold*, Amfortas in *Parsifal*, Marcello, Figaro, Sharpless, and Belcore.



Ramón Vargas

TENOR (MEXICO CITY, MEXICO)

THIS SEASON Rodolfo in *La Bohème* at the Met and Milan's La Scala, Gabriele Adorno in *Simon Boccanegra* at Barcelona's Liceu, the title role of *La Clemenza di Tito* in Zurich, and Riccardo in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, des Grieux in *Manon*, and the title role of *Don Carlo* at the Vienna State Opera.

MET APPEARANCES More than 200 performances of 19 roles, including Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Don Carlo, Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*, Gabriele Adorno, Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* (debut, 1992), the Duke in *Rigoletto*, Alfredo in *La Traviata*, Foresto in *Attila*, both Gounod and Berlioz's Faust, Lenski in *Eugene Onegin*, Count Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, and Don Ramiro in *La Cenerentola*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has sung the original French version of *Don Carlos* in Vienna; the title role of *Werther* in Los Angeles, Vienna, and Madrid; Rodolfo in *Luisa Miller* in Paris and Munich; the title role of *Idomeneo* in Salzburg and Paris; Hoffmann *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at La Scala; des Grieux in Vienna; Oronte in *I Lombardi* in Florence; and Lenski in Florence and Vienna.



Christian Van Horn

BASS (ROCKVILLE CENTRE, NEW YORK)

THIS SEASON Colline in *La Bohème* at the Met, Alidoro in *La Cenerentola* and Frère Laurent in *Roméo et Juliette* at Lyric Opera of Chicago, Escamillo in *Carmen* with the Canadian Opera Company, and the Prefect in Donizetti's *Linda di Chamounix* for his debut at the Rome Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Pistola in *Falstaff* (debut, 2013).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Publio in *La Clemenza di Tito* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Oroveso in *Norma* and Colline with the San Francisco Opera, the Four Villains in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* with Munich's Bavarian State Opera, Zaccaria in *Nabucco* with the Seattle Opera, and Colline with the San Diego Opera. He has also sung Timur in *Turandot* and the Four Villains with the San Francisco Opera, Claudio in *Agrippina* at Boston Lyric Opera, Colline at the Santa Fe Opera and Los Angeles Opera, Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Arizona Opera and Chicago Opera Theatre, and Masetto in *Don Giovanni* and Karenin in the world premiere of David Carlson's *Anna Karenina* with Florida Grand Opera.