

GIUSEPPE VERDI

AIDA

CONDUCTOR

Marco Armiliato

PRODUCTION

Sonja Frisell

SET DESIGNER

Gianni Quaranta

COSTUME DESIGNER

Dada Saligeri

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Gil Wechsler

CHOREOGRAPHER

Alexei Ratmansky

REVIVAL STAGE DIRECTOR

Stephen Pickover

GENERAL MANAGER

Peter Gelb

MUSIC DIRECTOR EMERITUS

James Levine

PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR

Fabio Luisi

Opera in four acts

Libretto by Antonio Ghislanzoni

Saturday, November 19, 2016

12:30-4:15PM

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

The revival of this production is made possible by a gift from the **Estate of Francine Berry**

The Metropolitan Opera

2016-17 SEASON

The 1,152nd Metropolitan Opera performance of
GIUSEPPE VERDI'S

AIDA

CONDUCTOR
Marco Armiliato

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

RAMFIS
Dmitry Belosselskiy

A PRIESTESS
Jennifer Check*

RADAMÈS
Marco Berti

AMONASRO
Mark Delavan

AMNERIS
Ekaterina Gubanova

SOLO DANCERS
Navarra Novy-Williams
Bradley Shelver

AIDA
Liudmyla Monastyrska

THE KING
Soloman Howard

A MESSENGER
Eduardo Valdes

Saturday, November 19, 2016, 12:30-4:15PM



A scene from
Verdi's *Aida*

Chorus Master **Donald Palumbo**
 Musical Preparation **Yelena Kurdina, Robert Morrison,
 Gareth Morrell, and Joshua Greene**
 Assistant Stage Directors **Jonathon Loy and J. Knighten Smit**
 Stage Band Conductor **Gregory Buchalter**
 Italian Coach **Gildo Di Nunzio**
 Prompter **Yelena Kurdina**
 Met Titles **Christopher Bergen**
 Scenery, properties, and electrical props constructed and
 painted in **Metropolitan Opera Shops**
 Costumes executed by **Metropolitan Opera Costume
 Department**
 Wigs and Makeup executed by **Metropolitan Opera
 Wig and Makeup Department**
 Headdresses by **Rodney Gordon Studios and Miles-Laity, Ltd.**
 Animals supervised by **All-Tame Animals, Inc.**

* Graduate of the
Lindemann Young Artist
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The Met
ropolitan
Opera

2016-17 SEASON

A scene from *La Bohème*

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during the 2016-17 season.



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Synopsis

Act I

Egypt, during the reign of the pharaohs. At the royal palace in Memphis, the high priest Ramfis tells the warrior Radamès that Ethiopia is preparing another attack against Egypt. Radamès hopes to command the Egyptian army. He is in love with Aida, the Ethiopian slave of Princess Amneris, the King's daughter, and he believes that victory in the war would enable him to free her and marry her. But Amneris also loves Radamès and is jealous of Aida. A messenger brings news that the Ethiopians are advancing. The King names Radamès to lead the army, and all join in a patriotic anthem. Left alone, Aida is torn between her love for Radamès and loyalty to her native country, where her father, Amonasro, is king.

In the temple of Vulcan, the priests consecrate Radamès to the service of the god. Ramfis orders him to protect the homeland.

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 1:15 PM)

Act II

Ethiopia has been defeated, and Amneris waits for the triumphant return of Radamès. Alone with Aida, she pretends that Radamès has fallen in battle, then says he is still alive. Aida's reactions leave no doubt that she loves Radamès. Amneris is certain she will defeat her rival.

At the city gates, the King and Amneris observe the victory celebrations and crown Radamès with a victor's wreath. Captured Ethiopians are led in, among them Amonasro, Aida's father, who signals his daughter not to reveal his identity as king. Radamès is impressed by Amonasro's eloquent plea for mercy and asks that the order for the prisoners to be executed be overruled, and for them to be freed instead. The King grants his request but keeps Amonasro in custody. He declares that as a victor's reward, Radamès will have Amneris's hand in marriage.

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 2:30 PM)

Act III

On the eve of Amneris's wedding, Ramfis and Amneris pray in a temple on the banks of the Nile. Nearby, Aida is waiting for Radamès, lost in thoughts of her homeland. Suddenly, Amonasro appears. Appealing to Aida's sense of duty, he makes her promise to find out from Radamès which route the Egyptian army will take to invade Ethiopia. Amonasro hides as Radamès arrives. He and Aida dream about their future life together, and Radamès agrees to run

away with her. Aida asks him about his army's route, and just as he reveals the secret, Amonasro emerges from his hiding place. Realizing what he has done, Radamès is horrified. Aida and Amonasro are trying to calm him when Ramfis and Amneris step out of the temple. Father and daughter are able to escape, but Radamès surrenders to the priests.

Pause

Act IV

Radamès awaits trial as a traitor, believing Aida to be dead. Even after he learns that she has survived, he rejects Amneris's offer to save him if he gives up Aida. Brought before the priests, Radamès refuses to answer their accusations and is condemned to be buried alive. Amneris begs for mercy, but the judges will not change their verdict.

Aida has hidden in the vault to share Radamès's fate. They express their love for the last time while Amneris, in the temple above, prays for Radamès.

Giuseppe Verdi

Aida

Premiere: Cairo Opera House, 1871

This grandest of grand operas features an epic backdrop for what is in essence an intimate love story. Set in ancient Egypt and packed with magnificent choruses, complex ensembles, and elaborate ballets, *Aida* never loses sight of its three protagonists: Amneris, the proud daughter of the pharaoh; her slave, Aida, who is the princess of the rival kingdom of Ethiopia; and Radamès, the Egyptian warrior they both love. Few operas have matched *Aida* in its exploration of the conflict of private emotion and public duty, and perhaps no other has remained to the present day so unanimously appreciated by audiences and critics alike.

The Creators

In a remarkable career spanning six decades in the theater, Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901) composed 28 operas, at least half of which are at the core of today's repertoire. His role in Italy's cultural and political development has made him an icon in his native country. The story of *Aida* is thought to be the creation of Auguste Mariette (1821–1881), an extraordinary French archaeologist who was the founder of the Egyptian Museum of Cairo (though opinions differ—Verdi biographer Mary Jane Phillips-Matz has argued that the source was actually Temistocle Solera). Camille du Locle (1832–1903), who collaborated on the scenario with Mariette and suggested the story to Verdi, had worked with the composer on the libretto of *Don Carlos*. An opera impresario in Paris, he commissioned *Carmen* from Georges Bizet for the Opéra Comique in 1875. *Aida*'s librettist, Antonio Ghislanzoni (1824–1893), was a novelist and poet as well as the creator of some 85 librettos, most of which are forgotten today. He had previously worked with Verdi on the revision of *La Forza del Destino* (1869).

The Setting

The libretto indicates merely that the opera takes place in “ancient Egypt, in the time of the pharaohs.” This may sound vague, but it was a clear direction to approach the drama as myth rather than anthropology or history. Europe's fascination with the ancient Nile civilization had been piqued with stories from Napoleon's Egyptian expedition at the end of the 18th century, and continued into the mid-19th century with the numerous archaeological discoveries being taken from the sands of Egypt and shipped to museums in the European capitals.

The Music

The score of *Aida* is a sophisticated example of Italian Romanticism, imbued with a convincingly mysterious and exotic hue. Making no claims to authenticity (nobody knows what music in ancient Egypt sounded like), Verdi created a unique musical palette for this opera. The grandeur of the subject is aptly conveyed with huge patriotic choruses (Acts I and II) and the unforgettable Triumphant March in Act II. These public moments often serve as frames for the solos of the leading tenor and soprano: his grueling “Celeste Aida” right at the beginning of Act I, her demanding “Ritorna vincitor!” that follows, and her great internal journey, “O patria mia,” in Act III. Perhaps most impressive in this drama of public versus private needs are the instances of solo voice pitted directly against complex ensembles and vast choruses: the tenor in the temple scene in Act I, the mezzo-soprano in the judgment scene in Act IV, and especially the soprano in the great triumphal scene in Act II.

Met History

Aida first came to the Met during the “German Seasons” of the 1880s and was performed in German until 1891. (The Met’s opening 1883–84 season was a financial disaster, so for a few seasons the company hired less expensive German singers and had them sing in their native language.) *Aida* has been among the most popular operas in the Met’s repertory since those early days. Conductor Arturo Toscanini inaugurated his Met career with a spectacular new production (even though the previous production was only a year old) for opening night of the 1908–09 season. That performance featured the Met debut of Czech soprano Emmy Destinn (who would sing the title role 52 times at the Met through 1920) as well as American mezzo Louise Homer (who sang Amneris 97 times between 1900 and 1927), Enrico Caruso (91 performances as Radamès at the Met between 1903 and 1919), and the great baritone Pasquale Amato (79 appearances between 1903 and 1919). Other unforgettable *Aidas* at the Met include Zinka Milanov (1938–58), Elisabeth Rethberg (1922–42), and Leontyne Price (from 1961 until her farewell appearance at the Met in 1985). The current production by Sonja Frisell, with sets by the acclaimed film production designer Gianni Quaranta (*A Room with a View*), premiered in 1988 with James Levine conducting a cast headed by Leona Mitchell, Fiorenza Cossotto, Plácido Domingo, Sherrill Milnes, and Paul Plishka.

Program Note

After the 1867 premiere in Paris of Verdi's *Don Carlos*, Camille du Locle, the composer's Parisian friend and co-librettist for that opera, persisted in attempts to further collaborate with the most famous opera composer in the world at the time. The two struck up a correspondence after du Locle's return from a trip to Egypt: "a land," wrote Verdi, "which once possessed a grandeur and a civilization which I could never bring myself to admire." How ironic that he would, not long after, embark on one of the most notable artistic monuments of 19th-century "Egyptomania," the fad for all things Egyptian that followed Napoleon's expeditions in 1797–1801 and the subsequent magnificent archeological discoveries.

The process that led to *Aida* began with the Khedive of Egypt, Ismail Pasha, known as Ismail the Magnificent, who stated in 1879 (the same year in which he was toppled from power by the British), "My country is no longer in Africa; we are now part of Europe." As part of the festivities marking the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, the Khedive invited Verdi to compose a celebratory ode, but the composer declined: he had no desire to write *pièces d'occasion*. Determined to secure a new work by Verdi, the Khedive then offered a much more attractive commission—a new opera to open Cairo's extravagant new opera house, for which the composer was offered unlimited rehearsal time whenever he wished. When Verdi learned that Wagner might be offered the project should the great Italian composer continue to be obdurate, he capitulated almost immediately. A shrewd businessman who recognized the value of having a ruler so desirous of his services, Verdi requested—and received—a fee four times what he was paid for *Don Carlos*.

It was du Locle who brought to Verdi's attention the scenario that eventually became *Aida*, but if he had hoped for a French-language, Parisian version of the opera, his hopes were dashed by the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War, which threw the French capital into chaos. Verdi also encountered the usual complications attendant on completing a libretto with sufficient specimens of "parola scenica" (a term he invented in a letter to his Italian librettist Antonio Ghislanzoni in 1870 to describe words and phrases that leap off the page in moments of heightened drama, such as "Ritorna vincitor!"), and casting the La Scala and Cairo premieres proved troublesome, as well. Ultimately, the delays prevented the work from being ready for the 1869 opening of the Cairo Opera House, and Khedive Ismael had to be content with a performance of *Rigoletto* instead. Finally, with all the complexities resolved, *Aida* received its world premiere in Cairo on December 24, 1871, and its European premiere in Milan on February 8, 1872. The La Scala performance—Verdi cared more about this one—was a huge success with the public, but the critics were less happy with the musical mixture of "the modern school" (influences from Wagner, Meyerbeer, and Gounod) and traditional Italian traits than they had been with *Don Carlos*.

Verdi, worried about critical reaction, wrote to his friend Clarina Maffei with regard to the fourth production of the opera in Padua:

The success of *Aida*, as you know, was outspoken and decisive, untainted by *ifs* and *buts* and such unkind phrases as *Wagnerism*, the *Future*, the *Art of Melody*, etc., etc. The audience surrendered to its feelings and applauded. That's all!

Verdi himself conducted the first Parisian performance on March 22, 1880, and this time, it was an unqualified success with public and press alike. Sometimes it takes a few years, or more than a few, to bring a work into proper focus.

That Verdi accepted the Khedive's commission is both somewhat surprising—in light of his characteristic demands for original, even experimental theatrical works—and typical: it was not unknown for him to be drawn to simpler, more old-fashioned plots in the wake of radical endeavors. The love-triangle of Idamante, Ilia, and Electra in Mozart's *Idomeneo* some 90 years earlier is a predecessor for Radamès, Aida, and Amneris in *Aida*; Verdi described the plot as “not entirely new,” its outline simple and straightforward. What attracted him was the sheer theatricality of the story, among other things, including the possibilities of new and exotic orchestral colors. The more limited orchestras of earlier 19th-century Italian opera had long since been replaced by immense ensembles—in this case, including six “Egyptian” trumpets (actually Roman-made), a military banda (every town had its brass band for public occasions, and they are an enduring part of Verdi's orchestras), and an underground ensemble of four trumpets, four trombones, and bass drum for the tomb scene. The distinctive coloration of this opera begins with the first ultra-soft, muted violin sounds at the start of the Prelude; this sort of atmospheric approach, beginning and ending softly, with richer, fuller sonorities in the middle, was fashionable at the time, but Verdi's canonic workings and radical harmonies are his own. We hear an initial theme—a rising fragment ending with a “sighing figure”—that is associated throughout the opera with the heroine Aida and love first repressed, then admitted, followed by a more menacing descending theme treated in counterpoint and associated with the priests of Fthà, or Ptah, the creator god and demiurge who existed before all other things in Egyptian mythology. (We hear Aida's theme memorably in Act III played by the flutes, a high sustained tone in the violins, and cellos *sotto voce*, as she is waiting for Radamès in the temple.) Other equally memorable orchestral sounds are to be found in abundance—for example, the translucent tapestry of strings at the start of Act III, with the note G played in various ways (*pizzicato*, muted, *tremolando*, distributed across four octaves in the first violins in swaying fashion). The result is a texture of incomparable delicacy, mystery, and beauty, of nocturnal stillness that is nonetheless vibrant with quivering life.

But this, of course, is an Italian opera, in which voices reign supreme. Verdi's publisher Ricordi describes Aida as being around 20 years old, of “a loving nature,” with “meekness and gentleness” her chief characteristics. This loving nature has

musical heights and depths; we hear despair, longing, and ardor with a huge vocal wingspan in "Ritorna vincitor!" and plaintive homesickness in "O patria mia," her Act III romanza. "Oh my country, never more will I see you," she sings before and after each verse, the line often splitting into expressive fragments. Her father, Amonasro, capable of lyricism when he is persuading Aida to do his bidding, shows his true colors when he bursts forth in anger against the Egyptians. "Just as a man in a towering rage oversteps all the bounds of order, moderation, and propriety and forgets himself completely, so should the music likewise forget itself," Mozart said of Osmin's music in his *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, and the same is true of Amonasro. Radamès is given sufficient tenor heroics to satisfy any operagoer, until he realizes in Act III that he has betrayed his country. The lyrical sweetness of his part in the death-duet at the opera's conclusion is a new vein of pathos for him. The mezzo-soprano Amneris is by far the most complex of the major characters. She genuinely loves Radamès, but she is a master of dissimulation, accustomed to power, and determined to humiliate Aida; the melody associated with her tends to appear in the orchestra, with the vocal line ("parlante melodico," or "melodious speech") grafted onto it. But when she pleads with Radamès in Act IV ("Ah! tu dei vivere"), Verdi gives her some of the most anguished, majestic, and beautiful melody ever written for a mezzo, culminating in a plea to the gods for mercy ("Numi, pietà"—words Aida had sung earlier) couched as gasping, sobbing fragments. Ramfis is among the most powerful of all the priests, hermits, and prophets sprinkled throughout Verdi's operas, and he is an especially unyielding and bloodthirsty specimen of the type. In the judgment scene of Act IV, he and his priests sing a version of plainchant-like melody—not to be found in any liturgy—of Verdi's invention, and he is often accompanied by the orchestra's version of sounds from the crypt.

This opera was Verdi's hail-and-farewell to the French-derived Italianate version of grand opera, based on history (or imagined history) and filled with huge ceremonial scenes, crowd scenes, massed forces of many kinds. The second scene in Act I, with its invocations of Fthà to melodies made to sound non-Western (a kind of exotic wailing); the dances for Moorish slaves and for the temple priestesses; the massing of male chorus, female chorus, banda, the soloists, and the entire orchestra for the triumphal scene of Act II: these are guaranteed to wow the spectator. But Verdi has a heartbreaking habit in his late tragedies of pulling the camera away from the gigantic and the public to focus instead on the most intimate matters of love and death, and he does so here. The work's final moments, with the chorus above the tomb chanting "Immenso Fthà" and Amneris pleading in anguished monotone for Radamès's soul, are like none other in operatic history.

—Susan Youens

Susan Youens is the J. W. Van Gorkom Professor of Music at the University of Notre Dame and has written eight books on the music of Franz Schubert and Hugo Wolf.

The Cast



Marco Armiliato

CONDUCTOR (GENOA, ITALY)

THIS SEASON *Aida*, *Manon Lescaut*, *La Bohème*, and *Cyrano de Bergerac* at the Met; *Otello*, *Il Trovatore*, *Aida*, *Turandot*, *La Fanciulla del West*, and *L'Elisir d'Amore* at the Vienna State Opera; *Otello* at the Zurich Opera; and *Madama Butterfly* in Madrid.

MET APPEARANCES Nearly 400 performances of 23 operas, including *Il Trovatore*, *Anna Bolena*, *La Bohème* (debut, 1998), *Tosca*, *Francesca da Rimini*, *Rigoletto*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *La Rondine*, *La Traviata*, *La Fille du Régiment*, *Turandot*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, and *Pagliacci*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Highlights of last season included *Lucrezia Borgia* in Barcelona, *La Traviata* at the Bavarian State Opera, and *L'Elisir d'Amore*, *La Bohème*, *La Traviata*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Manon Lescaut*, and *Roméo et Juliette* at the Vienna State Opera. A frequent guest at many of the world's leading opera houses, he made his Italian debut in 1995 at Venice's Teatro La Fenice with *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and his international debut that same year at the Vienna State Opera with *Andrea Chénier*.



Ekaterina Gubanova

MEZZO-SOPRANO (MOSCOW, RUSSIA)

THIS SEASON Brangäne in *Tristan und Isolde* and Amneris in *Aida* at the Met, the title role of *Carmen* at Lyric Opera of Chicago, Fidès in Meyerbeer's *Le prophete*, and Azucena in *Il Trovatore* in Barcelona.

MET APPEARANCES Eboli in *Don Carlo*, Jane Seymour in *Anna Bolena*, Giulietta in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, and Hélène Bezukhova in *War and Peace* (debut, 2007).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana* at the Deutsche Oper Berlin; Azucena at the Paris Opera; Fricka in *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre* at the Berlin Staatsoper, La Scala, and at the BBC Proms; Waltraute in *Götterdämmerung* at the Berlin Staatsoper; Amneris in *Aida* at the Vienna State Opera, the Bavarian State Opera, and St. Petersburg's Mariinsky Theater; Brangäne at the Paris Opera, the festivals of Munich, Baden-Baden, and Rotterdam, and in Tokyo, Buenos Aires, and Madrid; Adalgisa in *Norma* at Munich's Bavarian State Opera and in Barcelona; Eboli at La Scala; Olga in *Eugene Onegin* and Flosshilde in *Das Rheingold* in Salzburg; and Cassandra in *Les Troyens* at the Edinburgh Festival.



Liudmyla Monastyrska

SOPRANO (KIEV, UKRAINE)

THIS SEASON The title role of *Aida* and Abigail in *Nabucco* at the Met, the title role of *Tosca* at the Paris Opera and Berlin Staatsoper, Elisabetta in *Don Carlo* at Deutsche Oper Berlin, and Abigail at Deutsche Oper Berlin, Bavarian State Opera, and Munich Opera Festival.

MET APPEARANCES Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana* and the title roles of *Tosca* and *Aida* (debut, 2012).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS She made her stage debut in Kiev as Tatiana in *Eugene Onegin* in 1996 and made her debut in the West in the title role of *Tosca* at Deutsche Oper Berlin in 2010. Since, she has sung *Aida* at the Paris Opera and Vienna State Opera, *Abigail* and *Lady Macbeth* in *Macbeth* at Covent Garden, *Tosca* and *Aida* at the Houston Grand Opera, and *Abigail*, *Santuzza*, and *Aida* at La Scala. She has also sung *Odabella* in *Attila* at Deutsche Oper Berlin, *Leonora* in *La Forza del Destino* and *Lady Macbeth* at the Berlin Staatsoper, and *Santuzza* at the Salzburg Easter Festival.



Dmitry Belosselskiy

BASS (PAVLOGRAD, UKRAINE)

THIS SEASON *Ramfis* in *Aida* and *Zaccaria* in *Nabucco* at the Met, the title role of *Boris Godunov* at the Bavarian State Opera and Moscow's Bolshoi Theater, *Méphistophélès* in *La Damnation de Faust* at the Bolshoi Theater, *Gremin* in *Eugene Onegin* at Lyric Opera of Chicago, *King Philip* in *Don Carlo* in Florence, and *Ramfis* at the Salzburg Festival.

MET APPEARANCES Old Convict in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, *de Silva* in *Ernani*, and *Zaccaria* in *Nabucco* (debut, 2011).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS A tour of Asia and Moscow with La Scala as *Fiesco* in *Simon Boccanegra* and bass soloist in Verdi's *Requiem*; *Fiesco* at Bavarian State Opera, Berlin Staatsoper, and in Rome and Tokyo; *Boris Godunov*, *King Philip*, *Escamillo* in *Carmen*, and *Zaccaria* at the Bolshoi Theater; *Zaccaria* at the Vienna State Opera, Salzburg Festival, La Scala, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and in Tokyo; *Sparafucile* in *Rigoletto* at the Houston Grand Opera; *Talbot* in *Giovanna d'Arco* at La Scala; the title role of *Attila* at the Theater an der Wien; *Oroveso* in *Norma* with Washington National Opera; and *Vladimir* in *Prince Igor* in Zurich.



PHOTO: KRISTIAN SCHULLER/METROPOLITAN OPERA

KAIJA SAARIAHO / LIBRETTO BY AMIN MAALOUF

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DEC 1, 6, 10 mat, 14, 17 eve, 21, 24 mat, 29

The Metropolitan Opera presents the New York premiere of one of the most acclaimed operas of recent years, Kaija Saariaho's mesmerizing *L'Amour de Loin*, in a spellbinding new production by Robert Lepage. Susanna Mälkki conducts.

Tickets from \$27

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Marco Berti

TENOR (COMO, ITALY)

THIS SEASON Radamès in *Aida* at the Met, Calàf in *Turandot* in Philadelphia, Turiddu in *Cavalleria Rusticana* at the Paris Opera and in Bologna, and Manrico in *Il Trovatore* in Barcelona.

MET APPEARANCES Calàf, Manrico, Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* (debut, 2004), Don José in *Carmen*, and Cavaradossi in Act II of *Tosca* for the opening of the 2005–06 season.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS In recent seasons, he has sung Canio in *Pagliacci* at La Scala and the Los Angeles Opera; Radamès in Turin and Verona; Pollione in *Norma* at the San Francisco Opera, Zurich Opera, and Paris's Théâtre des Champs-Élysées; Cavaradossi with the Paris Opera and Deutsche Oper Berlin; Giannetto in Giordano's *La Cena delle Beffe* at La Scala; Don Alvaro in *La Forza del Destino* in Genoa; Manrico in Naples; and the title role of *Otello* in Bilbao. He has also sung Cavaradossi with the Los Angeles Opera, Manrico with the Houston Grand Opera, Calàf and Cavaradossi in Munich, and Calàf with the San Francisco Opera.



Mark Delavan

BARITONE (PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY)

THIS SEASON Amonasro in *Aida* at the Met and Jack Rance in *La Fanciulla del West* in Detroit.

MET APPEARANCES Gianciotto in *Francesca da Rimini*, Wotan in Wagner's *Ring* cycle, Tomsy in *The Queen of Spades*, Amonasro in *Aida* (debut, 2001), Gérard in *Andrea Chénier*, Don Carlo in *La Forza del Destino*, the Messenger in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, Scarpia in *Tosca*, and the title roles of *Nabucco*, *Rigoletto*, and *Simon Boccanegra*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Wotan with the San Francisco Opera and Deutsche Oper Berlin; Scarpia with the San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Atlanta Opera, Canadian Opera Company, and Pittsburgh Opera; Jack Rance with the Santa Fe Opera; Don Carlo with Washington National Opera; Alfio in *Cavalleria Rusticana* and Tonio in *Pagliacci* at Deutsche Oper Berlin; the title role of *Der Fliegende Holländer* with Arizona Opera; Jochanaan in *Salome* in Genoa; Giovanni in the world premiere of Marco Tutino's *Two Women* with the San Francisco Opera; and Mandryka in *Arabella* with the Santa Fe Opera.



Soloman Howard

BASS (WASHINGTON, D.C.)

THIS SEASON The King in *Aida* at the Met, Fafner in *Das Rheingold* at North Carolina Opera, and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with Christoph Eschenbach and the National Symphony Orchestra and with Gustavo Dudamel conducting the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra.

MET APPEARANCES The King (debut, 2014).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS The Duke of Verona in *Roméo et Juliette* and the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni* at Santa Fe Opera; Fafner in *Das Rheingold* and *Siegfried*, Frederick Douglass / Martin Luther King in *Appomattox*, Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte*, the Commendatore, and the High Priest of Baal in *Nabucco* at Washington National Opera; Gremin in *Eugene Onegin*, Colline in *La Bohème*, and the title role of D.J. Sparr's *Approaching Ali* with North Carolina Opera; Banquo in *Macbeth* and Sarastro at Glimmerglass Opera; Dr. Grenvil in *La Traviata* for his debut with the Los Angeles Opera; Moser in *I Masnadieri* with Washington Concert Opera, and Porgy in a concert version of *Porgy and Bess* with the Czech National Symphony Orchestra.