

JACQUES OFFENBACH

LES CONTES D'HOFFMANN

CONDUCTOR
Johannes Debus

PRODUCTION
Bartlett Sher

SET DESIGNER
Michael Yeorgan

COSTUME DESIGNER
Catherine Zuber

LIGHTING DESIGNER
James F. Ingalls

CHOREOGRAPHER
Dou Dou Huang

REVIVAL STAGE DIRECTOR
Gina Lapinski

GENERAL MANAGER
Peter Gelb

MUSIC DIRECTOR EMERITUS
James Levine

MUSIC DIRECTOR DESIGNATE
Yannick Nézet-Séguin

Opera in three acts, a prologue,
and an epilogue

Libretto by Jules Barbier, based on the
play by Barbier and Michel Carré (itself
based on stories by E.T.A. Hoffmann)

Saturday, October 7, 2017
8:00–11:40PM

The production of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*
was made possible by generous gifts from the
Hermione Foundation, Laura Sloate, Trustee;
and the **Gramma Fisher Foundation,**
Marshalltown, Iowa

Additional funding was received from
the Estate of Helen F. Kelbert and
Mr. and Mrs. William R. Miller

The Metropolitan Opera

2017-18 SEASON

The 272nd Metropolitan Opera performance of
JACQUES OFFENBACH'S

LES CONTES D'HOFFMANN

CONDUCTOR
Johannes Debus

HOFFMANN, A POET
Vittorio Grigolo

OLYMPIA, A DOLL
Erin Morley*

ANTONIA, A YOUNG SINGER
STELLA, A PRIMA DONNA
Anita Hartig

GIULIETTA, A COURTESAN
Oksana Volkova

LINDORF
COPPÉLIUS
DR. MIRACLE
DAPERTUTTO
Laurent Naouri

THE MUSE OF POETRY
NICKLAUSSE, HOFFMANN'S
FRIEND
Tara Erraught

ANDRÈS
COCHENILLE
FRANTZ
PITICHINACCIO
Christophe Mortagne

NATHANAËL, A STUDENT
SPALANZANI, A PHYSICIST
Mark Schowalter

LUTHER, PROPRIETOR OF
THE TAVERN
CRESPER, ANTONIA'S FATHER
Robert Pomakov

ANTONIA'S MOTHER
Olesya Petrova

HERMANN, A STUDENT
SCHLÉMIL
David Crawford

Saturday, October 7, 2017, 8:00-11:40PM



Erin Morley as
Olympia and Vittorio
Grigolo as Hoffmann
in Offenbach's *Les
Contes d'Hoffmann*

Chorus Master **Donald Palumbo**

Musical Preparation **John Keenan, Denise Massé,
Howard Watkins*, Joshua Greene, and
Nimrod David Pfeffer***

Assistant Stage Director **Paula Suozzi**

Prompter **Joshua Greene**

Met Titles **Sonya Friedman**

Assistant to the Costume Designer **David Newell**

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* Graduate of the
Lindemann Young Artist
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MOZART

DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE

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James Levine conducts the full-length, German version of Mozart's enchanting fable of love, friendship, and the triumph of goodness. Julie Taymor's magical production features a cast of young stars, including Charles Castronovo as Tamino, Markus Werba as Papageno, and soprano Golda Schultz in her Met debut as Pamina.

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Synopsis

Prologue

The poet E.T.A. Hoffmann is in love with Stella, a renowned opera singer. Lindorf, a rich counselor, also loves her and has intercepted a note she has written to Hoffmann. Lindorf is confident he will win her for himself. Arriving at Luther's tavern with a group of students, Hoffmann sings a ballad about a disfigured dwarf named Kleinzach. During the song, his mind wanders to recollections of a beautiful woman. When Hoffmann recognizes Lindorf as his rival, the two men trade insults. Hoffmann's Muse, who has assumed the guise of his friend Nicklausse, interrupts, but the encounter leaves the poet with a sense of impending disaster. He begins to tell the stories of his three past loves.

Act I

In his workshop in Paris, the eccentric inventor Spalanzani has created a mechanical doll named Olympia. Hoffmann, who thinks the girl is Spalanzani's daughter, has fallen in love with her. Spalanzani's former partner Coppélius sells Hoffmann a pair of magic glasses, through which he alone perceives Olympia as human. When Coppélius demands his share of the profits that the two inventors expect to make from the doll, Spalanzani gives him a worthless check.

Guests arrive at the fairground, and Olympia captivates the crowd with the performance of a dazzling aria, which is interrupted several times in order for the doll's mechanism to be recharged. Oblivious to this while watching her through his glasses, Hoffmann is enchanted. He declares his love, and the two dance. Olympia whirls faster and faster as her mechanism spins out of control. During the melee, Hoffmann's glasses break. Coppélius, having discovered that the check was worthless, returns in a fury. He grabs Olympia and tears her apart as the guests mock Hoffmann for falling in love with a machine.

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 9:10 PM)

Act II

At an elegant home in Munich, the young girl Antonia sings a plaintive love song filled with memories of her dead mother, a famous singer. Her father, Crespel, has taken her away in the hopes of ending her affair with Hoffmann and begs her to give up singing: She has inherited her mother's weak heart, and the effort will endanger her life. Hoffmann arrives, and Antonia joins him in singing until she nearly faints. Crespel returns, alarmed by the arrival of the charlatan Dr. Miracle, who treated Crespel's wife the day she died. The doctor claims he can cure Antonia, but Crespel accuses him of killing his wife and forces him out. Hoffmann, overhearing their conversation, asks Antonia to give up singing, and she reluctantly agrees. The moment he has left, Miracle reappears, urging

Antonia to sing. He conjures up a vision of her mother, who claims she wants her daughter to relive the glory of her own fame. Antonia can't resist. Her singing becomes more and more feverish until she collapses. Miracle coldly pronounces her dead.

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 10:30 PM)

Act III

At her palace in Venice, the courtesan Giulietta joins Nicklausse in singing a barcarolle. A party is in progress, and Hoffmann mockingly praises the pleasures of the flesh. When Giulietta introduces him to her current lover, Schlémil, Nicklausse warns the poet against the courtesan's charms. Hoffmann denies any interest in her. Having overheard them, the sinister Dapertutto produces a large diamond with which he will bribe Giulietta to steal Hoffmann's reflection—just as she already has stolen Schlémil's shadow. As Hoffmann is about to depart, Giulietta seduces him into confessing his love for her. Schlémil returns and accuses Giulietta of having left him for Hoffmann, who realizes with horror that he has lost his reflection. Schlémil challenges Hoffmann to a duel and is killed. Hoffmann takes the key to Giulietta's boudoir from his dead rival but finds the room empty. Returning, he sees her leaving the palace in the arms of the dwarf Pitichinaccio.

Epilogue

Having finished his tales, all Hoffmann wants is to forget. Nicklausse declares that each story describes a different aspect of one woman: Stella. Arriving in the tavern after her performance, the diva finds Hoffmann drunk and leaves with Lindorf. The Muse sheds the form of Nicklausse and resumes her true appearance, telling the poet to find consolation in his creative genius.

Jacques Offenbach

Les Contes d'Hoffmann

Premiere: Opéra Comique, Paris, 1881

After becoming the toast of Paris with his witty operettas, Jacques Offenbach set out to create a more serious work. He chose as his source a successful play based on the stories of visionary German writer E.T.A. Hoffmann. The play employed a narrative frame that made Hoffmann the protagonist of his own tales and united three of his most popular works—at once profound, eerie, and funny. Each episode recounts a catastrophic love affair: first with a girl who turns out to be an automated doll, then with a sickly young singer, and finally with a Venetian courtesan. In the prologue and epilogue, the hero is involved with an opera singer who seems like a combination of these three previous loves. Throughout the opera, Hoffmann is dogged by a diabolical nemesis and accompanied by his faithful friend Nicklausse, whose true identity is only revealed after bitter experience. Offenbach died before *Hoffmann's* premiere, leaving posterity without an authorized version of the score.

The Creators

Jacques Offenbach (1819–1880) was born Jacob Offenbach in Cologne, Germany, of Jewish ancestry. In 1833, he moved to Paris, where he became a hugely successful composer of almost 100 operettas. Many of his melodies, such as the can-can from *Orphée aux Enfers*, have made his music better known than his name. Jules Barbier (1825–1901) was a man of letters and the librettist for many operas, including Gounod's *Faust* and *Roméo et Juliette* and Thomas's *Hamlet*. He frequently collaborated with Michel Carré (1822–1872), with whom he wrote the play that served as the basis for the *Hoffmann* libretto. E.T.A. Hoffmann (1776–1822) was a German author and composer whose stories have inspired a variety of subsequent works, from Tchaikovsky's ballet *The Nutcracker* to Sigmund Freud's essay *Das Unheimliche* (*The Uncanny*).

The Setting

The action of the prologue and epilogue takes place in "Luther's tavern" in an unnamed city. The tavern setting (as well as the lurking presence of a diabolical client) recalls the Faust legend and casts an otherworldly ambience on the subsequent episodes. Each of these flashbacks occurs in an evocative setting representing a cross-section of European culture: Paris (Act I) is the center of the worlds of both fashion and science, which intersect in the tale of Olympia; Munich (Act II) is a convincing setting for the clash of the bourgeois and the

macabre in the Antonia scene; and the licentiousness of the Giulietta story (Act III) finds its counterpart in Venice. In the Met's current production, the world of Franz Kafka and the era of the 1920s provide a dramatic reference point.

The Music

Offenbach's music is diverse, ranging seamlessly from refined lyricism to a broader sort of vaudeville, with the extreme and fantastic moods of the story reflected in the eclectic score. The composer's operetta background is apparent in the students' drinking songs in the prologue and epilogue, in Frantz's comic song in Act II, and in Act I's glittering entr'acte and chorus. Virtuoso vocalism reigns in Olympia's aria, "Les oiseaux dans la charmille." The lyricism in Antonia's aria "Elle a fui, la tourterelle" gives way to the eeriness of the following scene, in which the villain conjures a vision of the girl's mother to urge Antonia to sing herself to death. Sensuality explodes in the Venetian act: in the ascending phrases of Hoffmann's "O Dieu! de quelle ivresse"; in the frenzied love duet; and in the famous barcarolle, whose theme reappears as part of the ravishing choral ensemble at the act's climax. The juxtaposition of beauty and grotesquerie, which is such a striking feature of the drama, also colors much of the music: The tenor's narrative about the dwarf Kleinzach in the prologue begins and ends as a nursery rhyme about a drunken, deformed gnome; in its central section, though, it becomes a gorgeous hymn to an idealized, perfect woman.

Met History

Hoffmann was first heard at the Met in 1913, with Frieda Hempel as Olympia, Olive Fremstad as Giulietta, and Lucrezia Bori as Antonia. Joseph Urban designed a new production in 1924, which lasted until the company unveiled another production in 1955, with Pierre Monteux conducting Richard Tucker, Roberta Peters, Risë Stevens, and Lucine Amara, and featuring Martial Singher as the Four Villains. In 1973, Richard Bonyngé conducted Joan Sutherland in all the leading female roles and Plácido Domingo in his first performance of Hoffmann. Riccardo Chailly, in his Met debut, conducted a new production by Otto Schenk in 1982 with Domingo, Ruth Welting, Tatiana Troyanos, and Christiane Eda-Pierre. Neil Shicoff (1984–2000) and Alfredo Kraus (1985–89) were among the other notable Hoffmanns in this production. Sopranos who have sung all the lead female roles on the same night include Catherine Malfitano (1984–85), Carol Vaness (1992–93), and Ruth Ann Swenson (2000), while other Villains include José van Dam (1989) and James Morris (1982–2005). Natalie Dessay was Olympia in 1998, and Susanne Mentzer sang the Muse/Nicklausse from 1992 to 2000. Met Music Director Emeritus James Levine first conducted the work in 1988 and has since led more than 20 performances, including the opening night of the current production by Bartlett Sher on December 3, 2009, which starred Joseph Calleja in the title role, Anna Netrebko as Antonia/Stella, and Alan Held as the Four Villains.

Program Note

In 1851, when Jacques Offenbach was a struggling salon cellist in his early 30s, he attended a play entitled *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*—based on three short stories by the Romantic author E.T.A. Hoffmann—and thought it would make a good opera; he even went so far as to talk over necessary alterations with the authors of the play, Jules Barbier and Michel Carré. When Offenbach returned to the idea 27 years later, Barbier (Carré had died in the meantime) created a libretto in which Hoffmann himself is the main character, while the episodes of his supposed amorous history are loosely derived from four of the real Hoffmann's tales: Act I is based on a portion of "The Sandman"; Act II comes from "Councilor Krespel"; and Act III is freely adapted from "The New Year's Eve Adventure." The framing story about the opera star Stella, whose very name means "star," is drawn from Hoffmann's "Don Juan," centered around a performance of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (both Hoffmann and Offenbach worshipped Mozart). This opera was to be Offenbach's swan-song and his first "serious" masterpiece after a long career writing wildly popular lighthearted operettas.

The grand opera Offenbach originally envisioned was intended for Paris's Théâtre de la Gaîté, with a single spinto soprano for all four female objects of desire and a single bass-baritone for all of the villains. Before the project was completed, however, the director went bankrupt, the troupe dispersed, and Offenbach instead brought his work to the famed impresario Léon Carvalho at the Opéra-Comique. This change of venue entailed musical changes to accommodate the singers in the new company, such as the transformation of Hoffmann from a baritone to a tenor and the rewriting of the female parts for the glittering coloratura soprano Adèle Isaac. Offenbach was in the process of revising what had been a simple dance-song for Giulietta in Act III, transposing it to a higher key and adding coloratura decoration galore, when he suddenly died.

Offenbach never considered a work complete until it had been performed for an audience, after which he would revise and finalize it. Because he died before he could complete the work, the first performances relied on scattered, incomplete, and contradictory drafts (though they found success with the public nonetheless). The Parisian composer and music teacher Ernest Guiraud assembled a performable edition, composed recitatives in place of spoken dialogue, and completed the orchestration. But Carvalho insisted on deleting the third act for the first performance, thus leaving out two of the most beautiful numbers in the entire opera (the Barcarolle and the love duet for Hoffmann and Giulietta), and dropping the recitatives. The role of the Muse was eliminated altogether in the opening act, leaving listeners unable to realize that Nicklausse is the Muse, Hoffmann's alter ego, in mortal disguise. Every time the character appears, it is important to understand that Hoffmann is in conflict with himself.

Different versions subsequently floated around for decades; it was only in the early 20th century, when Antonio de Almeida discovered a treasure-trove

of manuscript material, including sketches and the censor's copy of the original libretto, that Offenbach's intentions for his ultimate work came into somewhat clearer focus, leading to, among other efforts, Fritz Oeser's critical edition of 1977 (elements of which have been incorporated into the version currently being performed at the Met). Knowing that the composer himself had salvaged the Barcarolle in Act III from the "Elves' Song" in *Die Rheinnixen*, composed for Vienna's Hoftheater in 1864, Oeser filled in the gaps in Offenbach's unfinished score with music from other works by the composer, set to new text based on Barbier's notes. Finally, almost a century after the composer's death, the Muse takes her rightful place of prominence: Her aria "Vois sous l'archet frémissant" is restored to the Antonia act, she offers Hoffmann the opera's concluding consolation, and her theme of art's transforming power lies at the heart of the work. The Venetian act has also been restored as the climactic final episode of Hoffmann's descent into disillusion and cynicism: In Act I, Olympia is a mechanical doll, incapable of emotion; in Act II, Antonia is a performer who mimics emotion; and finally, in Act III, Giulietta revels in "performing" love, with the gorgeous sensuality of the barcarolle as her backdrop, while stealing souls.

For Offenbach, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* had symbolic resonance with his own story and career. Beyond supplying entertainments for boulevardiers to pass an idle evening, he had yearned to compose a serious work of art that would endure. Even the successful satirical hijinks of his operettas *Orphée aux Enfers*, *La Belle Hélène*, and *La Vie Parisienne* were going out of fashion by the 1870s, and the composer himself was subjected to condemnation in the press: He was a German Jew in a city that had suffered terribly during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–71 and the bloody aftermath of the Commune in 1871. The Third Republic ushered in more sober times, and Hoffmann tried to adapt to changing tastes, with varying degrees of success. It was not until he neared the end of his life that he took on the task of truly serious opera, the kind of drama he both feared and valued above all else. But heroic subjects, political idealism à la Beethoven's *Fidelio*, or mixtures of religion and eroticism in opera were not to Offenbach's taste. He needed an *anti*-heroic subject and finally found the perfect source in a protagonist who is four times a loser with women, all beautiful but either unreal, dying, or cynical opportunists. It is Hoffmann's sense of himself as an outsider artist hunting for a deeper purpose in a greedy, shallow, sensual world, and able to find it only in his art, with which Offenbach so strongly identified at the end of his life.

For such a crucial enterprise, Offenbach mostly avoids the slapstick humor endemic to operetta, except for the servant Franz's comic song, "Jour et nuit je me mets en quatre" in which he grumbles about the difficulty of singing (his tra-la-las are actually a delicious virtuosic parody of technical vocal exercises). The student drinking choruses at the beginning and end are staples of light

operatic style, but other traditions on display in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* come from serious French opera: The finale of Act I, "Voici les Valseurs," is the type of brilliant concerted waltz number that Charles Gounod turned into show-stoppers, and the scene in the finale of Act II, when the spirit of Antonia's mother sings to her daughter, "Chère enfant!," recalls the finales of Gounod's operas *Mireille* and *Faust*, which also depend on off-stage heavenly voices.

The serious dimensions of this work command our respect. It was doubtless in part from Mozart and Italian opera that Offenbach learned what ultra-virtuosic coloratura singing can accomplish dramatically: madness in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, the Queen of the Night's warped and insane lust for power in *Die Zauberflöte*, the music-box melody to tell of Olympia's mechanical nature in "Les oiseaux dans la charmille." Inset songs—characters singing songs to entertain the other characters, as well as us—were a well-established tradition, but Offenbach does something dramatically sophisticated with the "Legend of Kleinzach," a strophic song about a dwarf in Eisenach, which Hoffmann and the tavern chorus sing in the Prologue. As Hoffmann is beginning the third stanza, he drifts by degrees into a beautifully lyrical meditation on Stella as the "ideal woman," her voice the crux of her beauty. In Antonia's plaintive "Elle a fui, la tourterelle" (one of very few sad songs that Offenbach ever wrote), Offenbach creates a tiny three-part structure for each of two identical stanzas, but the interior portion rises to true dramatic heights and to harmonies far from the point of origin, with a sophisticated modulation to bring us back home. The extended finale of the Antonia act—especially the trio for Antonia's mother, Antonia, and Dr. Miracle—is wonderfully effective, ending with Crespel's hushed lament for his dead child and a fortissimo passion of grief in the orchestra. And no one would want to be without the love-duet for Giulietta and Hoffmann, "O Dieu, de quelle ivresse," replete with rising chromatic desire in the orchestra and a font of beautiful melody for the two singers. Where Offenbach's earlier parodies of theatrical tradition entertained, the irony he exercises here, as with the entirety of his final masterpiece, is more profound.

—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



Johannes Debus

CONDUCTOR (SPEYER, GERMANY)

THIS SEASON *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at the Met, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and Stravinsky's *The Nightingale and Other Short Fables* at the Canadian Opera Company, Goldschmidt's *Beatrice Cenci* at the Bregenz Festival, and concerts with the Bilbao Orkestra Sinfonikoa and the Seattle, Oregon, Kansas City, and San Diego Symphonies.

MET APPEARANCES *Salome* (debut, 2016).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has been music director of the Canadian Opera Company since 2009, where he has led a wide range of repertoire, including *Ariodante*, *Götterdämmerung*, Somers's *Louis Riel*, Monteverdi's *Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Falstaff*, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Rusalka*, *Bluebeard's Castle*, and Schoenberg's *Erwartung*. He spent the previous ten years at the Frankfurt Opera, where he served as pianist, coach, assistant conductor, and eventually resident conductor. He returned to Frankfurt in 2016 to conduct *The Cunning Little Vixen*. He conducts regularly at the Bavarian State Opera and Staatsoper Berlin, and he has made guest appearances with the Boston Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, English National Opera, and at the Tanglewood, Lincoln Center, and Spoleto festivals, among many others.



Tara Erraught

MEZZO-SOPRANO (DUBLIN, IRELAND)

THIS SEASON Nicklausse/the Muse in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* for her debut and Hansel in *Hansel and Gretel* at the Met; Carlotta in Richard Strauss's *Die Schwiigsame Frau*, Despina in *Così fan tutte*, the Second Esquire and a Flower Maiden in *Parsifal*, and Alcina in Haydn's *Orlando Paladino* at the Bavarian State Opera; Stéphanie in *Romeo et Juliette* in Barcelona, and Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* at Staatsoper Berlin.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS She has been a resident principal soloist with the Bavarian State Opera since 2010, where her roles have included the title role of *La Cenerentola*, the Composer in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Kathleen Scott in the world premiere of Miroslav Srnka's *South Pole*, Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and Sesto in *La Clemenza di Tito*, among many others. Recent performances include Annio in *La Clemenza di Tito* in concert in Baden-Baden, Siébel in *Faust* at the Salzburg Festival, and Cenerentola at Washington National Opera, the Vienna State Opera, and in Hamburg. She has also sung Rosina in Hamburg and at the Vienna State Opera, Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier* at the Glyndebourne Festival, and Kitty in the world premiere of Iain Bell's *A Harlot's Progress* in Vienna.



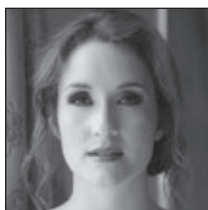
Anita Hartig

SOPRANO (BISTRITA, ROMANIA)

THIS SEASON Antonia/Stella in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* and Mimì in *La Bohème* at the Met; Mimì in Madrid, Rome, and at the Vienna State Opera; Marguerite in *Faust* at the Vienna State Opera, in Hamburg, and in concert in Moscow; and Violetta in *La Traviata* in Karlsruhe, Germany.

MET APPEARANCES Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Liù in *Turandot*, Micaëla in *Carmen*, and Mimì (debut, 2014).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Mimì at Staatsoper Berlin, the Romanian National Opera, the Bavarian State Opera, and in Seville and Dresden; Marguerite in Zurich and Toulouse; Liù at the Vienna State Opera; and Susanna at Covent Garden. She has also sung Susanna at the Bavarian State Opera and Vienna State Opera; Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, Musetta in *La Bohème*, Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*, Despina in *Così fan tutte*, and Micaëla at the Vienna State Opera; Giulietta in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* and Violetta in Zurich; Liù at the Bavarian State Opera; and Mimì at La Scala, Covent Garden, Welsh National Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, the Paris Opera, and in Brussels and Hamburg.



Erin Morley

SOPRANO (SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH)

THIS SEASON Olympia in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at the Met, Zerbinetta in *Ariadne auf Naxos* and Sophie in *Der Rosenkavalier* at the Vienna State Opera, and Cunegonde in *Candide* at LA Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Sophie, Sister Constance in *Dialogues des Carmélites*, Woglinde in *Das Rheingold* and *Götterdämmerung*, the Forest Bird in *Siegfried*, Madame Podtochina's Daughter in *The Nose*, Echo in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, the Dew Fairy in *Hansel and Gretel*, Masha in *The Queen of Spades*, the Second Niece in *Peter Grimes*, and the First Madrigal Singer in *Manon Lescaut* (debut, 2008).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS She has sung Zerbinetta at the Glyndebourne Festival and Minnesota Opera; Angelica in Handel's *Orlando* on tour with The English Concert; Sophie with the Boston Symphony Orchestra and at the Paris Opera and Vienna State Opera; the title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor* in Nancy, France; Fiakermilli in *Arabella* at the Bavarian State Opera; Marie in *La Fille du Régiment* with Palm Beach Opera; Konstanze in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* at the Paris Opera; and Madame Silberklang in Mozart's *The Impresario* and the title role of Stravinsky's *The Nightingale* at the Santa Fe Opera.

The Cast CONTINUED



Oksana Volkova

MEZZO-SOPRANO (MINSK, BELARUS)

THIS SEASON Giulietta in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at the Met, Olga in *Eugene Onegin* in Hamburg, and Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana* in Geneva.

MET APPEARANCES Maddalena in *Rigoletto* (debut, 2013), Sonyetka in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, and Olga.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include the title role of *Carmen* and Olga in Riga, Latvia; Preziosilla in *La Forza del Destino* at the Israeli Opera; Giovanna Seymour in *Anna Bolena* and *Carmen* in Tallinn, Estonia; Laura in Dargomyzhsky's *The Stone Guest* at Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre; and Dalila in *Samson et Dalila* in Beijing. She has also sung *Carmen* at the Bolshoi Theatre, St. Petersburg's Mariinsky Theater, and in Salzburg and Tokyo; Olga at Covent Garden and the Bolshoi Theatre; Maddalena at the Israeli Opera and Bavarian State Opera; Fenena in *Nabucco* and Lyubasha in Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Tsar's Bride* at the Bolshoi Theatre; Laura in *La Gioconda* in Palermo; Marguerite in *La Damnation de Faust* in Nice; and Santuzza in Naples.



Vittorio Grigolo

TENOR (AREZZO, ITALY)

THIS SEASON Hoffmann in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, Cavaradossi in *Tosca*, and Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* at the Met; Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore* at the Vienna State Opera and Bavarian State Opera; and Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi* at the Paris Opera.

MET APPEARANCES The title role of *Werther*, Roméo in *Roméo et Juliette*, Nemorino, des Grieux in *Manon*, Rodolfo in *La Bohème* (debut, 2010), the Duke in *Rigoletto*, and a solo recital.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include the Duke at the Paris Opera, La Scala, and in Zurich; Hoffmann at LA Opera and Covent Garden; Nemorino at La Scala, Staatsoper Berlin, and Covent Garden; Werther and Rodolfo at Covent Garden; and Edgardo at La Scala. He has also sung Roméo at the Arena di Verona and LA Opera, Ruggero in *La Rondine* at Covent Garden, Alfredo in *La Traviata* at the Vienna State Opera and Deutsche Oper Berlin, the Duke at Covent Garden, Hoffmann in Zurich, des Grieux at Covent Garden and in Valencia, and Rodolfo at La Scala, the Bavarian State Opera, and Washington National Opera.



Christophe Mortagne

TENOR (LE MANS, FRANCE)

THIS SEASON The Four Servants in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at the Met, the title role of Offenbach's *Le Roi Carotte* in Lille, and Aegisth in *Elektra* in concert in Bordeaux.

MET APPEARANCES Guillot de Morfontaine (debut, 2012).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include the Four Servants at LA Opera, Covent Garden, and the Bregenz Festival; Spalanzani in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at Covent Garden; Emperor Altoun in *Turandot* at the Bregenz Festival; King Ouf in Chabrier's *L'Étoile* at Covent Garden; the Carrot King in Lyon; and Dr. Blind in *Die Fledermaus* in Paris. He has also sung King Ouf in Amsterdam and Frankfurt; Lyonnell in Chausson's *Le Roi Arthus* in Lyon; Guillot de Morfontaine at La Scala, Covent Garden, and in Tokyo, Nice, and Hong Kong; Prosper in Offenbach's *La Vie Parisienne* in Nantes; Monsieur Triquet in *Eugene Onegin* at Covent Garden and in Lyon; Laërte in *Mignon* in Paris; and Spoletta in *Tosca* at the Orange Festival. An actor as well as a singer, he has been a member of Paris's Comédie Française and has worked with directors Kasper Holten, David Pountney, and Peter Stein, among others.



Laurent Naouri

BASS-BARITONE (PARIS, FRANCE)

THIS SEASON The Four Villains in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* and Pandolfe in *Cendrillon* at the Met, the High Priest in *Samson et Dalila* in concert in Paris, and Don Gaspar in Donizetti's *L'Ange de Nisida* in concert in London.

MET APPEARANCES Capulet in *Roméo et Juliette* and Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* (debut, 2012).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Méphistophélès in *La Damnation de Faust* in concert at Festival Berlioz and the BBC Proms, Agata in Donizetti's *Le Convenienze ed Inconvenienze Teatrali* and Ruprecht in Prokofiev's *The Fiery Angel* in Lyon, Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* in Geneva, Marquis de Grenvil in the world premiere of Luca Francesconi's *Trompe-la-Mort* at the Paris Opera, Golaud in *Pelléas et Mélisande* at the Aix-en-Provence Festival, and the Marquis de la Force in *Dialogues des Carmélites* at the Bavarian State Opera. He has also sung the Four Villains in Zurich and at the Bavarian State Opera, Pandolfe in Barcelona, Méphistophélès in Lyon, Fieramosca in *Benvenuto Cellini* in Amsterdam, Albert in *Werther* at La Scala, Roland Cassard in Michel Legrand's *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg* in Paris, Iago in *Otello* in Bordeaux, and Polifemo in Handel's *Acis, Galatea e Polifemo* in Paris.

Facilities and Services

THE ARNOLD AND MARIE SCHWARTZ GALLERY MET

Art gallery located in the South Lobby featuring leading artists. Open Monday through Friday, 6pm through last intermission; Saturday, noon through last intermission of evening performances.



ASSISTIVE LISTENING SYSTEM AND BINOCULARS

Wireless headsets, which work with the FM assistive listening system to amplify sound, are available at the coat check station on the South Concourse level before performances. Binoculars are also available for rental at the coat check station on the South Concourse level. The rental cost is \$5. A major credit card or driver's license is required as deposit.



BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

Large print programs are available free of charge from the ushers. Braille synopses of many operas are available free of charge. Please contact an usher. Tickets for no-view score desk seats may be purchased by calling the Metropolitan Opera Guild at 212-769-7028.



BOX OFFICE

Monday–Saturday, 10am–8pm; Sunday, noon–6pm. The Box Office closes at 8pm on non-performance evenings or on evenings with no intermission. Box Office Information: 212-362-6000.

CHECK ROOM

On Concourse level (Founders Hall).

FIRST AID

Doctor in attendance during performances; contact an usher for assistance.

LECTURE SERIES

Opera-related courses, pre-performance lectures, master classes, and more are held throughout the performance season at the Opera Learning Center. For tickets and information, call 212-769-7028.

LOST AND FOUND

Security office at Stage Door. Monday–Friday, 2pm–4pm; 212-799-3100, ext. 2499.

MET OPERA SHOP

The Met Opera Shop is adjacent to the North Box Office, 212-580-4090. Open Monday–Saturday, 10am–final intermission; Sunday, noon–6pm.



PUBLIC TELEPHONES

Telephones with volume controls and TTY Public Telephone located in Founders Hall on the Concourse level.

RESTAURANT AND REFRESHMENT FACILITIES

The Grand Tier Restaurant features creative contemporary American cuisine, and the Revlon Bar offers panini, crostini, and a full service bar. Both are open two hours prior to the Met Opera curtain time to any Lincoln Center ticket holder for pre-curtain dining. Pre-ordered intermission dining is also available for Met ticket holders. For reservations please call 212-799-3400.



RESTROOMS

Wheelchair-accessible restrooms are on the Dress Circle, Grand Tier, Parterre, and Founders Hall levels.

SEAT CUSHIONS

Available in the South Check Room. Major credit card or driver's license required for deposit.

SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

For information contact the Metropolitan Opera Guild Education Department, 212-769-7022.

SCORE-DESK TICKET PROGRAM

Tickets for score desk seats in the Family Circle boxes may be purchased by calling the Met Opera Guild at 212-769-7028. These no-view seats provide an affordable way for music students to study an opera's score during a live performance.

TOUR GUIDE SERVICE

Backstage tours of the Opera House are held during the Met season on most weekdays at 3:15pm, and on select Sundays at 10:30am and/or 1:30pm. For tickets and information, call 212-769-7028. Tours of Lincoln Center daily; call 212-875-5351 for availability.

WEBSITE

www.metopera.org



WHEELCHAIR ACCOMMODATIONS

Telephone 212-799-3100, ext. 2204. Wheelchair entrance at Concourse level.

The exits indicated by a red light and the sign nearest the seat you occupy are the shortest routes to the street. In the event of fire or other emergency, please do not run—walk to that exit.

In compliance with New York City Department of Health regulations, smoking is prohibited in all areas of this theater.

Patrons are reminded that in deference to the performing artists and the seated audience, those who leave the auditorium during the performance will not be readmitted while the performance is in progress.

The photographing or sound recording of any performance, or the possession of any device for such photographing or sound recording inside this theater, without the written permission of the management, is prohibited by law. Offenders may be ejected and liable for damages and other lawful remedies.

Use of cellular telephones and electronic devices for any purpose, including email and texting, is prohibited in the auditorium at all times. Please be sure to turn off all devices before entering the auditorium.